

IELTS SUCCESS FORMULA

GENERAL



THE COMPLETE PRACTICAL GUIDE
TO A TOP IELTS SCORE

Based on research into test takers and extensive IELTS experience

STEPHEN SLATER & SIMONE BRAVERMAN

Centre for English Language in the University of South Australia

IELTS SUCCESS FORMULA GENERAL

THE COMPLETE PRACTICAL GUIDE TO A TOP IELTS SCORE

Stephen Slater & Simone Braverman

One Sided Paper

Centre for English Language in the University of South Australia

www.IELTS-Blog.com/IELTS-Success-Formula

www.IELTSonTrack.com

Published by

One Sided Paper

4, Chalk Place,

Torrens Park

South Australia, 5062

Centre for English Language in the

University of South Australia

UniSA, City West campus

Adelaide, South Australia, 5000

Information on this title: www.ielts-blog.com/ielts-success-formula, www.ieltsontack.com

Copyright © Slater, Braverman 2015

First published 2015

Unless otherwise indicated, all materials on these pages are copyrighted by the authors. All rights reserved. No part of this book (including text, images, audio or video content) may be used for any purpose other than non-commercial personal study use. Therefore, unauthorised reproduction, photocopying, recording, modification, storage in a retrieval system or retransmission, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or otherwise, is strictly

prohibited without prior written permission from the authors. Users are not permitted to mount this file on any network servers.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the National Library of Australia

ISBN: 978 0 9873854 3 7

Audio: Stephen Slater

Cover design: Simone Braverman, Derek Murphy

ii

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors hereby acknowledge the following for their contributions to this book:

Neville Clark at Disk-Edits Pty Ltd. for audio recording and mastering.

Donna Millen for permission to use recorded extracts from IELTS on Track Listening tests.

Derek Murphy for cover design assistance.

Sally Collyns, Tanya Dahlenburg, Dr Ashish Davda, Sarah Divine, Georgina Hafteh

Peter Hanna and Keith Smith, for voice recordings.

IELTS-Blog.com members, but particularly Dharmen, Diana, Eveline, Hemanth, Hon, Irina,

Juliana, Lili, Nga, Paramjit, Princess, Rae, Raza, Rodney, Shahin, Shyam, Simone, Tina,

Venkatesh, Viet for participation in the trialling of the Listening and Reading test material.

Alex Braverman for assistance with proofreading and graphic design.

iStockPhoto for licensing of the image appearing on the front cover

(©iStockphoto.com/SimoneBraverman).

Australian Geographic for permission to use the article “To dam or not to dam”, originally published online at <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/> on 21 January 2011.

Other texts were freshly written to test parameters drawing on and integrating information

from a wide variety of written sources.

While every effort has been made to contact copyright holders it has not been possible to identify all sources of the material used. The authors and publisher would in such instances welcome information from copyright holders to rectify any errors or omissions.

iii

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

INTRODUCTION

A **big ‘HELLO’** to you from your team of authors, Stephen and Simone. We are glad you have chosen IELTS SUCCESS FORMULA for your exam preparation. They say everything happens for a reason, and perhaps **the reason you’re reading this book is that you need a high IELTS score and you want to be confident about how to achieve it for yourself or how to help your students to achieve an above-average IELTS score.**

Many books have been written about IELTS preparation. What makes this one different?

As you will have noticed, this book is called “IELTS Success Formula”. That’s exactly what you should expect to find here – **step by step, friendly guidance on how to overcome your difficulties and achieve a high score in the IELTS test.** This book wastes no time and immediately shows you the important aspects requiring attention during your exam preparation. The tips, advice and examples here will help you understand the difference between a lower score response and a higher score response, and you will learn efficient ways of dealing with test tasks to give more accurate answers, faster.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book was designed to suit busy test takers as well as people who can devote several weeks to IELTS preparation. Here are two possible test preparation plans:

PLAN A: CRASH-COURSE PREPARATION (for candidates who are short of time)

STEP 1. Read through the Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking lessons while making notes. Pay special attention to secrets and tips on impressing your assessor and achieving a higher score.

STEP 2. Do the full practice test included in this book. Instead of sticking strictly to IELTS time limits, spend some additional minutes trying to implement all the useful tips you have learned in this book.

STEP 3. Analyse your performance: write a brief summary on what you were good at, not so good at, and what to improve. Check your answers against the correct ones in the book and try to understand why you were wrong and why the answers in the book are correct. Then go over our tips once more on the skills you need to improve.

STEP 4. With any time left before your exam, locate and work through the relevant Fitness Activities to improve your performance in the skills that you found difficult in the practice test. IELTS Writing Doctor can help you cover the gaps in your use of grammar and vocabulary, and the rated writing samples and the recorded IELTS-style interview give you insights into how **you** can get a higher score in writing and speaking.

iv

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

PLAN B: COMPREHENSIVE PREPARATION (for candidates who have more time, or for teachers/students working with our book on IELTS preparation courses)

STEP 1. Work systematically through the lesson for each IELTS subtest with its detailed descriptions, extensive Q/A, and secrets of impressing an assessor and raising your score. As you read through each lesson chapter carefully, note any information, strategies, tips or advice that are new to you. Underline or highlight the ones that apply to you.

STEP 2. After finishing the lesson for every skill (Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking), work through its fitness activities and then check your answers.

Analyse any incorrect answers, and try to understand why you were wrong, and why the answer in the book is correct. UNDERSTANDING tasks and mistakes is central to improvement.

Note: if you need some help with your use of grammar or ideas for vocabulary, visit our IELTS Writing Doctor and Top Score Vocabulary in the Writing and Speaking chapters. For a deeper understanding of how to improve your score in writing or speaking, check out the rated writing samples and the recorded IELTS-style interview with a detailed analysis of the speaker's performance.

STEP 3. Take the Full practice test.

You should work through the test under strict test conditions and in the correct order (L > R > W > S) observing correct timings for each subtest. Put into practice as many relevant techniques and insights as possible from each of the four skills chapters you have systematically worked through.

When you have completed the full test, you can check your answers. For the Writing and Speaking test you'll need either to self assess by rating your level in comparison with those in our Writing and Speaking Resource sections, or ask a teacher to give you a rating.

STEP 4. Analyse your test performance and re-test later.

A vital, final stage in our SUCCESS FORMULA is to analyse and evaluate your exit test performance carefully in each of the four subtests and to write brief notes on what you were good at, not so good at, and what to improve. **UNDERSTANDING your performance deeply IS MUCH BETTER THAN JUST DOING** one, new test after another.

After a week, **re-take the exit test, and carefully re-analyse your performance.**

You will by then have applied the IELTS SUCCESS FORMULA! Good luck!

v

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



CONTENTS

IELTS LISTENING

Lesson

2

Fitness Activities

20

IELTS READING

Lesson

34

Fitness Activities

57

IELTS WRITING

Overview

78

Lesson Task 1

80

Fitness Activities Task 1

98

Lesson Task 2

118

Fitness Activities Task 2

137

Tasks 1 & 2, Rated Samples

165

IELTS WRITING DOCTOR

IELTS Grammar

188

IELTS Vocabulary

226

IELTS SPEAKING

Lesson

260

Fitness Activities

278

Interview, Rated Sample

296

Top Score Vocabulary

305

Questions for Practice

312

IELTS TEST

Full IELTS Practice Test

330

Answers

354

Audio Transcripts

367



IELTS

LISTENING

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Listening Lesson

First questions answered

What if I...? Some problem situations

8 ‘must do’ things for success in the Listening Test

How to avoid problems with your answers

Famously misspelled words list

Listening Fitness Activities 1-10

1

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

LISTENING LESSON

First Questions Answered

Q. How long is the Listening test?

A. The Listening test takes 40 minutes, where the first 30 minutes are used to listen to a recording and answer questions on what you hear, and the last 10 minutes are used to transfer your answers from the question booklet to the Answer sheet.

Q. Is the Listening test different for Academic and General Training test takers?

A. No, there is no difference in the format or contents of the Listening test in Academic and General Training tests.

Q. How is the Listening test organized?

A. The recording consists of four sections, which progress in speed and difficulty. Sections 1 and 3 are recordings of conversations between two or more people, and Sections 2 and 4 are recordings of monologues.

Q. How many questions are there?

A. There are 40 questions in total in the Listening test. In each section there are 10 questions.

Q. What topics are likely to appear in the Listening test?

A. Every section will have a different topic.

Section 1 is an everyday conversation between two people, such as a patient and a doctor, a receptionist and a client, and so on.

Section 2 is a lecture, a presentation or a speech by a person on an everyday topic such as services and facilities available in a library.

Section 3 is a conversation that may include more than two people about study-related matters. Often the participants are a student and a lecturer or a group of students, discussing homework or a university project.

Section 4 is a talk or a lecture on an academic subject, such as historical summary or a presentation of a study the speaker has undertaken.

2

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

Q. What type of questions am I likely to get?

A. All the questions will be about the information on the recording; however, the way you need to provide your answers (or, as we call it, ‘task type’) may differ. The typical task types are below (Figure 1.)

Task type

Example

MATCHING — select the appropriate

Questions 1–3

description (verbal or a picture).

Who will pay for the following items:

A Mary

B Peter

C Both Mary and Peter

Write the correct letter (**A–C**) next to questions **1–3**.

1 food for the trip _____

2 accommodation _____

3 excursions _____

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 1 (Page 21)

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS — select Question 4

the correct answer.

Circle the correct letter **A–C**.

The reason Mary prefers to stay in this hotel is

A because of the magnificent view

B because of the facilities

C because of the affordable pricing

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 2 (Page 22)

3

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontrack.com



Task type

Example

SENTENCE COMPLETION — complete a

Question 5

sentence according to what you hear.

Complete the sentence below. Use **NO MORE**

THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER for

each answer.

Peter has put a _____ on his packing list.

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 3 (Page 23)

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS—write

Question 6

an answer in one, two or three words,

according to the instructions, on what you

Answer the question below. Use **NO MORE THAN**

hear.

THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER for your

answer.

Which country are both Mary and Peter reluctant to
visit? _____

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 4 (Page 24)

FORM OR NOTE COMPLETION—enter

Questions 7–10

the appropriate information in blanks.

Complete the travel agency form below, using **NO**

MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A

NUMBER for each answer.

Customer's name **7** _____

Booking includes **8** ____ adults, **9** ____ children

Dates of holiday: 21 April to **10** _____

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activities 5– 7

(Pages 25-26)

4

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

Task type

Example

TABLE/FLOW CHART COMPLETION— Questions 11–13

fill in the blank cells or blocks.

Complete the table below. Write **NO MORE THAN**

THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER for each

answer.

Trip Itinerary

Date

Flight no.

Destination

21 April

CX 1345

11 _____

25 April

12 _____ Toronto, Canada

13 _____ FL 131

New York, USA

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 8 (Page 27)

SUMMARY COMPLETION—fill missing Questions 14–16

words in the blanks. You may or may not

be given a list of words to choose from.

Complete the summary below. Use **NO MORE**

If there is no list, choose directly from

THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER for

what you hear on the recording.

each answer.

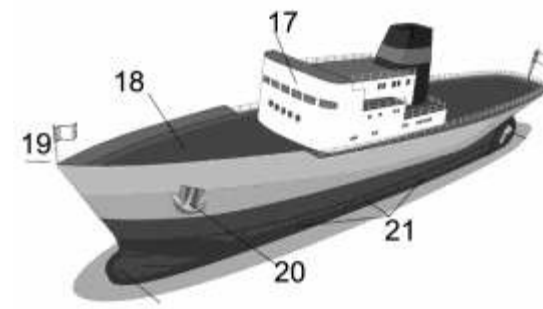
Peter and Mary are planning a **14** _____ together.

The **15** _____ they have decided to visit include

Canada and USA, where they will be **16** _____

by plane.

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 9 (Page 28)



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

DIAGRAM, MAP OR PLAN LABELLING— Questions 17–21

write short descriptions of up to three words

for parts of a drawing.

Label the diagram below. Write your answers in the

boxes **17–21** on the answer sheet.

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 10

(Pages 29-30)

Figure 1.

Note: in the real Listening test you won't see the task type change after every question—it is common to see a group of about five questions for every task type.

Q. Will I have time to read the questions?

A. Yes, you will have about 15–20 seconds to go over each group of questions before listening.

Q. When do I answer?

A. Once a recording is being played you will need to answer the questions as you listen,

because you will hear the recording only once.

Q. Where and how do I write the answers?

A. During the listening test write all the answers in the question booklet. Once the recording has stopped you will have 10 more minutes to transfer your answers to the answer sheet. Please read the section 'How to Avoid Problems with Your Answers' (Page 14), to make sure none of your answers gets disqualified.

6

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

Q. Will I be penalized for writing answers in capital letters?

A. When answering any task with missing words (such as sentence completion, summary completion, note completion, table completion, etc) you can write in uppercase letters (e.g. 'AFTERNOON') or lowercase letters (e.g. 'afternoon'), as you wish. It is probably best to choose a particular way (either uppercase or lowercase) and follow it consistently.

Q. Will I need to re-phrase what I hear in my answers?

A. No, you won't. All the answers are as heard on the recording. You will not need to substitute a word for its synonym or to change its form.

Q. What spelling version should I use, British or American?

A. Both British and American spelling versions are accepted. It is also very important that your spelling is correct, because misspelled answers may be penalized. For example, you can write 'color' (American spelling) or 'colour' (British spelling), but if you write 'calor' the answer will get zero points.

Q. Is grammar important?

A. Yes, grammar is an important part of the Listening test. Any grammatically incorrect

answers will not get any points, even if their meaning is correct. If you use a singular form ('apple') where a plural form should be used ('apples'), if you use the wrong tense or verb form ('he go' instead of 'he goes'), such ungrammatical answers will receive zero points.

Q. Is it OK to use shorthand writing in the answers?

A. While it is acceptable to use shorthand writing for your notes in the question booklet, your answers on the answer sheet must be complete. So if you quickly scribbled on your answer sheet something like 'doc. ord.', use the full form 'doctor's orders' when transferring such answers to the answer sheet.

7

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

What if I...? Some Problem Situations

Q. What if I can't understand what is being said on the recording?

A. If you have trouble understanding the recording it could happen for several reasons:

Reasons

It is possible that the speaker uses an accent you are not familiar with. For example, people who are used to the American accent may find a British accent hard to understand at first. This shouldn't be a problem as long as you have had some time to train your ears by listening to recordings in different accents that may appear in the IELTS test. The main accents to concentrate on include those from Australia, Britain, Canada, America and New Zealand.

It is also possible that your listening skills are weak, which may make you feel that the words are coming faster than you can recognize and understand them.

Solutions

This doesn't mean you will fail in the exam, because with training and regular work your

listening can improve significantly. To develop your listening skill:

- It's a good idea to use recordings that have a transcript (to help you understand every word).
- Listen to a recording daily for 20 minutes, then rewind and listen repeatedly to unclear sentences, to build the speed at which you decode spoken input.
- Try repeating words you hear after listening to help you remember them and the way they are pronounced, and perhaps even to improve your pronunciation.

8

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

Q. What if I lose track of the recording?

A. Being focused is very important in the Listening test. The fact that the recording is played only once means that there are no second chances for missed answers. This is why it is crucial that you learn mentally how to block out any disturbance or background noise, while preparing and practicing for the exam.

However, anything can happen, and if you have lost track of the recording there is a way to re-gain control:

- Jump ahead to the two or three questions immediately following the one you missed and you will find the one that the recording is addressing now. This way, you may miss an answer or two but from the question where you have re-established the connection with the recording, no more answers will be lost.
- Try to guess the missed answers instead of leaving their boxes blank on the answer sheet.

Q. What if I am a slow reader and don't have enough time to read the questions before the recording begins playing?

A. There is a solution that may help, especially with Sections 2, 3 and 4.

At the end of each section you get about 30 seconds to review your answers. Instead of checking your answers for the previous section, you can read the questions ahead that refer to the next section. Then, when the recording instructs you to move on and read the questions of the next section, you will have some more time to continue reading the questions.

Example

You have just finished answering Section 1. The recording announces that your time to check answers has begun. You begin reading the questions for Section 2. The recording announces that now you can read the questions for Section 2. You are continuing reading the questions for Section 2 and that way are already further ahead.

Is it wise to do so? Due to the nature of the Listening test, once a recording has stopped, many students find it difficult to recall what has been said, and therefore it's not likely that you will remember enough to correct your answers. Also, there will be another time slot of 10 minutes when you will be asked to copy your answers from the booklet to the answer sheet—and while copying you can also check the grammar and spelling.

9

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

Q. What if I have a problem with spelling?

A. Spelling is a well-known problem, even for people whose first language is English.

However, in the IELTS test spelling is very important and your answers may not be considered correct if they are wrongly spelled. For example, if the correct answer is ‘calendar’ and you wrote ‘calender’, even though the meaning is clear the spelling is wrong, and so your answer will get zero points.

To overcome this problem the obvious solution is to learn how to spell, but we know that this may take years. People who have to sit the IELTS test are usually in a hurry and have limited time for preparation—months or even weeks—and therefore we propose a shortcut. Our experience with students over the years has taught us that some words are more likely to get misspelled than others.

Please refer to the ‘Famously misspelled words list’ at the end of this chapter Page 17. By learning the correct spelling of most of the words on that list you will greatly reduce your chances of misspelling an answer in the IELTS exam.

Q. What if I am unsure of an answer?

A. Even if you are unsure what the correct answer is, having listened to the recording you can take a guess. Instead of leaving the answer blank, write your best guess in its space on the answer sheet. This won't hurt your Listening score and, if you're lucky, may even help it.

Q. What if I have a hearing/eyesight problem?

A. If you have a hearing/eyesight problem that can be backed up by a medical certificate, you should contact the test centre where you intend to take the test well in advance. The test centers consider each case individually and make special arrangements, including amplification of the recording or preparing a lip-reading version of the Listening module, or a Braille version of the question booklet for sight-impaired candidates.

Q. What if I get sick on the day of my exam?

A. It is generally a good idea to postpone your exam if you are not well. This is especially true if the sickness makes you sneeze. When we sneeze our ears are blocked, which is why constant sneezing may cause a person (and other candidates nearby!) to miss the key parts of the recording that hold the answers.

Your local test centre can give you the most up-to-date and detailed advice on how to

postpone your exam.

10

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

8 ‘Must do’ Things for Success in the Listening Test

1. Heard the answer? Write it down straightaway.

A listening test is a very dynamic experience and, simply put, you need to keep up. It is impossible to retain in your memory an answer that you heard, because it will be washed away by the continuous flow of information as the recorded voices keep on talking. This is why, once you've heard an answer to a question, you need to write it down, right there and then. You may think that writing will distract you from listening (and the truth is that initially it might), but with practice you will learn to write and listen at the same time, and writing won't come at the expense of listening.

2. Only look at one group of questions at a time.

You know by now that Listening test recordings are divided into Sections 1 to 4. But you may not know yet that Sections 1 to 3 are divided into smaller subsections, a fact which makes your job a bit easier.

In those sections the recording will refer to a certain group of questions, *not all* of the questions in the section, and it will say what questions you should look at *now*. For example, the recording may say “Now look at the questions 7 to 10” and then be silent for about 20 seconds.

This means that in the recorded segment that then follows four answers will be given—to questions 7, 8, 9 and 10.

So what should you do? Most importantly, read the questions while the recording is silent, but don't read beyond question 10. Underline key words, quickly grasp the main idea of each

question and try to understand what sort of answer you will hear— an amount? working hours? a location?

Another excellent consequence of the fact that Listening sections 1–3 are broken down into subsections is that you won't lose a whole section *even if you've missed a couple of answers*. As soon as you hear the recording say “Now look at questions 11 to 13”, and you know that you still don't have the answer to question 10, cut your losses—stop looking for the answer to question 10—and move on to the current group of questions. In this way you still have a chance to answer all the questions in the current group and then, at the end of the section/test you can go back and guess the answer to the ‘lost’ question.

11

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

3. Details *are* important.

Any specific information mentioned on a recording, such as names, phone numbers, dates, opening hours, locations, years, colors is usually mentioned for a reason. It is very likely that such details are contained in the answer. When you hear specific information on a recording, have another look at the current group of questions, to see where it may fit.

4. Multiple choice: not all answer options are born equal.

When dealing with Multiple choice tasks not all answer options have the same likelihood of being correct.

Out of three answer options one can almost always be crossed out as plain wrong or as not mentioned by the speaker, and then you will have fewer options to choose from—which will make your job much easier.

5. Summary completion: let sentence structure be your guide.

When completing a summary it is often hard to guess straightaway which word is missing from the blank space. Sometimes it may seem as though no word is missing at all! A trick that always works for this type of task is to look at the words immediately before and after the gap, because they reveal whether the missing word is a noun, an adjective, or a verb.

For instance, consider the summary below

Example

Peter and Mary are planning a **14** _____ together. The **15** _____ they have decided to visit include Canada and USA, where they will be **16** _____ by plane.

It seems that answer 14 should be a noun (such as 'trip'), 15 – also a noun (such as 'countries'), and 16 should be a verb (such as 'arriving' or 'travelling').

How does this help? Once you know that you're looking for a verb, selecting the right one from what you hear on the recording will be easier. You will pay more attention to verbs than to nouns or adjectives.

12

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

6. Plan/Map/Diagram Labeling – try to note down all the locations mentioned.

As soon as the recording begins talking about the map/plan/diagram, start labeling the locations on the drawing in the question booklet. Instead of trying to find and label only the locations required in the questions, note down every location the recording mentions. Why? Because it is easier just to write down information as the recording proceeds than it is to analyse that input at the same time. Later on, when you are given some time to check your answers at the end of that particular Listening section, you can look at your notes and use them to find the right answers and write them in the booklet. Then, at the end of the

Listening test you will be given time to copy the correct answers on to the Answer Sheet.

7. Do not let the use of synonyms confuse you.

It may happen that you will hear a word on the recording, but the question will be worded using its synonym. Test takers whose minds are ‘locked’ on the exact word the speaker said, may get confused and not realize the question is mentioning the same thing.

Example

The recording may say, “The list of prohibited items inside an airplane includes...” and the question may say, “Passengers are not allowed to take the following items on board a plane”.

8. The speakers (not just women!) are allowed to change their minds.

One of the things you are being tested on in the Listening test is whether or not you can follow the *development of the conversation*, AND, just like in a real-life conversation, the speakers on a recording can change their minds.

Example

Peter: “We can book a flight on the 10th of April, what do you think?”

Mary: “My vacation request was approved to start from the 9th, so I am free to go. But hang on, isn't your brother's birthday party on the 10th?”

Peter: “You’re right, how could I forget?! Thanks for reminding me. We’d better book our flight on the 11th of April, or he’ll never forgive me.”

You should pay attention to such unexpected changes of mind, and make sure they don't trick you into giving the incorrect answer.



How to Avoid Problems with Your Answers

You would be surprised how many correct answers get disqualified for 'technical' reasons. To make sure this doesn't happen to you read through the common problems below and make a mental note to avoid making these mistakes.

Problem 1—not following the task instructions.

You may have noticed how every task type has a clear set of instructions (refer to the table in Figure 1). They specify how many words or numbers you can use, and what you need to do—complete a sentence, answer a question, circle a letter, and so on. It is very important that you do *exactly* as the instructions say. If the instructions say “Circle two letters”, do exactly that—don't circle just one or three letters.

Especially important is the word limit, because any answer that consists of more words than the limit allows, will get zero points even if its meaning is correct. If the instructions say, “**WRITE NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS**”, you may write one, or two or three words—but never more than three.

Problem 2—transferring information incorrectly.

a) Words

When transferring the answers from the question booklet, only the missing words should be written on the answer sheet.

For instance, consider a task that asks you to complete a sentence using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER**.

Example

The sentence is: “Peter and Mary **are** _____ **to** visit their relatives in Ottawa”

Since the correct answer is ‘not going’, writing the words ‘are not going to’ on the answer

sheet will mean receiving zero points for your answer.

Note: the definite and indefinite articles 'a', 'the' count as one word each.

14

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

b) Symbols and abbreviations

If you are required to complete a sentence that talks about money such as,

“The deposit Peter has to pay for plane tickets is \$ _____”

write *only the amount* on the answer sheet, without the '\$' sign, because it's already written in the question booklet.

In a sentence that talks about time, such as,

“Trading hours of the travel agency are Mon–Fri, _____ **am** to 5 pm.”

write only the time on the answer sheet, without the ‘am’. The reason is that ‘am’ is already written in the booklet and you do not need to repeat it.

c) Numbers

Confusing numbers with digits is a common problem. The word 'digit' means any of 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. A number is a combination of digits, or in other words more than one digit may form a number.

Why is this important? Because when instructions ask to ‘answer in **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER**’, it is a mistake to think that you are only allowed to write one digit in the space provided on the answer sheet. You are allowed to write one number, which can consist of many digits.

Example

Complete the sentence below using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER**.

“The address of Peter's uncle is _____ Main street, Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada.”

Let's say the correct answer (the missing house number) is ‘308’. It’s a mistake to think that all you're allowed to write just one digit (such as ‘3’), in fact you are allowed to, and should, write ‘308’.

15

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

d) Letters

When the task instructions ask you to circle a letter, this is exactly what you need to transfer to the answer sheet—the letter, not the full answer. There is a whole set of reasons why you shouldn't copy the full answer:

1. It's not what the instructions say
2. You can make a spelling mistake
3. It takes longer to write two or three words than to write a letter.

Example

Circle the correct letter A–C.

The reason Mary prefers to stay in this hotel is

A because of the magnificent view

B because of the facilities

C because of the affordable pricing

Let's say B is the correct answer. While you are listening, circle B in the question booklet. When transferring the answers to the answer sheet, write ‘B’ in the relevant space—don't copy the words ‘because of the facilities’.

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

Famously Misspelled Words List

Correct

Wrong

Correct

Wrong

A

C

absence

absense /

calendar

calender

absance

acceptable

acceptible

career

carrer

accidentally

accidentaly

careful

carefull

achieve

acheive

category

catagory

acknowledge

aknowledge

certain

certin

accommodation

acomodation

colleague

collegue

across

accross

collectible

collectable

address

adress/addres

competition

compitition

affordable

affortable

completely

completly

almost

almost

controversy

contraversy

a lot

alot

amateur

amature

D

among

amung

decide

dicide

annually

annually

definitely

definately

appearance

appearence

description

describtion

argument

arguement

develop

develope

dilemma

dilemna

B

disappear

dissapear

balance

balence

disappoint

disapoint

basically

basicly

discipline

disipline

because

becuase

before

befor

E

beginning

begining

embarrass

embarass

believe

beleive

environment

enviroment

benefit

benifit

exceed

excede

breathe

brethe/breath

exercise

exersize

business

bisness/bizness

experiment

expiriment

17

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

Correct

Wrong

Correct

Wrong

F

L

familiar

familier

leisure

liesure

finally

finaly

length

lenght

foreign

foriegn

lesson

*lessen/leson **

forward

foreward

lose

*Loose **

further

futher

G

M

government

goverment

marriage

marrige

grateful

greatful

minute

minite

guarantee

garantee

mimic

mimmic

misspell

mispel

H

N

happened

happend

necessary

necessery

happiness

happyness

neighbour

neibor

height

haight

noticeable

noticable

hoping

hopeing

I

O

ignorance

ignorence

obedient

obidient

imitate

immitate

occasion

occassion

immediately

immediatly

occurrence

occurence

incur

incurr

often

offen/ofen

independent

independant

opportunity

oppurtunity

indispensable

indispensible

interesting

intresting

P

interruption

interuption

particularly

particurly

pastime

pasttime

K

perceive

percieve

knowledge

nowledge/

persistent

persistant

knolege

knives

knifs

possession

posession

preferred

prefered

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Lesson

Correct

Wrong

Correct

Wrong

R

U

really

realy

until

untill

receive

recieve

usable

usible

referred

refered

usually

usualy

repetition

repitition

ridiculous

rediculous

S

V

separate

seperate

vehicle

vehical

shelves

shelfes

visible

visable

similar

similer

sincerely

sinseerly

speech

speach

successful

successfull

surely

surelly

T

W

temporary

temperary

weather

whether *

therefore

therefor

weird

wierd

thieves

thiefs

whether

wether *

till

til

which

wich

tomorrow

tommorrow

truly

truely

twelfth

twelvth

* These words have correct spelling but their meanings are different from the intended word.

However, they have similar pronunciation and are thus easily confused.



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

LISTENING FITNESS ACTIVITIES

The fitness activities in this section offer you quick practice at the different task types you may encounter in the IELTS Listening test. It's also a chance to use some of the tips from the Listening chapter earlier in our book.

General guidance

- As these are just for practice and not contained within an IELTS Listening test format, it is a good opportunity to experiment with your task strategies.
- Don't forget to read each of the tasks and the instructions carefully before trying to put in your answers.
- If you can wait, check your answers after completing **all** Fitness Activities.
- Later you could also read the transcripts for each activity (See Page 367) to see where the answers were located in the short extracts you listened to.

The recordings for the Listening Fitness Activities listed below, and all other recorded material in later sections can be downloaded on this webpage:

<http://www.ielts-blog.com/isf-downloads/>

Activities

Audio Time

Fitness Activity 1

1 min 53 sec

Fitness Activity 2

1 min 02 sec

Fitness Activity 3

0 min 59 sec

Fitness Activity 4

1 min 02 sec

Fitness Activity 5

0 min 54 sec

Fitness Activity 6

0 min 47 sec

Fitness Activity 7

1 min 06 sec

Fitness Activity 8

1 min 29 sec

Fitness Activity 9

1 min 10 sec

Fitness Activity 10

1 min 59 sec

20

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



TASK TYPE » Matching

In this activity you simply have to match the name of the student with the information that they give about themselves. It is important to read the information in the questions first, before listening, so that you know what to listen out for. This is always a good strategy because it gives your listening real focus.

Listen to Fitness Activity 1

Listen to three students Anna (A), Veronica (V) and Chris (C) introducing themselves.

Match each student with their personal information, by writing either **A, V or C**.

1 ____ is Swedish.

2 ____ was a member of a university film society.

3 ____ is studying English literature.

4 ____ wrote for a student publication.

5 ____ has already been in the festival organising committee.

6 ____ will recommend some changes in a written report.

21

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Multiple Choice

The IELTS Listening test generally uses only three choices in its multiple choice questions – A, B, C. This is simpler than the four-option multiple choice.

An excellent strategy **before** listening is to look through each set of A,B,C choices and cross out any that look (from your common sense or knowledge!) unlikely to be correct. This saves

time and gives the task more focus when actually listening.

It may also help you to pick up when a speaker says something which is **opposite** to one or other of the answer choices. It doesn't always work, but see if you can cross out unlikely answers now, before listening to the next extract.

Listen to Fitness Activity 2

Listen to this short extract on food trends. Choose **A**, **B** or **C**.

1 Mobile meals are:

A a form of junk food

B Canadian home cooking

C foods consumed outside of the home

2 The increase in sales of snack foods in three years could be:

A 14%

B 40%

C 4%

3 Which of these is a nutritious, portable food?

A Muesli bar

B Cholesterol bar

C Food bar

22

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Sentence Completion

This type of task involves writing not only the appropriate word in terms of meaning but also choosing the correct grammatical form. The best strategy is to:

Read the task instructions to see what the maximum number of words is for each answer.

Look through each sentence before listening and decide what type of word is required grammatically (e.g. noun? adjective? verb? adverb?).

Then when you listen and choose your word try to make sure it is spelled correctly.

Listen to Fitness Activity 3

Complete these sentences using **ONE WORD ONLY** from the recording.

1 Money for the film festival comes from advertising and charging for _____.

2 It is necessary to _____ the films by the beginning of March.

3 The deadline for getting sponsors is the _____ of March.

4 The end of March is the deadline for program _____.

5 During April, posters need to be put together and _____.

23

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Short-answer Questions

This type of task is straightforward because it is a conventional Q/A style. In other words, you are listening for the information that actually answers the question.

The best strategy is to read the questions so that you know what you are listening out for

and in what order. Remember the maximum number of words you can use for each answer.

Listen to Fitness Activity 4

Write an answer to each question using **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS OR NUMBERS** from the recording.

1 What did the invention of the QWERTY typewriter keyboard reduce?

2 What negative outcome for typists did the layout of the QWERTY keyboard cause? _____

3 On which side are many of the most frequently used typewriter keys?

4 What happened to typewriter technology after the QWERTY keyboard was invented? _____

24

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Form Completion

This type of task sort of tests your ‘orientational awareness’. In simple terms you need to know where you are, or which part of the form to focus on while listening. So, look at the forms carefully before listening so that you know your way around the forms.

Often the speaker will make a little mistake with an address or number and then correct it, so listen out for this type of little trick.

When a speaker reads out a name for you to copy down and spells it out, you need to

know how each of the alphabet letters is pronounced in English.

Don't forget to check the task instructions for the maximum number of words/numbers you can use.

Listen to Fitness Activity 5

Listen to the airline passenger and complete the form, using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS OR NUMBERS**.

Passenger Enquiry Form

Arrival Flight No. **1** _____ Time of arrival: **2** _____

Item lost: **3** _____ Country of flight connection: **4** _____

25

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

Listen to Fitness Activity 6

Listen and complete the address and phone number.

Name: Jenny Lee

Address: **1** _____, Riverside

Phone: **2** _____

Listen to Fitness Activity 7

Listen and complete the information about the ATS Office, using **ONE WORD OR A NUMBER**.

Opening times: Monday – 1 _____ 10–5pm,

Friday/Saturday 10 – 2 _____ pm.

Website address: 3 www. _____ .com

26

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Table Completion

Again, this type of task requires you to ‘know your way around’ the table before listening.

A good strategy is to check the headings at the top of each column, and to check the information that is already there so that you can see what type of information is required.

Oh, and don’t forget to check the task instructions for the maximum number of words.

Listen to Fitness Activity 8

Complete the table using **ONE WORD ONLY** for each answer.

Student Name

Work Experience Location

Day / Time of Day

Theresa

Uni 1 _____

Friday 2 _____

Manuel

Mainly 3 _____

Friday afternoons

Henry

The 4 _____ Shop

5 _____ afternoons

27

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Summary Completion

This task is similar to the sentence completion type (See Fitness Activity 3), but is a little more complex. Sometimes you are given a list of words to choose from for the spaces; sometimes not. If no word list is given use words that you actually hear on the recording.

As with sentence completion you should:

- Read the summary and decide what kind of word is missing grammatically.

- Decide too, what sort of meaning the missing word might have (e.g. is it a positive, negative word, a description, a fact?)

- Check the task instructions for the maximum number of words.

It's worth remembering that summary completion is difficult so it is often used in the later parts of the IELTS Listening test.

Listen to Fitness Activity 9

Listen to this short talk about the Dvorak typewriter keyboard and complete the summary. Use **ONE WORD ONLY** from the talk for each space.

SUMMARY

Although the Dvorak keyboard is superior it has not been **1** _____ for two main reasons: the Depression, and **2** _____. Too many people were too accustomed to the QWERTY keyboard. This has prevented improved keyboard **3** _____ for 70+ years.

28

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Diagram Labelling

This type of task is similar to forms and tables in the sense that you need to ‘know your way around’ the diagram BEFORE listening, then you will be more relaxed when listening.

Look at all the information given and what any labels refer to, so that you know more about the topic and about the type of information you will be listening out for. As usual, check the maximum number of words/numbers in the task instructions.

Listen to Fitness Activity 10

Listen and complete the notes in the diagrams. Use **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the recording for each answer.

Before your talk

Choose your topic and

decide 1 _____

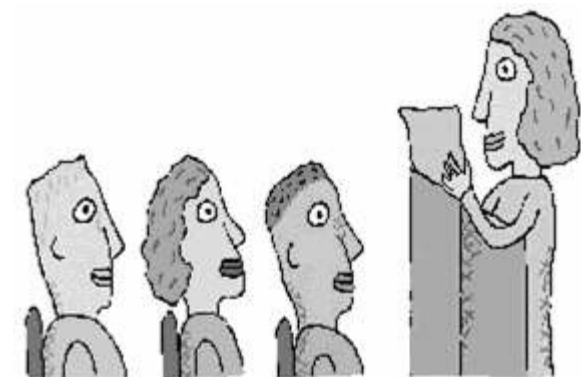
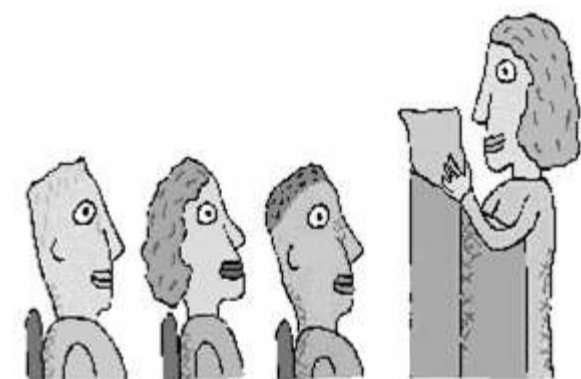
Make 2 _____

you will talk for

on small cards

29

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

During your talk

3

_____ is

vital when talking to an
audience

Practise 4 _____

to help pronunciation

5 _____ your

voice to reach the person

furthest from you

Well done if you completed all the Listening tasks! Tired now?

So are we! OK, just one more fitness activity to go! You can do
it!

30

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

FINAL TASK » Recording Your Answers on the Answer Sheet

Finally we'll give you a little practice at transferring your answers to the correct box on a separate, answer sheet. The answer sheet here is not exactly the same as in IELTS but will certainly help you to become careful about putting your answers in the right box, and more aware of spelling.

Put your answers to all 10 Fitness activities in the Answer Sheet on the next page, in the correct order. You can download a printable Answer Sheet from this webpage:

<http://www.ielts-blog.com/isf-downloads/>

That's the end of our Listening Fitness section, so after transferring your own answers quickly check the correct answers on Page 354, then relax and make yourself some tea or

coffee. When comparing the answers try to understand why your wrong answers are incorrect, and why the ones in this book are correct.

It's important to keep relaxed and sleep as well as you can, before the IELTS test, even if you can't stop yourself from being a wee bit nervous. Everyone who takes the test probably feels pretty much the same.

31

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Listening Fitness Activities

IELTS Success Formula

Practice Answer Sheet (Listening)

Practise transferring your answers from this Fitness section.

TIME LIMIT: 10 minutes

REMEMBER to keep an eye on:

where you place each answer

how you spell any words

the use of abbreviations (only use well-known ones; write in full if in doubt)

word endings (e.g. don't forget the final 's')

any answers that you missed out (write your best guess)

Fitness Activity 1

Fitness Activity 6

1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

Fitness Activity 7

4.

1.

5.

2.

6.

3.

Fitness Activity 2

Fitness Activity 8

1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

Fitness Activity 3

4.

1

5.

2

Fitness Activity 9

3

- 1.
- 4
- 2.
- 5.
- 3.

Fitness Activity 4

Fitness Activity 10

- 1.
- 1.
- 2.
- 2.
- 3.
- 3.
- 4.
- 4.

Fitness Activity 5

- 5.
- 1.
- 2.

Total: 40 answers

- 3.
 - 4.
- 32



IELTS

READING

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Reading Lesson

First questions answered

What if I...? Some problem situations

7 fundamentals to make your Reading Test a success

Techniques for answering Reading tasks quickly & accurately

Reading Fitness Activities 1-13

33

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

READING LESSON

First Questions Answered

Q. What is the General Training Reading test like?

A. During the IELTS Reading test you will be asked to read passages of text, and answer questions on each passage. If you have chosen to do a paper-based test, you will receive a booklet with texts and questions. Alternatively, if you have chosen the computer-based version of the test, you will be reading the texts on a computer screen, and answering questions by selecting the correct answer option with a keyboard/mouse, or by typing your answer.

Q. How long is the Reading test?

A. The Reading test takes 60 minutes. During this time you should finish reading the texts and answering the questions. If you are doing a paper-based test, copy your answers on to the answer sheet **during the same 60 minutes**, because you won't be given extra time to transfer the answers. In the computer-based version you won't need to transfer answers.

Q. How is the Reading test structured in the General Training module?

A. Here is what you can expect to see in a General Training test:

General Training module

Number of texts

Four to five shorter texts,
one longer text (maximum overall
length up to 2750 words)

Text type

Four to five factual texts (e.g.
collection of advertisements,
work-related matters), one
explanatory/analytical text

Number of questions 40

34

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



Q. How is the Reading test marked?

A. Each of the 40 questions receives one mark if the answer is correct, or zero if the answer is incorrect. The number of marks is then converted to an IELTS score on a nine-band scale.

Q. What kind of questions will I get?

A. All the questions (or, as we call them, ‘task types’) will be about the information in the texts; however, the way you need to provide your answers can be different. Following the instructions precisely contributes significantly to success in IELTS, which is why getting familiar with each task type **now** is so important. This will help you concentrate on solving the tasks in the real exam, instead of reading each set of instructions for the first time.

The typical task types are below

Task type

Example

MATCHING PARAGRAPH HEADINGS Questions 1–3

— select the appropriate heading to each paragraph of text.

Choose the correct heading for the **Sections**

A–C above from the list of headings below.

Note: not every heading on the list

may be used.

Write the correct number (**i–iii**) in boxes **1–3** on your answer sheet.

List of Headings

i Problems in Paradise?

ii Benefits outstrip problems

iii Development of dams in Australia

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 1 (Page 60)

35

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

Task type

Example

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS —

Question 4

select the correct answer from three or four options.

Using **ONLY Section C** above, choose the appropriate letter **A,B,C**, or **D**.

Note: sometimes you may be

required to select more than one

Write your answer in box **4** on your answer sheet.
option.

One of the problems of dams is that ...:

A new plant species may change the biological

balance

B they cause more drowning

C they lead to changes in salt levels in water

further down river

D weeds and algae can't survive as easily

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 2 (Page 61)

SUMMARY COMPLETION —

Questions 5–6

fill missing words in the blanks.

Complete the summary below based on **Sections C**

Note: you may or may not be

and D ONLY, above. Choose **NO MORE THAN**

given a list of words to fill in the ONE WORD from the text for each answer.

gaps.

Write your answers in boxes **5–6** on your answer

sheet.

Dams have benefits and drawbacks. For example,

they provide water and **5** _____ but those

residing in the dam's path may have to be

6 _____ .

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 3 (Page 62)



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

Task type

Example

DIAGRAM, MAP OR PLAN LABELLING Questions 7–8

— write short descriptions of up to three

words and/or a number for parts of a

Look at the diagrams of types of dams (**A–D**) and
drawing.

read each dam description below.

Label each description with the appropriate letter
A–D.

Write your answers in boxes **7–8** on your answer
sheet.

DAM TYPE

DESCRIPTION of DAMS

7 _____ Embankment dams use a long-
sloped, massive volume of rock,
gravel and sand, with the finest
materials in the centre to form a
waterproof core.

8 _____ Buttress dams have 45 degree
walls that transfer the force

downwards.

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 4 (Page 62)

37

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

Task type

Example

YES/NO/NOT GIVEN

Questions 9–10

(Identifying Writer's Views) — you will

be given a list of statements and asked to

Do the following statements reflect the claims of the

decide whether each statement agrees

writer in **Section A** above?

with the author's claim or view,

contradicts it, or there is no reference to it

In boxes **9–10** on your answer sheet write

in the passage.

YES if the statement reflects the claims

of the writer

NO if the statement contradicts the

claims of the writer

NOT

if it is impossible to say what the

GIVEN

writer thinks about this

9 The deteriorating situation of the lungfish has stimulated public support.

10 The habitat of the lungfish is now restricted to primarily only two rivers.

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 5 (Page 65)

38

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

Task type

Example

MATCHING INFORMATION —

Questions 11–13

**find a paragraph that has the
information in the question, or**

Which **Section (B, C, D or E)** above contains the
match statements to certain items

following information?

from a list, or

categorise features.

Write the correct letter **B–E** in boxes **11–13** on your answer sheet.

11 Measures for accommodating likely increases in demand for water.

12 Data illustrating current and projected water demand in Queensland

13 Cost benefit gains and low projected impact of the Mary River Dam

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 6 (Page 66)

FORM/NOTE COMPLETION — enter

Questions 14–15

the appropriate information in the blanks.

Using only **Section D** above, complete the notes below. Choose **NO MORE THAN 3 WORDS**

AND/OR A NUMBER from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **14–15** on your answer sheet.

- Overall cost of the dam = **14** _____
- Reduction of **15** _____ = a goal of

building the dam

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 7 (Page 66)

39

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

Task type

Example

MATCHING FEATURES — find

Questions 16–17

descriptions in the text and match them

to people's names or places on a given

Which of the individuals mentioned in Australia's
list.

Dam Story (Part 3) above has these points of view?

Write **A** for Professor Arthington, **I** for Kevin

Ingersole and **P** for Glenda **Pickersgill** in boxes

16–17 on your answer sheet.

Which person (A, I or P) believes that...:

16 ... most printed material about the dam is
really an attempt to promote it? _____

17 ... a large amount of the available
documentation outlines the difficulties experienced

by river life resulting from dams?

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 8 (Page 69)

40

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

Task type

Example

TRUE/FALSE/NOT GIVEN

Questions 18–19

(Identifying Information) — you will

be given a list of statements and

Do the following statements agree with the information

asked to decide whether each

given in Australia's Dam Story (Part 3)?

statement agrees with the passage,

contradicts it, or there is no reference

In boxes **18–19** on your answer sheet, write:

to it in the passage.

TRUE

if the statement agrees with the
information

FALSE

if the statement contradicts the
information

NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

18 QWI accepts that social problems resulting from
purchase of properties have affected everyone.

19 People who have sold their land to QWI may not
leave it for some time.

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 9 (Page 70)

MATCHING SENTENCE ENDINGS

Questions 20–21

**— complete a sentence according to
the passage.**

Choose the best endings for the sentences below.

Write your answers in boxes **20–21** on your answer

Note: there may or may not be
sheet.

sentence endings provided in

20 After the QWI announcement, many Mary Valley

a box. If you need to choose

residents... _____

words from the passage a word

limit will be provided for your

21 Glenda Pickersgill is likely to lose her land and

answers.

property... _____

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 10 (Page 71)

41

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

Task type

Example

SENTENCE COMPLETION —

Questions 22–23

**complete a sentence according to the
passage.**

Complete the sentences below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS OR A**

Note: words to choose from

NUMBER from the text for each answer.

for sentence completion may

or may not be provided in a

22 Glenda Pickersgill was _____ when

box

she heard of the government's dam-building plans.

23 Glenda is trying hard to build _____

for the anti-dam protest group.

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 11 (Page 72)

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS —

Questions 24–25

answer in one, two or three words

and/or a number.

Answer the questions below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A**

NUMBER from the text for each answer.

24 What has been the overall effect of QWI's property purchase on the community? _____

25 In what direction is Glenda's land relative to the proposed dam? _____

Need practice? Go to Fitness Activity 12 (Page 74)

42

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



Task type

Example

TABLE/FLOW CHART COMPLETION — Questions 26–30

fill in the blank cells or blocks.

Complete the diagram below, based on the text about how evaporated milk is produced.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **26–30** on your answer sheet.

See diagram in Fitness Activity 13 (Page 76)

Note: in the real Reading test you won't see task types change after every question or two—normally there is a group of about five questions for every task type.

Q. Where and how do I write the answers?

A. You can write the answers in the question booklet or on the answer sheet. One thing to keep in mind is that all your answers must be transferred to the Answer Sheet before the Reading test ends. Nothing written in the question booklet will be marked, and no extra time for copying answers will be given once your 60 minutes have ended.

Please read the section 'How to Avoid Problems with Your Answers' in this book (Page 14), to make sure none of your answers gets disqualified.

Q. Will I be penalised for writing answers in CAPITAL letters?

A. When doing any 'completion type' task—a task with missing words such as sentence completion, summary completion, note completion, table completion, etc—you can write in uppercase (e.g. 'AFTERNOON') or lowercase (e.g. 'afternoon') letters, as you wish. It is

probably best to choose a particular way, either uppercase or lowercase, and consistently follow it.

43

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

Q. Will I need to re-phrase the information from the text in my answers?

A. With ‘completion type’ questions, use the words just as they are in the text. There’s no need to change them in any way, or to use synonyms.

Q. Should I spell words the British or American way?

A. Both British and American spelling versions are accepted. Whichever you adopt, please make sure your spelling is correct, because misspelled answers may be penalised. For example, you can write ‘color’ (American spelling) or ‘colour’ (British spelling), but if you write ‘calor’ the answer will get 0 points.

Q. Will I be penalised for grammatical errors?

A. Grammar is an important part of the Reading test. Any answer with correct meaning but incorrect grammar may get zero points. A common error, for example, is to use a singular form (‘apple’) instead of plural form (‘apples’), or to use the wrong tense or verb form (‘he go’ instead of ‘he goes’). Such ungrammatical answers could receive zero points.

44

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

What if I...? Some Problem Situations

Q. What if I am not familiar with the text topic?

A. It can happen that the text you get will be on a subject you don't know much about. Good news: this doesn't mean you are in trouble.

The truth is that your chances of success don't change much, whether you get a text on a subject you know lots about, or a subject you don't feel confident about. This is because your personal knowledge and life experience **are not needed** to answer IELTS Reading questions—instead you should use the techniques described in more detail in this book.

The techniques you should apply to the text stay the same, regardless of the passage topic, and the outcome depends largely on your effective use of these techniques.

The rule for dealing with texts on an unfamiliar topic is “Don't concentrate on the words you don't know — concentrate on the words you **do** know”. Even if you don't understand a few words, guess their meaning from the context. You can achieve this by reading the words before and after the unfamiliar word, and using them to guess what the word you don't know means.

Q. What if I am a slow reader?

A. Slow reading is a real problem for some people, and it is often caused by:

- a) poor concentration
- b) limited vocabulary
- c) not enough practice in reading long texts (even in your first language!)
- d) poor reading techniques (e.g. reading single words, not phrases)

Slow reading is **not** an incurable disease. To train yourself to become a faster reader you should:

- a) Reduce the level of distraction in the room where you study. Don't sit in front of a window, turn off music/TV/radio, and ask other people near you to keep quiet while you're studying.

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

b) Learn new words. Every time you practice reading and see a new word, you might try writing it on a flash card (in a sentence!). Spend five to ten minutes a day looking at the flash cards and trying to remember the meaning of each word.

You should also learn how to guess from context—this skill will serve you well in the IELTS Reading test. Guessing from context means using the other words around the word you don't know to work out its meaning, without using a dictionary.

c) Read more. Use newspapers, magazines, IELTS practice tests and other sources of reading texts for practice.

d) Stop reading sentences in a word-by-word manner; instead train yourself to read in phrases. This is a skill that fast readers possess, and that you, too, can acquire with practice. Read words in groups, and soon a change in your reading speed will become noticeable.

Example

The sentence below, when read by a slow reader, would perhaps look like this:

One – of – the – best – known – dolphin – species – the – bottlenose – dolphin – lives – in – every – ocean – of – the – world – except – the – Arctic – and – the – Antarctic – oceans.

Notice how long it takes to read this, when you stop before every word.

Now try reading each of these lines without stopping between words:

– One of the best known dolphin species, –
 – the bottlenose dolphin –
 – lives in every ocean of the world –

– except the Arctic and the Antarctic oceans.

Notice how the speed has increased. This is the right way to read in an IELTS Reading test.

46

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

Q. What if I'm almost out of time, and I still haven't answered all the questions?

A. This can (and probably will) happen to you during the first practice sessions. The IELTS Reading test is time-intensive, meaning there is a lot of reading and answering in the 60 minutes, and anyone who doesn't manage their time can end up in this situation. While it's OK to run out of time at home, in the initial stages of your preparation, try not to let it happen to you during the actual exam. Proper time management will help you avoid such scary moments—please refer to '**7 Fundamentals to Make Your Reading Test a Success**' on page 48.

Q. What if I have a problem with spelling?

A. Spelling answers incorrectly may cost you points, so this problem should be addressed early in your preparation. Apart from the obvious solution—to learn how to spell—which may take months, we've come up with a shortcut. Our experience with students over the years has taught us that some words are **more likely to get misspelled** than others.

Please refer to the 'Famously misspelled words list' at the end of the Listening chapter (Page 17). By learning the correct spelling of most words on that list you will greatly reduce your chances of misspelling an answer in the IELTS exam.

Q. What if I have bad handwriting?

A. Then you should try writing in block letters, not in cursive script. Block letters are harder to mess up than cursive and are easier to read. It is important that your answers are readable—if they can't be read, they can't be scored.

Q. What if I am unsure of an answer?

A. Whenever you are unsure what the correct answer is, you have two options:

Option 1 is to go over the text again, to check your answer is correct or find a different answer.

Option 2 is to guess the answer. Some questions are harder than others, and when there's no time to search the text again, guessing is a legitimate solution. Instead of leaving the answer blank, write your best guess in its space on the answer sheet. There is no penalty for writing incorrect answers, so this can't do any harm—and with some luck you may earn a few points!

47

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

7 Fundamentals to Make Your Reading Test a Success

1. Skim and scan instead of reading word by word

Shocking as it may sound, you do not have the time to read the passages entirely. If you try to read and remember every single word in your question paper, you will run out of time well before even getting to the stage where you answer the questions.

The trick is to read only the important and meaningful parts, and that is achieved by skimming and scanning. 'Skimming' means reading fast to get the general idea, and 'scanning' means looking for particular information. Your eyes should be skimming the paragraphs to get the general idea of each, and scanning the paper like radar, looking for keywords, main points and other important information. It is a good idea to circle or underline names, dates and keywords.

How and when to skim

Although this is not the only way, most students of IELTS-Blog.com reported better results

when they skimmed the text first. Skimming includes reading the title/heading, looking at pictures (if any) and reading the first sentence of every paragraph. Normally this is enough to harness an overall understanding of the text.

Then it's time to read the questions. Not all of them, of course, but the first group. Questions are broken down into groups, and usually there are questions of just one certain type in each group. There is a set of instructions for every group of questions and an example; read them closely before you begin scanning the text.

48

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

How and when to scan

Scanning works best when you have an idea about what you're looking for. When you know what the question is, and you've seen an example answer, you know what sort of information you need to find, and what the answer should look like.

Some questions will require you to scan the text to find the answer; others will require reading in detail. Scanning works best for the following task types:

Sentence/Notes/Table/Flow chart/Summary completion

Short answer questions

Labelling a diagram

Matching features (finding Information in paragraphs)

Why? Because these question types can be answered by finding a keyword in the paragraph and reading around it, and scanning is the way to find a keyword in text quickly.

Always try to guess what information is missing before you start scanning—this will make finding the answer easier.

Try this in action — go to Reading Fitness Activities 6 and 8, to see how it works (Pages 66, 69).

49

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

2. Use the text to guide you to the answers

This part we need you to **read closely**, because it may help you find answers to certain types of questions more quickly.

Answers to some types of questions appear **sequentially** in text. This means that the answer to question 2 appears in the text after the answer to question 1, and the answer to question 3 appears after the answer to question 2. In other words you won't have to go back in the text to find the next answer if you do the questions sequentially—you will always be moving forward.

This is important because with each answered question you have less and less text to search—which enables you to find the later answers in a group more quickly.

Here are the task types for which answers appear **in the order of the passage**:

Sentence completion (with or without a list of options)

Short-answer questions,

True/False/Not Given,

Yes/No/Not Given,

Multiple choice.

When solving these types of questions, mark the sentence where you found the answer. To find the next answer, you will only need to search **after** that mark.

Try this in action — go to Reading Fitness Activities 10 and 12, to see how it works (Pages 71, 74).

Note: when you finish one group of questions and move on to the next group, you may have to go back to the first paragraph and start looking for answers from the top.

50

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

3. Use words from the text

Answers to certain types of questions should be copied straight from the passage, exactly as they are. This is great news for you as a test taker—firstly, you don't need to think of an answer from off the top of your head (if it's not in the passage, if you can't copy it exactly as it is—then it's not the right answer). Secondly, when you copy words you won't have to worry about spelling—all you do is copy them as shown.

The task types that require **words to be copied** from the passage **without changing** anything are:

Sentence completion (without a list of options)

Short-answer questions

Summary completion (without a list of options)

Table/notes/flowchart completion

Diagram labelling

Try this in action — go to Reading Fitness Activities 7 and 13, to see how it works (Pages 66, 76).

4. Read in detail only if you have to

Scanning works fine with some task types—but not all. The trick is to know when you really need to read parts of the text closely. A study that we conducted of IELTS-Blog visitors, helped

us to identify these task types that require **reading in detail** to find the correct answer:

True/False/Not Given

Yes/No/Not Given

Matching Paragraph Headings

Matching Information

51

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

5. Pay close attention to task instructions in the test paper

In IELTS, following instructions is not voluntary—it's mandatory. They define the exact way you should answer, and if you deviate, you may lose points.

In particular, the word limit is crucial, so when the instructions ask you to answer '**USING NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER**', do the right thing and write one, two or three words, and/or a number, but not more. Don't repeat words unnecessarily (if they already are in the sentence that you're required to complete), and don't write two answers/options if they ask for just one.

Note: articles (a/an/the) and prepositions (e.g. in/on/by) count as words.

For more information read the section 'How to Avoid Problems with Your Answers' (Page 14).

6. Know when to move on

Let's face it—IELTS is not a 100% kind of test. In our years of working with test-takers through IELTS-Blog.com, from thousands of candidates we have come across only a few people who

have answered 100% of the reading questions correctly.

When practicing, you may find that some questions are just harder than others and require more time to find the correct answer. This is why there's no shame in putting a question mark next to a tough question and moving on to the next one—in fact it's much better than getting stuck and losing too much time.

If you have some time left after all the other questions are answered, go back to the tough questions and try to answer them. Or, if you're out of time—just write your best guess.

52

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

7. Manage your time

Finding yourself in a situation where there is almost no time left, yet many questions haven't been answered can be very stressful. The good news is that with proper preparation there is no reason why it should happen to you in the actual exam.

Practice answering questions using firm time limits for each text/section. This will help to prevent possible loss of points, caused by spending too much time agonising about answers to questions in the earlier texts.

How to manage time in a General Training Reading test

The General Training Reading test may consist of five or six texts. The texts are divided into three sections which progress in difficulty.

Section 1 can have two or three shorter texts with general information such as advertisements for restaurants, courses, etc. Section 2 is on work-related issues—company policies, working conditions, staff responsibilities and so forth—and can contain up to two texts. Section 3 has the longest, single text.

This is why you should allocate about 15 minutes for completion of the tasks based on the first section, around 20 minutes for those based on the second, and 25 minutes or so for those linked to the final section. If you are writing the answers in the question booklet, transfer each section's answers within the time slot allocated to that particular section.

Before you begin to read, write when each time allocation begins and ends. When your time is up, move on to the next section. Make sure you transfer the answers to the Answer Sheet within the time limit allocated to that particular section. Don't leave the transferring of answers till the very end—otherwise you will be robbing the last section of all those minutes required to transfer your complete set of answers to the Answer Sheet.

If you find it very difficult, almost impossible to complete the first two sections in 15 and 20 minutes (after you have tried and practiced), then consider a different strategy, more suitable for people with **weaker** reading skills. Concentrate on the first two sections and do them more thoroughly, at the expense of the third section. Yes, you may not have enough time to finish all the questions in the third section, but spending more time on the first two sections can help you get more correct answers there. Experiment with these two alternative strategies and find out which one helps you get a larger number of correct answers.

53

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

Techniques for Answering Reading Tasks Quickly & Accurately

TASK TYPE » Matching Paragraph Headings

Technique 1

Matching headings is considered a hard task by some students, but only because they do it the

hard way. Here is the easy way: when you match headings, go in the order of **paragraphs**, not in the order of headings. Go to paragraph 1, look for a suitable heading for it in the list, then go to paragraph 2, look for a suitable heading for it, and so on.

In each paragraph, read the first sentence, and then look for a heading. If you can't find the right heading, read the second sentence, then search the list of headings again. If you still can't find the heading, read the last sentence, and then look for a heading. If still you get nothing, then read the whole paragraph before you look for a heading.

This technique is based on the fact that the first sentence of a paragraph often contains its main point. In many cases reading the first sentence will be enough to find the right heading, but even if you need to read another sentence, this method will still save you time because it doesn't require you to read every paragraph in full. What's more, compared to the other, inefficient way students often match headings—when they go in the order of headings, read each heading and try to match a paragraph to it—our way **saves** you from reading the same paragraph over and over again.

Instructions will tell you when a heading can't be used more than once. In that case, any heading that you matched should be clearly marked as 'taken' on the list (simply by putting a tick '✓' next to it). This will save you from considering it again for another paragraph.

Technique 2

If you come across a tricky paragraph that requires a long time for a heading to be found and even then you are still unsure, use the elimination technique. Move on and solve the rest of the paragraphs. After you've done that there will be fewer headings to choose from, and it will be easier to pick the right one. Even if you end up guessing, with fewer options to pick from, your chances of success increase.

Try this in action — go to Fitness Activity 1 and see how it works (Page 60).

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

TASK TYPE » True/False/Not Given (or Yes/No/Not Given)

This type of task has proven to be problematic for some students, and here is why: apart from testing your English, True/False/Not Given questions test your logical thinking as well.

However with some practice your logical thinking will improve and solving this type of questions will become easier.

Technique 1

The basic rule is that if the statement clearly agrees with text, the answer is True, if the statement explicitly contradicts the text, the answer is False, and if the statement says something that the text doesn't say, it's Not Given. It works in a very similar way with Yes/No/Not Given.

It is also helpful to keep in mind that the answers to True/False/Not Given and Yes/No/Not Given questions appear sequentially in the passage. This narrows down the search for you, because once you've found the answer to question 1, the answer to question 2 will be somewhere in the sentences that follow, not in the preceding part of the text.

Technique 2

When you practice at home, your work doesn't stop after you've answered all the questions. For this type of task there is a very powerful technique—it helps you turn your weakness into your strength.

Once you've checked your answers against the correct ones in your book/sample test, and you know which of your answers are wrong, go back and try to understand exactly **why** these answers are wrong, and why the ones in the book are correct. This is a very important step, as

it enables you to learn from your mistakes.

Then understand why you answered the way you did, what confused you, what tricked you into giving the wrong answer, and try not to make the same mistake the next time. We live, we learn, right?

Try this in action — go to Fitness Activities 5 and 9, to see how it works (Pages 65, 70).

55

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

TASK TYPE » Summary/Sentence Completion (Filling in Blanks)

Technique 1

To make filling in blanks quicker, easier and more accurate, try to guess what is missing. Even if you can't guess the meaning of the word, you can still guess whether it's, say, a verb, a noun, or an adjective, by looking at the words around the gap.

Once you know the kind of word that's missing, it is easier to find it in the passage or in the list of options in a box.

While reading the sentence around the gap, also note what it's about, and use that information when you're scanning the text to locate the paragraph where the answer might be.

In the selected paragraph look for words of the same type that could go in the gap. If a verb is missing—look at verbs, if an adjective is missing—look at adjectives, and so on. After you've found the best candidate for the gap, always read the whole sentence, to make sure it makes sense and that grammatically it is correct.

If you find yourself changing the words from the text, or their form, before writing them in the gap, it means that you've got the wrong answer. In tasks such as sentence completion or summary completion you should be able to find the correct answer right in the text, and copy

it as is, without changing a word.

Technique 2

Sometimes moving on to the next gap will allow you to use the elimination technique. For example, when you have a list of words to choose from, after you've used most of the options and only have a few left it will be easier to eliminate the wrong ones, and pick the right ones.

Try this in action — go to Fitness Activities 3 and 11, to see how it works (Pages 62, 72).

56

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Reading Lesson

TASK TYPE » Multiple Choice Questions

This type of task may confuse you by offering multiple answer options, so your best way of getting the answer right is by 'shooting down' the wrong options.

First, read the question and find the paragraph that is discussing the same topic. If the right answer is not immediately visible, begin eliminating the wrong answer options one by one, based on the information in the paragraph.

Pretend that each answer option is a statement of the True/False/Not Given type, and decide whether each particular answer option is True, False or Not Given, according to the passage. If the answer option is False or Not Given, cross it out—it's not the answer.

Another helpful observation is that the answers to multiple choice questions are located sequentially in the passage. If you've found the answer to question 1, and the answer to question 3, then the answer to question 2 will probably be between them.

Try this in action — go to Fitness Activity 2 and see how it works (Page 61).

57

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

READING FITNESS ACTIVITIES

Improve your understanding of each of the task types that could be used in the IELTS Reading test. Try these challenging Fitness Activities, based on a text of the approximate difficulty of those used in Section 3.

Note: it is best to download and print Fitness Activities, so that you can look at the text and questions at the same time. Download printable Fitness Activities on this webpage:

<http://www.ielts-blog.com/isf-downloads/>

Read the text below and answer Fitness Activities 1–4.

Section A

Measured across the continent, Australia receives an average of only 465 mm of rainfall a year, compared with Europe's 640 mm and Asia's 600 mm. High evaporation allows just 12 per cent of its rainfall to run off and reach waterways. Even so, there's enough water for everyone—but it's seldom in the right place at the right time.

Section B

European settlers solved this problem with dams. The first two—Yan Yean outside Melbourne and Lake Parramatta, Sydney—were completed in 1857. Dam building continued steadily until after World War II, when it accelerated.

Today, 500 large (more than 15 m high) dams store a total of 93,957 gigalitres (Sydney Harbour holds about 562 GL). There are also countless smaller dams, called weirs, on most Australian rivers—8000 in the Murray-Darling Basin alone—and more than 2 million farm dams.

58

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

Section C

Large dams bring quick benefits. They can provide water and electricity, mitigate flooding and create beautiful lakes. But they also have adverse impacts. The first are those on people living in the way of a dam and its lake. They may need to be moved, causing families and communities to fragment. The lake may flood farmland or natural landscape. Many of the drowned river's plants and animals fail to adapt to lake conditions. Alien fish species, introduced into the reservoir accidentally, or for recreational fishing, may further alter the biological make-up of water life, and weeds and algae may thrive in the nutrient-rich water. Downstream, changes in the river's flow and water quality usually cause irreversible effects, often down to the river mouth and beyond. Fish migration and reproduction, siltation and salinity in deltas are altered.

Section D

Once upon a time, these adverse impacts—some of which take years to manifest—weren't really considered before a dam was built. The human need for water, for drinking or to grow food, took precedence. Some people believe they should still. But over recent decades, science has deepened our understanding of natural systems, which we now know can't be broken into discrete pieces, some of which can be exploited and others not. This has given

rise to the idea that the environment itself is a legitimate water consumer, with attendant needs and rights. All this calls for careful study of a river's state and function before it's dammed.

Section E

Australia's newest megadam straddles a gentle valley on the Burnett River, 260 km northwest of Brisbane. Apart from a soupy stain low on its upstream face, the concrete is spotless and dazzles the eye under the sharp Queensland sun. This is Paradise Dam, completed in 2005. Impressive though it may be, Paradise, like other large dams, is a mix of good points and bad. For some people, the bad prevail. High among the complaints has been that the rationale behind it was political. Then there are the potential environmental impacts downstream, especially around the river's mouth in Hervey Bay, which worry people such as commercial fishers and tourism operators.

Source: *Australian Geographic, Issue 89 (Jan–Mar, 2007)*

59

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Matching Paragraph Headings

Fitness Activity 1

The reading passage on AUSTRALIA's DAM STORY (Part 1) has five sections, **A–E**. Choose the correct heading for sections **B–E** from the list of headings below.

Write the correct number **i–ix** below. Choose each heading once

only.

List of Headings

i

Problems in Paradise?

ii

Benefits outstrip problems

iii

Development of dams in Australia

iv

The importance of water to humans

v

How to solve problems with dams

vi

Australia's rainfall profile [Example]

vii

The role of science in the planning of dams

viii

Disadvantages outweigh gains

ix

Meeting Sydney's water needs

1 Section A

vi [Example]

2

Section B

3

Section C

4

Section D

5

Section E

60

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Multiple Choice Questions

Fitness Activity 2

1 Using **ONLY Section C** above choose the appropriate letter **A,B,C**, or **D**.

One of the problems of dams is that:

A new plant species may change the biological balance

B they cause more drowning

C they lead to changes in salt levels in water further up river

D weeds and algae can't survive as easily

2 Using **ONLY Section D** above, choose the appropriate letter **A,B,C**, or **D**.

According to the passage, the negative features of dams:

A were originally given precedence over the demand for water

B were at first taken into account before construction

C have given rise to more sensitivity about the environment

D have led to national studies of river care

3 Using **ONLY Section E** above, choose the appropriate letter **A,B,C**, or **D**.

According to the passage, Paradise Dam:

A has been entirely beneficial

B is situated beyond a valley

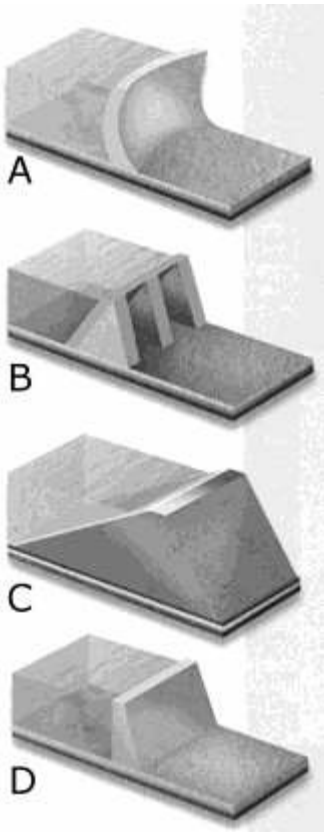
C has provided environmental advantages for tourists

D may have been built for political reasons

61

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com





IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Summary Completion

Fitness Activity 3

Complete the summary below based on **Sections C and D ONLY**, above.

Choose **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD** from the text for each answer.

Dams have benefits and drawbacks. For example, they provide water and **1** _____ but those residing in the dam’s path may have to be **2** _____. The reservoir may **3** _____ agricultural land, and biological changes may include unwanted fish species. In recent years better understanding of nature has been helped by **4** _____. The environment is now seen as having rights just like every other **5** _____ of water.

TASK TYPE » Labelling Diagrams

Fitness Activity 4

Look at the diagrams of types of dams (A–D) and read each dam description below. Label each description with the appropriate letter (A–D).

Dam Type

Description of Dams

Embankment dams use a long-sloped, massive

volume of rock, gravel and sand, with the finest materials in the centre to form a waterproof core.

Buttress dams have 45 degree walls that transfer

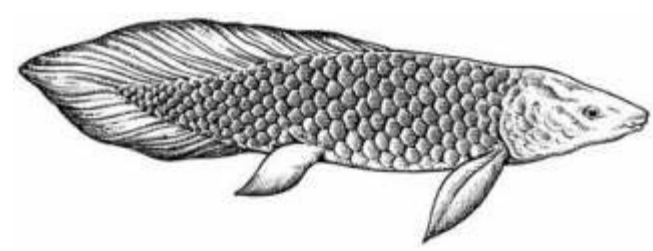
the force downwards.

Gravity dams are thick, massive structures with a

vertical face that can hold back enormous amounts of water under their own weight.

Arch dams have curved sides which redirect a lot

of pressure to the valley sides.



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

Read the text below and answer Fitness Activities 5–7.

Section A

THREATENED SPECIES

But nothing has galvanised public opinion more than the plight of the endangered Australian, or Queensland, lungfish. Among the last of a group that lived 400 million years ago, this once-abundant fish is restricted mostly to the Burnett and Mary rivers. Biologists believe Paradise Dam has had, and will have, serious consequences for it. A fishway was installed to comply with the Commonwealth's Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act), which lists the lungfish as endangered. The Act requires the fish's spawning and nursery habitat to be preserved. Jean Joss, Professor of Biology at Sydney's Macquarie University, says lungfish spawn in slow-flowing shallows with plenty of native water plants. “When it [Paradise dam] is full, it will have permanently destroyed 42 km of lungfish spawning/nursery grounds,” she says.

Section B

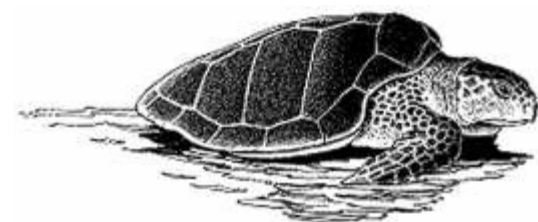
GROWTH AND THIRST

Declining water consumption in most of Australia has stalled dam-building in recent years.

But not in south-east Queensland. There, the population is set to soar from 2.8 million today to 5 million in 2050, and water consumption is expected to climb with it. The region mirrors not only what has happened historically elsewhere in Australia but also what's happening across the world. Look here and you see humanity's past and its future. South-east Queensland consumes about 440,000 ML a year. The Queensland Government says that by 2050 the region will need 330,000–490,000 ML more, even with water restrictions.

63

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

Section C ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR MEETING WATER DEMAND

Prodded by drought but committed to economic growth, the government has assembled a mix of measures to provide the extra water. Among them are recycling, desalination, raising some existing dams and building two new ones – Traveston Crossing on the Mary River, and Wyaralong nearer to Brisbane.

Section D THE MARY RIVER DAM PROPOSALS

Queensland Water Infrastructure (QWI) Pty Ltd would build the dam in two stages. Stage 1, due by 2020 and costing \$1.6 billion, would flood 3000 ha of farmland and 334 properties; Stage 2, due after 2040, would raise the total cost to \$2.5 billion and flood an extra 7135 ha and 265 properties. The dam wall would be made of RCC (Roller Compacted Concrete) at its western end and would merge with an earth-and-rock embankment.

Since one aim of the dam is to limit flooding in Gympie, 20 km to the north, the spillway

would have six floodgates. QWI aims to build the dam to Stage 2 height immediately so that the only extra work needed later to raise the water level by another 8.5 m would be the fitting of higher gates. As with Paradise dam, there was talk of political expediency, but the government insisted the looming water crisis allowed no choice.

Section E

SATISFYING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE MARY RIVER DAM

In its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the project, published in October 2007, QWI maintained the dam was the cheapest option offering maximum water returns. On the environment it was upbeat, saying downstream impacts would be negligible and that it could manage the effects around the dam's footprint such that wildlife might even be better off than now. As in the Burnett, the lungfish is central here. But in the Mary it's joined by the Mary River cod and the Mary River turtle. Since all are legally protected under national environmental legislation, the project needs federal approval. A decision based on the final Environmental Impact Statement is due soon.

64

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Yes/No/Not Given (Identifying Writer's Views)

Fitness Activity 5

Do the following statements reflect the claims of the writer in **Section A** above?

Write:

YES

if the statement reflects the claims of the writer

NO

if the statement contradicts the claims of the writer

NOT GIVEN

if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

1 The deteriorating situation of the lungfish has stimulated public support.

2 The habitat of the lungfish is now limited primarily to only two rivers.

3 Biologists officially consider the lungfish to be an endangered species.

4 The breeding grounds of the lungfish have no legal protection.

65

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Matching Information

Fitness Activity 6

Which Section (**B**, **C**, **D** or **E**) above contains the following information?

1 Measures for accommodating likely increases in demand for water.

2 Data illustrating current and projected water demand in Queensland. _____

3 Cost benefit gains and low projected impact of the Mary River Dam. _____

4 The aquatic life affected by the proposed new dam.

5 The likely timing and sequencing of dam construction.

TASK TYPE » Form/Note Completion

Fitness Activity 7

Using only **Section D** above, complete the notes below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from the passage for each answer.

- Overall cost of the dam = **1** _____
- Reduction of **2** _____ = a goal of building the dam
- **3** _____ to be fitted to enable increase in water level
- Government claimed no alternative due to approach of **4** _____



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

Read the text below and answer Fitness Activities 8–12.

For Mary Valley residents, nothing will ever repair damage already caused to families and communities by the dam's announcement and Queensland Water Infrastructure's (QWI) purchase of properties in the dam's footprint. QWI acknowledges that stress, depression, community disintegration and deep mistrust have resulted but says not everyone has suffered.

By late 2007, QWI had reached sale agreements for 65 per cent of the land it needs before it can build the new dam. Many people who sold have leased back their former properties and may continue to live on them for a time. One who hasn't sold is Glenda Pickersgill. Glenda breeds cattle about 1 km upstream of the proposed dam site. Her house and land would vanish under water at Stage 1. The farm has been in Glenda's family for 30 years and she has owned it for 20. Glenda was devastated by the Queensland Government's announcement about planning to build a new dam.

As a member of the Save the Mary River Coordinating Group, an anti-dam residents' coalition, Glenda has thrown all her energy into getting information about the project into the community and rallying support for the campaign against it.

Anti-dam protest signs dot the Mary Valley. The signs cluster

in greatest quantity and variety at Kandanga's old railway station, used these days only by a historic steam train. There, an airy weatherboard shed has become the headquarters and public information centre of the Save the Mary River Coordinating Group.

67

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

The group's chairman, Kevin Ingersole, 63, is a dynamic, semi-retired management consultant who bought a property in the valley five years ago. At Stage 1 he would lose much of his land. Kevin is bitter but, like Glenda, he diverts his emotions into action. He considers the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and its associated documents to be a magnificent sales pitch for building a dam, and claims that the government has not demonstrated that the proposed dam at Traveston Crossing is the best long-term solution for south-east Queensland's water-supply needs.

QWI's documents certainly attempt to build a convincing case for the dam's long-term economic importance to the region, emphasising increases in gross regional product, employment and business potential. QWI also claims that the dam's long-term cost will be more than \$200 million less than the 'next best' water-supply alternative, a desalination plant. What irks Mary Valley residents most, however, is that water from the proposed reservoir would be pumped out of the area. Of the lake's 153,000 ML at Stage 1, 70,000 ML would go out every year. At Stage 2 the lake would hold 570,000 ML and would yield up to 150,000 ML a year. Professor Angela Arthington says the environmental consequences of such extraction, together with the flooding of a shallow valley, are predictable because they

characterise all megadams in similar landscapes. She believes that thousands of publications document the adverse effects of dams on river and estuarine ecosystems.

68

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Matching Features

Fitness Activity 8

Which of the individuals mentioned in Australia's Dam Story (Part 3) above has these points of view? Write **A** (for Professor Arthington), **I** (for Kevin Ingersole) and **P** (for Glenda Pickersgill).

Which person (**A**, **I** or **P**) believes that

1 ...most printed material about the dam is really an attempt to promote it? ____

2 ...a large amount of the available documentation outlines the difficulties experienced by river life resulting from dams?

3 ...it is vital to distribute material about the dam to the local population. ____

69

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » True/False/Not Given (Identifying Information)

Fitness Activity 9

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Australia's Dam Story (Part 3)? Answer:

TRUE

if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE

if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN

if there is no information on this

1 QWI accepts that social problems resulting from purchase of properties have affected everyone.

2 People who have sold their land to QWI may not leave it for some time.

3 The majority of the anti-dam signs are near Kandanga Railway station.

4 The EIS discusses the sale of Kevin Ingersole's land to the government.

5 QWI's documents predict that regional wealth will grow.

6 QWI consider that the dam will be less expensive than a desalination plant.

7 People who live in Mary Valley are annoyed about the likely loss of water from their area when the reservoir is in operation.

8 Professor Arthington is unsure about the environmental outcomes likely to arise as a result of the new dam.



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Matching Sentence Endings

Fitness Activity 10

Choose the best endings for sentences **1–4** from the **List of Options A–H** in the box below.

1 After the QWI announcement, many Mary Valley residents

2 Glenda Pickersgill is likely to lose her land and property

3 Five years ago, the chairman of the Save the Mary River Coordinating Group

4 Angela Arthington believes that megadams cause flooding of valleys

List of Options

A
to her family during the next thirty years

B

purchased a valley property

C

which are extracted during construction

D

suffered traumatic psychological effects

E

can be repaired by avoiding all the damage

F

was a full-time management consultant

G

during Stage 1 of the dam's development

H

that are characteristically shallow

71

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Sentence Completion

Fitness Activity 11

Complete the sentences below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS OR A NUMBER** from the text for each answer.

1 Glenda Pickersgill was _____ when she heard of the government's dam-building plans.

2 Glenda is trying hard to build _____ for the anti-dam protest group.

3 Kevin Ingersole remains unconvinced that the proposed dam is the optimal _____ to regional water needs.

4 At Stage 2 _____ would be extracted from the lake annually.

72

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Short-answer Questions

Read this job advert and answer Fitness Activity 12.

IS THIS JOB FOR YOU?

Job: Sales Support role in Fast Growing Retail Business

Location: Norwest

Salary: \$40k–\$45k + Super

- Are you someone who loves people, loves customer service, has great computer skills?

- Do you like following procedures, enjoy juggling multiple tasks at once, and love getting things done? Yes ?? GREAT !!

This well established company is looking for a bright, bubbly individual who wants to get an administration and customer service role. This role could lead anywhere for you—Sales, HR, Business Management—the choice is yours!

Oh, and this role is URGENT—so you could be in

your new career next week!

Here are the qualities we are looking for:

Confident, Bubbly, Articulate

Excellent communication skills

High analytical skills, Great attention to detail

You understand the importance of data integrity
and client satisfaction

Proactive, takes initiative, good work ethic

Real people person who loves executing tasks

You need to be proficient with Microsoft Word & Excel.

Sound like you? Then tell us about YOU!!

73

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

Fitness Activity 12

Answer the questions below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS OR A NUMBER** from the advertisement for each answer.

1 In what area of business is the job being offered?

2 What is the maximum base salary of the advertised job?

3 Apart from Human Resource or Management roles, what other future area of work could this job lead to?

4 When could you commence work, if you obtained this job?

5 A suitable candidate would be able to operate which software program?

74

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE » Flow Chart/Table Completion

Read the text below and answer Fitness Activity 13.

How evaporated milk

is produced

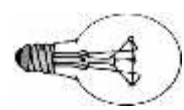
First, the raw milk is transported from the dairy farm to the plant in refrigerated tank trucks.

At the plant, the milk is tested for odour, taste, bacteria, sediment, and the composition of milk protein and milk fat. The composition of protein and fat is measured by passing the milk under highly sensitive infrared lights. After this, the milk is piped through filters and into the pasteurizers where it is quickly heated in one of two ways: the High Temperature Short Time method (HTST) subjects the milk to temperatures of 71.6°C for 15 seconds; the Ultra High Temperature (UHT) method heats the milk to 138°C for two seconds. The two methods increase the milk's stability, and decrease both the chance of coagulation during storage, and the bacteria levels. Next, the warm milk is piped to an evaporator. Through the process of vacuum evaporation, (a pressure lower than atmospheric pressure) the boiling point of the milk is lowered to $40\text{--}45^{\circ}\text{C}$. As a result, the milk is concentrated to 30–40% solids and has little or no cooked flavour. The milk is then homogenized by forcing it under high pressure through tiny holes. This breaks down the fat globules into minute particles, improving its colour and stability. Pre-measured amounts of a stabilizing salt, such as potassium phosphate, are added to the milk to make it smooth and creamy. This stabilization causes the milk to turn a pale tan. Finally, the milk is passed under a series of ultraviolet lights to fortify it with Vitamin D. Finally, the milk is piped into pre-sterilized cans that are vacuum-sealed.

75

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com





IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Academic Reading Fitness Activities

Fitness Activity 13

Complete the diagram below based on the text ‘**How evaporated milk is produced**’.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text for each answer.

Raw milk goes from farm —> plant

Milk tested for smell, taste,

bacteria, sediment

Milk —> filters —> pasteurisers

Protein + fat are measured by

where heated to build

passing milk under infra red light

1 _____ and reduce

bacteria

Warm milk —> next to

Homogenisation occurs by forcing

2 _____ to reduce

milk through tiny holes -

its boiling point

transforms fat into very small

3 _____

Ultraviolet light is used to add

Potassium phosphate added

5 _____

—> makes milk creamy + darkens

colour to a 4 _____

Finally, milk —> pipes —> vacuum-

sealed, sterilised cans

Finished all 13 tasks? You're a hero!

76

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS

WRITING

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Overview

Writing Lesson – Task 1 Letter

First questions answered (3 types of letter)

What if I...? Some problem situations

8 secrets of how to impress your assessor in Writing Task 1

Reduce 8 weaknesses to achieve a higher score

Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Writing Lesson – Task 2 Essay

First questions answered (4 types of essay)

What if I...? Some problem situations

11 secrets of how to impress your assessor in Writing Task 2

Reduce 5 weaknesses to achieve a higher score

Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Rated Samples of Writing Tasks 1 and 2

77



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Test Lesson

OVERVIEW

Writing Test Basics

Q. How is the Writing test structured?

A. The Writing test has two tasks called Task 1 and Task 2, as briefly described below:

Writing Task 1

Writing Task 2

Word limit

150 words minimum

250 words minimum

Suggested time limit

20 minutes

40 minutes

Overall Score

On a band scale from 0–9 with half band scores

Note: Task 2 score contributes a little more to the overall score than Task 1.

Q. Where should I write my answers to the Writing tasks?

A. You will be given two Answer sheets on which you should write your Task 1 and Task 2 responses:

Each Answer sheet has a front and back, with a total of about 40 lines.

The front side of each Answer sheet has some instructions, leaving only half of that page for writing.

The Answer sheets for Task 1 and 2 are almost identical; they differ in colour and titling.

Where to start your answer to both Task 1 and Task 2 is clearly indicated.

Remember, too:

You can do the tasks in **any order**, which means you can decide to do Task 2 first if you prefer, or if you are worried about how best to use the time.

You can ask for additional paper if you need it, in that case all the pages will be stapled together.

78

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Test Lesson

Q. How is my writing assessed?

A. By a real person!

Each task is marked by a trained IELTS assessor who reads your answer and gives you a score

(from 0 to 9) for different aspects of your performance by comparing what you have written with performance descriptions for different score levels in these four areas:

task fulfilment in Task 1 (Did you do what you were asked to do?) or **task response** in

Task 2 (Did you respond to all parts of the task and offer a clear viewpoint?)

vocabulary (How varied, appropriate and extensive is your use?)

grammar (How flexibly and accurately are you able to use different sentence types?)

coherence and cohesion (How well is your answer structured in terms of ideas and paragraphing; how well do sentences link together to build logical movement from one idea to another?)

Note: you may lose marks if you don't write enough words for either answer.

Q. How can I impress the assessor?

A. Well done! This is the **key question** in our book.

There are many ways to manage your answers to each task so that you impress your assessor.

These will be discussed and practised extensively later in this section of the book.

Q. How should I begin my preparation?

A. First, have a look at the Task 1 section on Page 80 and the Task 2 section on Page 118.

While going through our advice for Task 1 and Task 2 you may notice that we give several identical suggestions for both tasks. This is because there are **important principles that apply to both Task 1 and Task 2**. It seems a good idea to be reminded of them so you can learn how to apply them while practising, and, more importantly, in the actual IELTS exam.

WRITING LESSON – Task 1 Letter

First Questions Answered

Q. What kind of task will I be given?

A. For Task 1 you will be asked to write a letter, following some task guidelines which outline a situation and list three, separate features for inclusion. The letter will be one of several possible types:

Type 1 — a letter to a friend in response to some situation or problem.

Example

A friend has invited you to their wedding. Write a letter to your friend:

Thank your friend for the invitation

Explain why you can't go

Suggest one or two possible wedding presents you could send

Type 2 — a letter to an organization or to someone you don't know, perhaps involving a complaint, an invitation, or some other situation that needs attention.

Example

You hired a car and another vehicle crashed into your hire car, while you were in a shop.

Write to the manager of the car hire company:

Say who you are and when you hired the car

Explain what happened

Ask what the company is likely to do as a result

80

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Type 3 — a letter to someone you may know a little but who is not a friend.

Example

Your neighbours are overseas but have offered to let you use their holiday house at the seaside. Write a letter to your neighbours:

Thank them for their offer and ask if the house is available for particular dates

Explain why you'd like to spend some time there

Ask some questions to find out more details about the house

Q. How do I start planning and organizing my answer?

A. You need to read the task instructions carefully to establish the central purpose of the letter (for example to make a complaint, to make a request) and then think up some ideas for the content of short paragraphs addressing each of the three listed parts of the letter, which are given in the task (see the above examples).

Q. What do I have to do to respond well to the question?

A. Your task is to:

identify the central purpose or reason for writing the letter,

write a well-organised letter which communicates appropriately in terms of the type of letter and the relationship with the person you are writing to,

Write in an appropriate and consistent tone (e.g. polite formal, polite semi-formal, or informal),

include ideas or information which address relevantly each of the three listed parts in the task,

end the letter appropriately,

write accurately and clearly,

avoid copying or repeating too many words from the task.

Q. How long do I have to complete Task 1?

A. You have about 20 minutes for this task and must write at least 150 words, **but...**

Be careful not to write too much detail or too many words as this may rob you of time for Task 2.

Aim for a maximum of about 170 words and a minimum of 150.

81

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Q. How can I be sure to use the time wisely?

A. Practise before the test in order to establish a systematic routine, like this one:

What you should do:

How?

Why?

Stage 1 — understand the

By studying the task for one to

To guarantee relevance

task

two minutes especially the

of your plan and clear

three required parts and

structure of the answer

purpose of letter

Stage 2 — plan your answer

Build ideas, perhaps by

To organise your

for about two minutes

thinking of a similar situation

answer into three

from your life, then write notes

relevant, logical

in three sections to fit the three

sections

parts of the task

Stage 3 — write a

By following your plan for

It looks more

systematic answer neatly

about 15 minutes.

organized, well

and with clear paragraphing

structured, clear,

and is easier to read

Stage 4 — check your work

By skim reading; quick word

To pick up any obvious

quickly

count by counting number of

mistakes and to check

words in a typical line and then

approximate number

multiply by number of lines

of words used

(e.g. 10 words x 15 lines = 150)

82

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Q. Is 15 minutes enough time to write 150 words?

A. Yes, with practice.

Practise writing answers to Task 1 questions with a 20-minute limit.

Get used to following the pattern above. Gradually you will be able to do it, and will feel a sense of reduced panic and more effective management of this task.

GOLD STAR ADVICE No. 1:

Planning time saves writing time by making writing time structured and managed.

Q. What is a ‘clock victim’ and why should I avoid becoming one?

A. Some candidates spend too much time counting words or watching the clock and lose connection and focus with the actual task. Practise doing Task 1 questions until you have developed a reliable routine.

Remember, being organised is important because you can then create an organised answer. A relevant, organised answer impresses the assessor because it seems professional even if it still has some vocabulary and grammar weaknesses.

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

What if I...? Some Problem Situations

Q. What if I don't understand one or two of the aspects of the letter?

A. Most candidates understand at least some things. So you should:

- a) Build the letter around the parts you do understand.
- b) Try to guess the meaning of the other parts by imagining that it is a real situation and using the other aspects of the situation to help you.

Q. What if I can't think of enough ideas?

A. Try not to think of the letter as belonging to another universe, culture or only a language test situation. Use your own life and something similar to the letter situation that has happened to you or someone you know. Build your ideas around that real situation. This may also help the tone of the letter to seem more authentic.

Q. What if I don't know how to write a letter requiring me to complain or to explain a problem?

A. Do the fitness activities and study the IELTS Grammar Doctor in this book, pages 98 and 187. These have useful sections on how to:

- a) Select appropriate verb tenses in letter writing.
- b) Build vocabulary which is appropriate to particular types of letter.
- c) Build awareness of tone by using appropriate levels of formality and politeness.

Q. What if I am only half way through and already out of time?

A. This probably means either:

that you haven't organised and planned your **overall answer** enough before writing,

or that your language level is low and it takes you a long time either to think of what

to write, or to express it clearly.

Either way, you have to decide whether to continue on Task 1 or move on to Task 2. Some options:

Option 1 — if the Task 2 topic looks easy, you might give yourself another five minutes to complete Task 1 before changing to Task 2.

Option 2 — if the Task 2 topic looks tricky and needs full planning time, try to finish the Task 1 paragraph you are writing, then move on to Task 2 and allow yourself five minutes before the end of the test to return to complete Task 1. Aim to write 250 words approximately for Task 2.

84

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Q. What if writing about one or two of the letter's parts takes me much more than 150 words?

A. This usually means that you haven't planned and balanced your letter's three central paragraphs well enough. Before writing, you needed to look more carefully at the task and balance the number of ideas. Remember there is not enough time to write in too much detail.

Q. What if I make a mistake, how do I fix it?

A. If it is a mistake concerning **lack of relevance**, cross out the paragraph neatly with one diagonal line, and write a more relevant one. If it is a major mistake, such as

misunderstanding the purpose of the letter and realizing your mistake only after writing a paragraph or two, cross out the first attempt with a diagonal line, then miss a line and start again but with a tighter plan to avoid too much detail. Aim to write at least 140 words in the

time remaining. Don't panic, because you will probably be able to write more easily once you have realized your mistake.

Q. What if I feel so anxious that my mind goes blank?

A. Stay as calm as you can. This is an opportunity to manage your emotions and become stronger. Follow this 'calming routine': close your eyes and breathe systematically for one minute. To do this:

while breathing in, silently count 'one, two, three, four',

then hold your breath counting from one to four again,

and then breathe out counting once more from one to four in your head.

After one minute, return to the question, and make every action systematic and structured.

You have to manage panic and not let it control you. This one-minute 'calming routine' is not time wasted but **time managed!**

85

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Secrets of How to Impress Your Assessor in

General Writing Task 1

Your assessor is a busy person with perhaps 20 Writing tests to score. Perhaps yours is the last one so the assessor may be a little tired. Within the limitations of your English, you need to create a positive relationship with the assessor through the quality of your writing.

GOLD STAR ADVICE No 2: *Your Writing is YOU.*

Everything you write and how you present your writing represents 'YOU' in the

mind of the assessor because you will not meet that assessor in person.

Q. How can I show the assessor that my writing is worth a higher score?

A. There are ways to write a letter that always create a good impression.

A few ways have been mentioned briefly already, but read these more detailed guidelines.

Follow these detailed suggestions and your work will be appreciated by your assessor:

1. Take care with the layout and appearance of your letter

Explanation

A handwritten letter, even a formal letter, is always a personal reflection of ‘YOU’ so you need to take particular care with its layout and appearance, even if you feel under time pressure.

Avoid crossing out words too often and make your handwriting crisp and neat. Leave lines between the start (‘Dear ...’) and the first paragraph, and between each paragraph, and between the final paragraph and the ending (‘Yours, ...’).

Why is this important?

As this is the assessor’s very first impression of your management of the task, you need to communicate a positive feeling of competence and care.

86

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

2. Try to make the purpose of the letter clear in the introductory paragraph, and allow one separate paragraph for each of the three parts in the task

Explanation

The clear structuring of your letter into clear paragraphs makes it easier to read and its relevance to the task easier to establish.

Why is this important?

The assessor can more easily reward you if it is easy to see that you have organised the letter effectively and have made it easier to read and easier to locate the purpose of the letter and its contents.

3. Establish and maintain an appropriate tone in your letter

Explanation

The use of language in any letter reflects the relationship between writer and receiver (e.g. how well you know the person you are writing to), and needs to establish an appropriate level of formality in that culture, in terms of the purpose of writing (for example, the need to be polite even if you are complaining).

Why is this important?

The assessor, as a native speaker, or equivalent, has been deeply immersed since childhood in the culture in which English is used, and is therefore highly sensitive to the subtle use of language in different relationships and for different purposes when writing. Inappropriate tone immediately indicates lack of understanding of culture and seems naïve and low-level.

Example

Task: A friend has invited you to their wedding. Write a letter to your friend:

Thank your friend for the invitation (**Part 1**)

Explain why you can't go (**Part 2**)

Suggest one or two possible wedding presents you could send (**Part 3**)





IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

SAMPLE LETTER

Inappropriate tone

What's wrong?

Appropriate tone

Dear Mr and Mrs Smith,

Inappropriate tone — first

Hi Karen and Jim,

names are always used with
friends.

Thank you for your wedding

Part 1 — content OK but

Thanks so much for the

invitation. It was much

tone (vocabulary/style) too

wedding invite. Sue and I

appreciated by my wife and

formal for a letter to a

were really knocked out to
myself.

friend.

be asked to join you for the

big day!

Unfortunately, attendance at

Part 2 — content relevant

Very sadly, we won't be able

your function will not be

but tone (vocabulary/style)

to make it, because we'll still

possible owing to a prior

too formal, too impersonal

be tied up with that major

engagement linked to an

for a letter to a friend.

project in Brussels, and I'm

overseas project. Being

pretty sure we won't be able

released from this assignment

to get time off to come back

is highly improbable.

just for a few days.

It is our wish to offer you a

Part 3 — content relevant

Of course, we'd really like to

suitable gift for this auspicious

but tone (vocabulary/style)

give you something special

occasion. Your gift list was
too formal and too
as a present to mark your
received with your invitation.
impersonal for a letter to a
super-important day! We've
After some deliberation it is
friend.

had a look at the gift list and
our decision to send you the
after a great deal of thought,
dinner set. It will be freighted
we've opted for the dinner
to you within the next week. It
set. We'll send it next week –
is hoped that it meets your
hope you like it!
requirements.

It is our hope that your
Again, too formal for a
Hope, too, that the wedding
celebration is successful in
letter to a friend.
goes brilliantly for you both.

every way.

Yours sincerely,

Too formal as an ending to

All the very best,

a letter to a friend.

Tom and Sue Johnson

Using full name is too

Tom and Sue

formal for a letter to a

friend.

88

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

4. Write your IELTS letter ‘in good faith’

Explanation

Some candidates find the task of writing an ‘unreal’ letter a little patronizing and occasionally make fun of the task by signing themselves ‘Mickey Mouse’, for example, at the end, or by deliberately creating an absurd or exaggerated situation in the letter as a sort of protest at the test situation. This is not a good idea!

Why is this important?

IELTS assessors are hired to do a job (assessing) with very strict guidelines and undertake stressful training and retraining programs. They take their work seriously as they realise they are often dealing with a key stage in people’s lives. If you sabotage the task you are indirectly insulting the integrity of the assessor.

5. Use a systematic structure

Explanation

Wherever possible, use a sentence explaining why you are writing the letter, then three body paragraphs followed by a concluding comment, with each body paragraph dealing with one of the three parts mentioned in the letter task.

Why is this important?

A well-organised and logically structured letter seems more planned and relevant, and makes the task of reading your letter much easier for the assessor. This has a strong and positive psychological impact on the assessor.

6. Select vocabulary which adds interest to your letter, and flags awareness of tone

Explanation

The writer of a high scoring letter is able to select vocabulary which indicates ability to avoid repetition, and an awareness of which words fit which type of letter and the type of relationship between writer and receiver.

89

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Examples

Informal Letter

Formal Letter

I'm fed up with my job

My job is no longer sufficiently rewarding

I can't make it to the party

I'm unable to attend the celebration

This car you sold me is a lemon

The car I purchased is mechanically unsound

This room is filthy and it stinks

The room needs cleaning and has an unpleasant odour

Your kid is a spoilt brat

Your child seems somewhat over-indulged

Why is this important?

The ability to use a wide range of suitable vocabulary shows the assessor that you are pretty similar to an educated, native speaker, even if you still make a few grammatical errors. This invites a positive evaluation and makes the assessor feel comfortable. Creating psychological 'closeness' between you and the assessor is a good thing!

7. Don't neglect the beginning and ending of the letter

Explanation

Beginning and ending the letter appropriately shows a clear understanding of the appropriate level of formality.

Why is this important?

The assessor's final impression of you and your letter is formed as the letter finishes. If your ending is not appropriate it may affect the assessor's overall impression in a negative way.

90

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Examples

Start your letter with ‘*Dear*’.... + name of the person to whom you are writing – Mr/Ms + family name, for formal letters; **or** first name only, for friends. If you don’t have the name of the person to whom you are writing, then just use ‘Sir’ or ‘Madam’ **e.g.**

Dear Mr. Jones/Dear Ms. Jones (**formal**)

Dear Jim/Dear Sally (**informal**)

Dear Sir/Madam

When writing your name **at the end** remember just to use your first name if you are writing to a friend, but use your full name if you are writing to an organization or to someone you don’t know, **e.g.**

Yours faithfully,/Yours sincerely, James Jones/Sally Jones (**formal**)

All the best,/Best wishes, Jim/Sally (**less formal**)

8. Reduce simple grammar mistakes

Explanation

Simple grammar mistakes seem ‘babyish’ to the assessor, who generally expects you to have mastered basic grammar if you are trying to get a higher score.

Why is this important?

The assessor may think that you should have learnt basic grammar when you first learnt English. Too many basic errors reduce the natural ‘feel’ of your letter and invite a negative evaluation, even if the assessor can understand what your letter is communicating.

91

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



Reduce Weaknesses to Achieve a Higher Score

To maintain the good impression you've already created you need to reduce the kinds of weaknesses illustrated in these examples:

Weakness 1 — Word Forms Adjective/Noun/Adverb

Explanation

In simple terms, **errors that relate to basic rules of English grammar leave a more negative impression than other kinds of mistakes** because the assessor may assume that you learnt about these basic rules when you were younger and have had plenty of time to learn to use them correctly since that time.

Examples of mistakes that can reduce your score

Mistake

What's wrong?

I have a **complain** to make about your hotel

Noun form '**complaint**' needed

The room was not **space** enough

Adjective '**spacious**' needed

It is **obviously** that the room is **vacancy**

Adjectives '**obvious**' and '**vacant**' needed

Your hotel is **certain** overpriced

Adverb '**certainly**' needed

So, **if you still make these basic errors you may give the impression of being like an**

immature schoolchild, even if your own native language causes you to make the errors

because its verb system is much simpler than the English verb system, or its translated word

forms are less varied than those in English. The assessor is guided to a rating by your writing

and isn't influenced by such complexities as 'first language interference'. The IELTS test, remember, is based ultimately on comparing performance with a native English speaker equivalent.

92

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Weakness 2 — Verb Tenses

Explanation

Accurate use of the verb system shows an awareness of how time is marked in English. This is important when writing letters that refer to events in the past, present and future.

Example

Letter with errors

Corrected Letter

I **hire** a car from your company last week.

I **hired** a car from your company last week.

I **use** it every day until today without

I **have used** it every day until today without

a problem. Unfortunately this morning, I

a problem. Unfortunately this morning, I

park it in the car park at the shopping centre.

parked it in the car park at the shopping

While I was in the shop the driver of another

centre. While I was in the shop the driver of

car **has hit** the car but **doesn't leave** their

another car **hit** the car but **didn't leave** their

address. I'd like to know if I **am having** to

address. I'd like to know if I **will have** to pay

pay for this damage when I **returned** the car. for this damage when I **return** the car.

Weakness 3 — Subject/Verb Agreement

Explanation

Making the subject and verb agree is a basic aspect of English grammar. It is learnt at the

beginner stage but a surprising number of IELTS candidates still make errors, and these create

a poor impression.

Example

Incorrect

Correct

Does your holiday home **has** a garage? We

Does your holiday home **have** a garage? We

like to park our car out of the sun as this

like to park our car out of the sun as this

stop the paint from getting damaged. Also

stops the paint from getting damaged. Also

we **doesn't like** mosquitoes so hope there

we **don't like** mosquitoes so hope there

aren't many around the house. Air

aren't many around the house. Air

conditioning **are** also important.

conditioning **is** also important.

93

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Weakness 4 — Run-on Sentences

Explanation

Run-on sentences indicate a lack of awareness of the importance of correct punctuation in showing the boundary between one sentence and another. Assessors get frustrated by this problem as it forces them to re-read sentences in order to make sense of them, and wastes time.

Example

Sentence without

Sentences ended by full stops

boundaries

I stayed at your hotel last week, it was

I stayed at your hotel last week. It was not a

not a pleasant experience and the room

pleasant experience and the room was too

was too small I felt uncomfortable in

small. As a result, I felt uncomfortable in

such a small space.

such a small space.

Weakness 5 — Omissions from Sentences

Explanation

Perhaps because many learners of English are more comfortable speaking the language conversationally, written English is often ‘telegraphed’, which means words are left out but the meaning is still reasonably clear.

Example

Sentence with omissions

Complete sentence

I am writing complain your hotel. I

I am writing **to** complain **about** your hotel. I

stayed two nights in April but service

stayed **for** two nights in April but **the** service

very poor. I’ll give details my concerns.

was very poor. I’ll give **you some** details

regarding my concerns.

94

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Weakness 6 — Not Doing What the Task Asks You to Do

Explanation

The task instructions ask you to write 150 words and to include **three** features in your letter. If you omit one or more of these, or write under the minimum length, you will get a lower score.

Why is this important?

It is important not to lose marks unnecessarily. Failing to follow instructions would penalise even a native speaker of English who took the IELTS test.

Example

Task: A friend has invited you to their wedding. Write a letter to your friend:

- Thank your friend for the invitation (**Part 1**)
- Explain why you can't go (**Part 2**)
- Suggest one or two possible wedding presents you could send (**Part 3**)

Read this letter:

Dear Jim,

How are things with you? It seems ages since we were in contact.

I bet you are getting excited about your wedding. Or scared?

Thanks very much for the wedding invitation. I'm really honoured that you and Judy have included me on your guest list, and the location sounds great. (**Part 1**)

Unfortunately, I'm afraid it will not be possible for me to come and support you both.

I'll be overseas at that time working for my company, and because it is the final part of a key project, I'm not going to be allowed to leave. Of course, this is a major disappointment, but I don't have a choice, other than resignation, and that's a bit drastic. **(Part 2)**

Have a great time on your big day and all the very best for a wonderful future together,

Best wishes,

Tom

Comment – the letter omits Part 3 and is also underlength (135 words).

95

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Weakness 7 — Writing a letter that isn't relevant

Explanation

You need to follow the type of information the task asks you to include, not create a new direction for the letter.

Why is this important?

Again, this lack of attention to instructions means that you don't read carefully enough.

Example (same task as in Weakness #6)

Dear Jim,

How are things with you? It seems ages since we were in contact.

I bet you are getting excited about your wedding... or scared?

I can remember when Jill and I got married. What a day! It rained and the best man

dropped the ring. My mother fainted at the reception and the plane for our honeymoon was cancelled because of bad weather. I hope you have better luck.

(Part 1 — not what the task asks for)

Unfortunately, I'm afraid it will not be possible for me to come and support you both. I'll be overseas at that time working for my company, and because it is the final part of a key project, I'm not going to be allowed to leave. Of course, this is a major disappointment, but I don't have a choice, other than resignation, and that's a bit drastic.

(Part 2 — OK)

I know you have everything already so I'm not going to send a present. Why don't you come and stay with us when you get back from your honeymoon. You know you're always welcome and we have loads of space in our new home.

(Part 3 — not really what the task asks for)

Have a great time on your big day and all the very best for a wonderful future together,
Best wishes,

Tom

Comment — the letter is well written and has an appropriate tone, but two paragraphs are not relevant to the stated task.

96

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Lesson

Weakness 8 — Being too repetitive

Explanation

A letter is an opportunity to show command of synonym and range of appropriate, formal or informal expression. Richness of vocabulary use gives your written style more ‘personality’ and this gives a stronger impression of you (the writer) to your assessor. Being over-repetitive reduces the colour and texture of your letter.

Why is this important?

Varied use of high-level expressions is rewarded in a higher score for vocabulary, but appropriateness is important so avoid word-for-word translation or use of idioms unless you are really confident about if and when they are currently used.

Example

Repetitive version

Improved version

I can't come to your wedding because I'll
Unfortunately, I'm afraid it will not be
be working. It is the last part of a big
possible for me to come and support you
project, and I can't leave. I'm sad because I
both. I'll be overseas at that time working
can't come, but I can't choose to come and
for my company, and because it is the final
I can't lose my job, because that's too big a
part of a key project, I'm not going to be
thing for me to do.
allowed to leave. Of course, this is a major

disappointment, but I don't have a choice,
other than resignation, and that's a bit
drastic.

Comment: over-repetition of 'can't', 'come'; insufficient range of vocabulary use; too many
simple, general words like 'big', 'thing'.

Weakness 9... NO, We're sure you've had enough.....for NOW!

97

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

WRITING TASK 1 FITNESS ACTIVITIES

Before you start

These fitness activities build awareness of key elements of different Task 1 letters.

Work through each section, noting the aspects of the letter being focused on.

When you are practising a Task 1 letter under exam conditions, try asking yourself similar
questions as part of **managing and improving your written response**.

Since you are probably reading this e-book on a computer or mobile device, it would be best
to get some paper to write your answers on.

TYPE 1 TASK » Letter to a Friend (Informal)

Task Question

**You are going away travelling for the summer. You want a friend to look after
your home while you are away.**

Write a letter to your friend. In your letter,

say where you are going

describe your home

explain some of the things your friend must do to look after your house

Write at least 150 words.

You do **NOT** need to write any addresses.

Begin your letter as follows:

Dear _____ ,

98

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Fitness Activities 1–14 (for TYPE 1 Sample Letter)

Activities 1–3 will help you plan your letter:

1 How many main areas will the assessor expect you to talk about in your letter?

a) 2

b) 4

c) 3

2 Can you include some less formal expressions because you are writing to a friend?

a) Yes

b) No

3 What is the central purpose of your letter?

- a) to make sure your friend knows what to do while you are away
- b) to talk about what your house looks like
- c) to describe your trip.

Activities 4–6 refer to Paragraph 1 of the sample letter:

Paragraph 1

How's it going? I've just booked my ticket to Paris, and will be leaving on January 15th.
I'll be studying French cinema for the whole summer. I'm really excited.

4 Note how many different verb tenses are used just in the opening paragraph!

Match these verb tenses with the correct verb forms from the letter.

Present continuous (progressive)

I've just booked

Present perfect

I'm ...excited

Future continuous

How's it going?

Present simple

I'll be studying

99

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

5 The writer starts with an informal greeting, 'How's it going?'

Which two of these other greetings would also suit this type of letter?

- a) How do you do?
- b) Are you in good health?
- c) How are things with you?
- d) How are you doing these days?

6 The writer intensifies the final sentence by using ‘really’, as in ‘I’m really excited’

Which of these adverbs could NOT be used in the same way?

- a) very
- b) usually
- c) so
- d) totally

Activities 7–8 refer to Paragraph 2 of the sample letter:

Paragraph 2

As you know, I’d like you to look after my place while I’m away. Because you hadn’t been to this apartment before, I’ll just tell you a bit about that. Well, it’s on the ground floor of a small group of apartments. It has a large kitchen/diner and a lounge area. There are two bedroom and balcony with a great view of the bay.

7 Which phrases or expressions in Paragraph 2 could these replace?

- a) take care of
- b) As you may recall
- c) a little
- d) flat
- e) when
- f) which has



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

8 Correct these three expressions from Paragraph 2:

I'll just tell you a bit about that

Because you hadn't been to this apartment

There are two bedroom and balcony

Activities 9–12 refer to Paragraph 3 of the sample letter:

Paragraph 3

Line

1 The apartment is pretty easy to look after. You'll need to keep it clean, of course.

2 Also I have loads of rare plants on the balcony, which will need watering. My cat,

3 Ebony, will also need feeding, but you can let him out in the evenings. Oh yes, one last

4 thing. You'll need to pick up my mail, and email me details of any important phone

5 messages.

9 How many different tasks will Jim need to carry out while Susan is away?

a) 4

b) 5

c) 6

10 The verb 'need' is perhaps used a little too often in this paragraph. Which of these two verbs a) 'require' and b) 'have to' could be used in the four places where 'need' is used?

Line 1 _____

Line 2 _____

Line 3 _____

Line 4 _____

Which verb is perhaps too formal in a letter to a friend, ‘require’ or ‘have to’?

101

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

11 Why does the writer (Susan) use the expression, ‘Oh yes’?

- a) She’s agreeing with Jim
- b) She has just remembered another thing
- c) She is excited

12 Which more informal expressions are used in Paragraph 3 in preference to these?

quite _____

many _____

collect _____

task

Activities 13–14 refer to the Ending of the sample letter:

Ending the letter

Hope all this is going to be manageable for you.

See you soon,

Susan

13 Which of these phrases is more formal: a) or b)?

1

- a) I hope these tasks will be manageable
- b) Hope all this is going to be manageable

2

- a) See you soon
- b) I'll see you in the near future

14 Which two of these letter endings would be as appropriate as 'See you soon'?

- a) All the best for now
- b) Yours
- c) I'll be in touch again soon
- d) Yours truly

102

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Complete Sample Letter

Now read the complete, corrected sample letter:

Dear Jim,

How's it going? I've just booked my ticket to Paris, and will be leaving on January 15th. I'll be studying French cinema for the whole summer. I'm really excited.

As you know I'd like you to look after my place while I'm away. You haven't been to this apartment so I'll just tell you a bit about it. Well, it's on the ground floor of a small group of apartments. It has a large kitchen/diner and a lounge area. There are two bedrooms and a balcony with a great view of the bay.

The apartment is pretty easy to look after. You'll need to keep it clean, of course. Also I have loads of rare plants on the balcony which will need watering. My cat, Ebony, will also need feeding, but you can let him out in the evenings. Oh yes, one last thing. You'll need to pick up my mail, and email me details of any important phone messages.

Hope all this is going to be manageable for you.

See you soon,

Susan

(173 words)

Note: To reduce time pressure for Task 2, it's always a good idea to try to restrict your word total for Task 1 to about 170 words.

Well done! You're now at the end of Fitness Type 1.

Take a little break. Go and make some tea, maybe?

103

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

TYPE 2 TASK » Letter to Someone You Don't Know (Formal)

Task Question

A charity organization you recently phoned regarding voluntary work with

elderly people has asked you to support your application.

Write a letter to the charity organization. In the letter,

explain why your personality is suitable

describe any practical skills you have

indicate times and days you are available

Write at least 150 words.

You do **NOT** need to write any addresses.

Begin your letter as follows:

Dear Sir or Madam,

104

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Fitness Activities 1–16 (for TYPE 2 Sample Letter)

Activities 1–2 will help you plan your letter:

1 The best tone for this letter is:

- a) informative and polite
- b) light and friendly
- c) cold and business-like

2 The writer's main purpose is to:

- a) give lots of information

b) convince the organization of their suitability

c) show enthusiasm

Activities 3–6 refer to Paragraph 1 of the sample letter:

Paragraph 1

Dear Sir/Madam,

Further to my telephone call of 15th February, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to support and amplify my application to undertake voluntary work with your organization.

3 Which one of these expressions could replace ‘Further to...’?

a) After

b) Following

c) With

d) Later

105

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

4 What does ‘this opportunity’ refer to?

a) the chance of volunteering

b) the chance to write the letter

c) the chance of a job

d) the chance to phone

5 Which three expressions in Paragraph 1 could these words replace?

a) develop

b) carry out

c) build upon

6 Why is this sentence not suitable for use in Paragraph 1?

‘Thanks for the chance to say some more about myself and to show you I’m the right guy to do volunteer work with you.’

a) It’s too informal

b) It’s not relevant

c) It’s not polite

d) It’s grammatically incorrect

106

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Activities 7–9 refer to Paragraph 2 of the sample letter:

Paragraph 2

In terms of my suitability, I think it is fair to say that I am a sensitive and conscientious young man. In addition to that I am told that I am very patient, sociable and a good listener. All of these qualities should be helpful when actively supporting elderly people.

7 Which two of these expressions could be used instead of ‘In terms of...’

a) Regarding

b) About

c) Talking of

d) With regard to

e) Subject to

8 Why does the writer put, ‘I think it is fair to say that I am...’ and ‘I am told that I am...’

instead of just the simpler ‘I am...’? Choose the best TWO possibilities.

- a) He wants to sound definite
- b) He is not sure of himself
- c) He wants to sound more reasonable
- d) He doesn’t want the reader to think he is conceited

9 Which three of these personal qualities are not helpful if working with the elderly?

- a) tolerance
- b) diffidence
- c) empathy
- d) diplomacy
- e) indolence
- f) diligence
- g) callousness

107

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Activities 10–12 refer to Paragraph 3 of the sample letter:

Paragraph 3

I possess a wide range of useful, practical skills. For instance, I can carry out light repairs to household items, maintain gardens and renovate rooms. I am also experienced at ironing and cleaning. Furthermore, I am a proficient pianist.

10 In formal letter writing tasks, higher level expressions enhance the quality of vocabulary. Which higher level expressions in Paragraph 3 are used in preference to these ‘ordinary’ alternatives?

Ordinary words

Higher level expressions used

‘have’

‘do’

‘do up’

‘good at’

‘good’

11 Which three adjectives make his skills sound more positive, and thus strengthen his application?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

12 Which sentence-connecting expressions does the writer use to join his various skills fluently and logically?

1 _____

2 _____

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Activities 13–14 refer to Paragraph 4 of the sample letter:

Paragraph 4

With respect to availability, I am free on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays most weeks, but only in the afternoons and evenings. When my university terms end I am usually available also on other days.

13 Which are the correct prepositions to use with time expressions?

Write in the correct prepositions:

I am available this month ____ Friday 12th ____ the morning ____ 10 o'clock, but ____ April I'll be overseas. I think I last saw you ____ 2011.

14 Singular or plural? Why does the writer prefer use of plurals, as in 'Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays most weeks', & 'afternoons and evenings'?

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Activities 15–16 refer to the Ending of the sample letter:

Ending the letter

I'll look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

John Grant

15 Which one of these options suitably captures the same tone as, 'I'll look forward to hearing from you,'?

- a) It'll be great to hear from you
- b) Your response will be much appreciated
- c) Can't wait for your reply
- d) Looking forward to getting an answer

16 Which one of these options is the most suitable, formal ending to this type of letter?

- a) Sincerely yours
- b) Yours
- c) Yours faithfully
- d) Yours hopefully

110

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



Complete Sample Letter

Now read the complete, corrected sample letter:

Dear Sir or Madam,

Further to my phone call of 15th February, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to support and amplify my application to undertake voluntary work with your organization.

In terms of my suitability, I think it is fair to say that I am a sensitive and conscientious young man. In addition to that I am very patient, sociable and a good listener. All of these qualities should be helpful when actively supporting elderly people.

I possess a wide range of useful, practical skills. For instance, I can carry out light repairs to household items, maintain gardens and renovate rooms. I am also experienced at ironing and cleaning. Furthermore, I am a proficient pianist.

With respect to availability, I am free on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays most weeks, but only in the afternoons and evenings. When my university terms end I am usually available also on other days.

I'll look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

John Grant

(158 words)

Good job! You've made it to the end of Fitness Type 2.

Still in good shape? We hope so!

You're well on the road to IELTS success!



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

TYPE 3 TASK » Letter to Someone You Know a Little (Semi-formal)

Task Question

Your neighbour has a dog that is noisy at night. You can't sleep.

Write a letter to your neighbour. In your letter,

- describe the problem with the dog**
- explain why it is important for you to sleep**
- outline what your neighbour could do about the situation**

Write at least 150 words.

You do **NOT** need to write any addresses.

Begin your letter as follows:

Dear _____ ,

Fitness Activities 1–13 (for TYPE 3 Sample Letter)

Activity 1 will help you plan your letter:

1 What is the best tone to use in this type of letter?

- a) polite and reasonable
- b) friendly and warm
- c) cold and annoyed

What type of language best helps the tone you chose?

- a) very formal
- b) informal

c) semi formal

112

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Activities 2–5 refer to Paragraph 1 of the sample letter:

Paragraph 1

I am your neighbour, Julia Swanson. I'm sorry to be writing to you in this way, but I have to complain about the behaviour of your dog. Because you work until very late at night, you may not realise that your dog barks constantly from about 9pm until you return.

Unfortunately, this is making it impossible for me to get to sleep.

2 The purpose of the first sentence is to:

- a) Say who is writing
- b) Establish the writer's full name formally
- c) Offer a greeting

3 The purpose of this paragraph is to:

- a) Explain the problem gently
- b) Explain the problem angrily
- c) Complain strongly

4 Find two expressions in this paragraph which give it a more polite tone.

- a) _____
- b) _____

5 In the final sentence what does the word 'this' refer to?

- a) the neighbour's job
- b) the dog barking
- c) the neighbour's late return

113

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Activities 6–8 refer to Paragraph 2 of the sample letter:

Paragraph 2

It is really important for me to sleep properly as I have not been well recently and need to have plenty of rest. I go to bed early but even with my earplugs I cannot get to sleep for several hours because of your dog. My doctor says that this will prevent me from recovering effectively.

6 Find four adverbs in Paragraph 2, write them below.

Note: adverbs often end in **–ly**

In what way do these adverbs help the paragraph to communicate well?

- a) They increase precision and emphasis
- b) They make the paragraph more polite
- c) They make the paragraph more powerful

7 Which words in the paragraph could these adverbs replace?

‘soundly’

could replace _____

‘extremely’

could replace _____

‘lately’ could replace _____

‘fully’

could replace _____

8 Using ‘this’ in the final sentence helps economy and fluency in the final part of the letter. What does ‘this’ refer to?

a) lack of sleep

b) the dog

c) the illness

114

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities

Activities 9–11 refer to Paragraph 3 of the sample letter:

Paragraph 3

I would like to suggest that you keep your dog inside the house while you are at work so that the barking is less noticeable. Alternatively, you could perhaps drop your dog off at a friend’s house on your way to work.

9 Rate these expressions in order of politeness (1 = most polite; 4 = least polite)

Rating

Please keep your dog inside the house

I would like to suggest that you keep your dog inside the house

You must keep your dog in the house

Keep your dog inside the house, OK!

10 The verb form ‘drop...off’ is used in Paragraph 3 to create more informality.

Which TWO of these informal verbal expressions formed with ‘drop’ mean to ‘visit’?

- a) drop off
- b) drop in
- c) drop out
- d) drop round

11 Linking within sentences is important. Complete these two sentences in your own words:

Example: ..keep your dog inside the house **so that** the barking is less noticeable

Eat fewer biscuits **so that** you _____

You should study hard **so that** you _____

115

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



Activities 12–13 refer to the Ending of the sample letter:

Ending the letter

I'd be grateful for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Julia

12 The writer (Julia) uses 'I'd be grateful for your cooperation' because...

- a) She wants politely to encourage the neighbour to accept her suggestion
- b) She wants to thank the man for helping her

13 'Yours sincerely' in this letter could be replaced most suitably by which

TWO of the options a–d?

- a) Warmest wishes
- b) Yours faithfully
- c) Yours
- d) All the very best

116

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



Now read the complete, corrected sample letter:

Dear Mr. Johnson,

I am your neighbour, Julia Swanson. I'm sorry to be writing to you in this way, but I have to complain about the behaviour of your dog. Because you work until very late at night, you may not realise that your dog barks constantly from about 9pm until you return.

Unfortunately, this is making it impossible for me to get to sleep.

It is really important for me to sleep properly as I have not been well recently and need to have plenty of rest. I go to bed early but even with my earplugs I cannot get to sleep for several hours because of your dog. My doctor says that this will prevent me from recovering effectively.

I would like to suggest that you keep your dog inside the house while you are at work so that the barking is less noticeable. Alternatively, you could perhaps drop your dog off at a friend's house on your way to work.

I'd be grateful for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Julia Swanson

(169 words)

We're here again! Congratulations on completing Fitness Type 3!

Great job. IELTS success is within your reach!

117

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

WRITING LESSON – Task 2 Essay

First Questions Answered

Q. What kind of task will I be given?

A. For Task 2 you will be given a task prompt, usually on a social issue, and asked to write a response in the form of a short, 250-word essay.

Q. What types of task prompt are there?

A. These are the **four** main types of Task 2 prompt:

Type 1 — Indicate and Support Your Level of Agreement

In a Type 1 essay task you are required to agree, partly agree or disagree with a stated point of view.

Sample task:

“Meeting someone for the first time through the internet is never a good idea.

Do you agree?”

How to build your answer

Introduction: Introduce the task issue and say whether or not you agree.

Paragraph 1: Discuss the point of view which is opposite from your own (e.g. if you agree, explain reasons why others might not agree or only partly agree).

Paragraph 2: Give the main supporting point in favor of your view, and provide relevant examples.

Note: If you fully agree/disagree - go to **Paragraph 3**; if you only partly agree, proceed to **Conclusion** and summarise your partial agreement there.

Paragraph 3: [Optional] Give a secondary supporting point in favor of your view, provide relevant examples.

Conclusion: Summarise what you have said (without too much repetition).



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

Type 2 — Present a Two-sided Discussion

In a Type 2 essay task you are required to discuss 2 sides of an argument or 2 points of view, and explain which one they personally agree (or partly agree) with and why.

Sample task:

“Some say you should always marry for love; others say that in an uncertain world it’s wiser to marry for money.

Discuss both points of view and give your own opinion. ”

How to build your answer

Introduction: Introduce the task issue and say what your own opinion is.

Paragraph 1: Discuss one side of the argument **briefly** + supporting examples.

Paragraph 2: Discuss the other side of the argument briefly + supporting examples.

Paragraph 3: Give your own view and explain briefly why you hold that view.

Conclusion: Summarise what you have said (without too much repetition).

Type 3 — Discuss Advantages & Disadvantages

In a Type 3 essay task you are required to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a given situation or viewpoint.

Sample task:

“In some countries older people are being encouraged to work longer and not

to retire.

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of working beyond retirement age.”

How to build your answer

Introduction: Introduce the task issue, say what you will address in your answer.

Paragraph 1: Discuss advantages with supporting examples.

Paragraph 2: Discuss disadvantages with supporting examples.

Conclusion: Summarise what you have said (without too much repetition).

119

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

Type 4 — Explain & Offer Solutions or Consequences

In a Type 4 essay task you need to explain the reasons why the situation in the task prompt has arisen, and how it can be solved, or what consequences it gives rise to.

Sample task:

“Family life is suffering because of the pressure of work. Why is this happening?

What is the most important way to improve the quality of family life? ”

How to build your answer

Introduction: Introduce the task issue, say what you will address in your answer.

Paragraph 1: Answer the first question in the task prompt with supporting examples.

Paragraph 2: Answer the second question in the task prompt with supporting examples.

Conclusion: Summarise what you have said (without too much repetition).

Q. What do I have to do to respond well to the question?

A. Your task is to:

Develop your essay's point of view clearly.

Write a well-organised, well structured answer in clear paragraphs each with a clear central topic (i.e. a main idea for you to discuss in each paragraph).

Write legibly and neatly, minimize crossing out.

Include ideas or information which are relevant, and not repetitive.

Write accurately and clearly with a variety of grammatical structures and linking words.

Use a good range of appropriate, formal vocabulary (not just general words).

Avoid copying or repeating too many words, or expressions, especially from the task wording.

120

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

Q. How long do I have to complete Task 2?

A. You have about 40 minutes for this task and must write at least 250 words.

Q. How can I be sure to use the time wisely?

A. As we suggested for Task 1, you should practise before the test in order to establish a systematic routine, like this one:

What you should do:

How?

Why?

Stage 1 — understand

By studying the wording for

To guarantee relevance

the task clearly

one to two minutes, especially of your plan and clear

the task type and central ideas structure of the answer

and your viewpoint

Stage 2 — plan your answer Build ideas linked to your own To organise your ideas

for about two to three

view and response type,

into relevant

minutes

establish paragraph structure

paragraphs; to ensure

clarity of answer

Stage 3 — write a systematic By following your plan for

To make your answer

answer neatly and with clear about 30-35 minutes.

look organized, well

paragraphing

structured, clear,

and easier to read

Stage 4 — check your work By skim reading; quick word

To pick up any obvious

quickly

count by counting number of

mistakes

words in one line and then

multiply by number of lines

(e.g. 10 words x 25 lines = 250)

121

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

Q. Is 30-35 minutes enough time to write 250 words?

A. Yes, with practice.

Practise writing answers to Task 2 questions with a 40-minute limit. Get used to following the pattern above. Gradually you will be able to do it, and will feel a sense of reduced panic and more effective management of this task. It may also be useful to try one or two complete Writing tests within the official, one-hour, time limit so that you learn to combine the writing and time management patterns you have learnt for each task.

GOLD STAR ADVICE No. 1:

Planning time saves writing time by making writing time structured and managed.

Q. What is a ‘clock victim’ and why should I avoid becoming one?

A. Some candidates spend too much time counting words or watching the clock and lose connection and focus with the actual task. Practise doing Task 2 questions until you have developed a reliable routine.

Remember, being organised is important because you can then create an organised answer. A

relevant, organised answer impresses the assessor because it seems professional even if it still has some vocabulary and grammar weaknesses.

122

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

What if I...? Some Problem Situations

Q. What if I don't really understand the issue being described in the task?

A. Most candidates understand at least something. So:

- a) Focus on those words or ideas that you can understand.
- b) Try to guess the meaning of the other parts by using the known words and your own general knowledge of the topic.

Q. What if I can't think of enough ideas?

A. Keep to your planned structure. Sometimes fresh ideas come to your mind as you write.

Alternatively, try to think of other examples to support the ideas you do have.

Avoid repeating your ideas if possible; build the other sections a little more (such as the Introduction and Conclusion)

Q. What if I copy most of the words from the task question in my Introduction?

A. If you copy 'word for word' from the task question when you start, then you risk having these words excluded from your essay's total word count. In addition, the first impression you give the assessor will show your limitations.

Solution: try to paraphrase words in the task to show you have flexibility and to increase the word count of your essay.

Q. What if I don't know how to write formal, essay-style English very well?

A. **Before** the test, do the fitness activities and study the IELTS Writing Doctor in this

textbook, pages 137 and 187. These have useful sections on how to:

focus on topic sentences for each paragraph,

build vocabulary which is appropriate to essay styles, and

build awareness of how to link sentences to develop your viewpoint.

123

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

Q. What if I am only half way through and already out of time?

A. This probably means either:

that you haven't organised and planned your **overall answer** enough before writing,

or that you spent too long on Task 1 and didn't follow a time management strategy to

cover the whole writing test,

or that your language level is low and it takes you a long time to think of and/or express

ideas clearly in English.

In a real test you may have no options, but, before taking the test again:

Practise answering Task 2 topics under strict, 40-minute time conditions to learn how to

maximize the way you manage the time, and how you balance the time given to each

section of the essay.

Practise making quick plans (two to three minutes) so that the overall structure of your

answer, and your main ideas are clear—this saves time later and helps you to relax.

Learn to use one or two useful expressions which help you to start your answer or to

structure paragraphs.

Examples

To start an essay you could use:

‘The problem/issue of _____ is a complex one, but one which is receiving more attention. This essay will suggest that _____,’

Note: be careful to make the standard of the English in the rest of your response at about the same level as any formulaic phrases.

To start a paragraph:

‘One reason why _____ is that _____’, **or**

‘There are two main reasons why _____. The first is that _____’

To start a conclusion:

‘To summarise, this essay has come to the conclusion that _____’

If the problem is caused by anxiety, then being organized is the best solution. Panic can be caused by a lack of willingness to take responsibility for the situation you are in, when you suddenly have no one to help you. This requires better management of the situation. Planning and organization help you to take more control of how you feel inside this stressful situation.

124

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

Q. What if writing just one or two paragraphs takes me close to 250 words?

A. This usually means that you haven’t balanced your planned essay structure well enough or haven’t had enough practice before the test.

Before writing, you needed to look more carefully at the task, and balance the number of ideas before writing. Remember there is not time to write in too much detail, or to include too many ideas. It’s important to complete the essay with a well-balanced paragraph structure. Try to

remember at all times that you are communicating with the assessor, not writing to yourself.

Q. What if I make a mistake, how do I fix it?

A. If the mistake involves **lack of relevance** at paragraph level, cross out the paragraph neatly with one diagonal line, and write a more relevant one. If it is a major mistake, such as totally **misunderstanding** the task and realizing your mistake only after writing a paragraph or two, cross out the first attempt with a diagonal line, then miss a line and start again but with a tighter plan to avoid too much detail. Aim to write at least 240 words in the time remaining. Don't panic, because you will probably be able to write more easily once you have realized your mistake.

Q. What if I feel so anxious that my mind goes blank?

A. Stay as calm as you can. This is an opportunity to manage your emotions and become stronger. Follow this 'calming routine': close your eyes and breathe systematically for one minute. To do this:

count 'one and two and three and four' in your head when you breathe in,
then hold your breath counting from one to four again,
and then breathe out counting once more from one to four in your head.

After one minute, return to the question, and make every action systematic and structured.

You have to manage panic and not let it control you. This one-minute 'calming routine' is not time wasted but **time managed!**

125

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



Secrets of How to Impress Your Assessor in

Writing Task 2

As we noted earlier when discussing Task 1, your assessor is a busy person with perhaps 20 Writing tests to score. Usually Task 2 is marked after Task 1. Perhaps yours is the last one so the assessor may be a little tired. Within the limitations of your English, you need to create a positive relationship with the assessor through the quality of your writing.

GOLD STAR ADVICE No 2: *Your Writing is YOU.*

Everything you write and how you present your writing represents ‘YOU’ in the mind of the assessor because you will not meet that assessor in person.

Q. How can I show the assessor that my writing is worth a higher score?

A. There are ways to write a Task 2 essay response that always create a good impression. A few of these have been mentioned briefly already, but read these more detailed guidelines.

Follow these detailed suggestions and your work will be appreciated by your assessor:

1. Take care with the layout and appearance of your essay

Explanation

A handwritten piece of writing, even a formal essay, is always a personal reflection of ‘YOU’ so you need to take particular care with its layout and appearance, even if you feel under time pressure. Avoid crossing out words too often and make your handwriting crisp and neat.

Leave a line between each paragraph, so that the essay’s structure is very clear. You are trying to make the assessor’s job easier, remember!

Why is this important?

As this is the assessor’s very first impression of your management of the task, you need to communicate a positive feeling of competence and care.

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

2. Try to make your point of view and the direction and structure of your essay clear in the introductory paragraph

Explanation

In Western, essay writing, the Introduction often serves not just to introduce the topic but also to signal the writer's intentions or point of view (For example—whether you agree with the topic statement or not and what you are going to discuss).

Why is this important?

If the assessor knows right at the beginning what your opinion and plan is, then this helps in three important ways:

- a) It makes you appear well-organised (appearing to be a good essay manager is a good first impression).
- b) It enables your reader (the assessor) to predict the likely direction of your essay—this helps the reading to go more smoothly (unless you don't do what you said you were going to do).
- c) It forces you to be systematic and relevant in structuring the remainder of the essay.

3. Establish an appropriate level of formality in your essay response

Explanation

The use of language in any written communication reflects the relationship between writer and the **context** of writing (this means the situation in which the writing takes place and the expectations of the person who is to receive it).

Why is this important?

The assessor, who is usually a native speaker, has been deeply immersed since childhood in the culture, and, more specifically, in the education system in which English is used, and is

therefore highly developed in terms of the subtle choices and uses of language needed for different purposes when writing.

127

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

You should try to build some of these features into your writing to create formality:

Choose formal vocabulary mostly as this seems more professional to the reader.

Avoid using clichés, short forms and abbreviations.

Avoid repetition and over-use of basic verbs like ‘is’, ‘has’, ‘makes’, ‘gets’, ‘does’.

Vary your use of linking expressions.

For instance, instead of writing ‘For example’ all the time, you can write, ‘One example of this is....’, or ‘This is clearly illustrated in....’.

Enrich your display of vocabulary by using adjectives or other expressions to create greater strength in your written ‘voice’, as in:

‘One effect of this is...’ —> ‘One **striking** effect of this is...’;

‘This will lead to...’ —> ‘**Clearly**, this will lead to...’;

‘In contrast to this is...’ —> ‘In **sharp** contrast to this is....’.

Reduce the use of personal pronouns where possible, by using ‘it...’ constructions, as in:

‘It seems reasonable to suggest that...’ (instead of ‘I think that...’), or

‘It is education that is the key to preventing extremism’ (instead of ‘I believe that education is the best way of stopping extremism’).

Use noun groups instead of lengthy imprecise formulations, as in:

‘There is currently an intensification of **mature age unemployment**’ (rather than,

‘Now there are many old workers and they don't have jobs and this is getting worse’).

To summarise — your task is to try to match the assessor’s expectations (as made explicit in the assessment criteria for Writing Tasks) as well as you can. Many younger test takers tend to read less formal English and often feel more comfortable when they speak English. This often limits their vocabulary and reduces their awareness of how to use sentence building to develop and link ideas. The essay produced may then seem immature if it is too ‘chatty’ or too simplistic, or repetitive in style.

128

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

4. Make sure you develop a clear point of view

Explanation

Some candidates can write generally about the task topic but find it difficult to establish a clear point of view or a clear conclusion in terms of their own point of view. This is often related to a lack of experience in either thinking about or discussing social issues, or different cultural thinking styles.

Why is this important?

The clearer your point of view is to your IELTS assessor the better the relationship between writer and reader is in this type of writing. The assessor will be impressed if you are definite about what your standpoint is, even if your overall view is that you are ‘undecided’.

5. Use a systematic, paragraph structure

Explanation

The use of clear paragraphs, each with a clear function or a clear central topic (idea) is one of the foundations of clear essay writing. It is a well-established convention in academic writing.

Why is this important?

A well-organised and logically developed essay helps to structure your thinking and at the same time structures the reader's understanding of the point of view you are seeking to develop and support. It reduces 'scatter' of ideas (meaning, when a writer just adds one idea after another, like a shopping list without establishing any link to previous ideas or any support via development, explanation or exemplification of ideas).

6. Reduce simple grammar mistakes

Explanation

Simple grammar mistakes may seem a little 'babyish' to the assessor, who generally expects you to have mastered basic grammar if you are trying to get a higher score.

Why is this important?

The assessor may think that you should have learnt basic grammar when you first learnt English. Too many basic errors in your Task 2 response reduce the natural flow of your essay for the reader, reduce the sense of maturity in your viewpoints, and leave a negative impression, even if the assessor can understand what your essay is communicating.

129

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

7. Use modal forms or 'cautious language' to express views on complex issues

Explanation

Even if your point of view is clear, social issues are complex and it is therefore difficult to be 100% certain about anything.

Example

Sentence 1

Sentence 2

Family life is terrible today because work is
For an increasing number of people family
full of stress and working hours are too long
life nowadays seems to be deteriorating,
perhaps, in part, because hours of work and
levels of stress in many jobs appear to be
increasing

Comment: The assessor may think that Sentence 1 is a little too strong and simplistic because it is very general and talks about the situation (family life) as if it is 100% fact (use of ‘is’ and ‘are’ generally sound factual). Sentence 2 offers a more considered and cautious formulation, and generates more words.

Why is this important?

The tone of your writing forms part of the relationship you form with the reader. Tone in writing is similar to spoken voice tone. If you speak in a flat tone you may appear bored or sad (and perhaps boring to the person you are speaking to); if your voice has a mix of high and low tones you sound more ‘alive’, more interesting, warmer. If you write in a tone that seems too confident, too sure, without any caution when discussing complex social issues then you may seem unreasonable, conceited, even naïve or crude in your thinking, even if this is caused by

lack of ability in English to write in a different way!

130

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

8. Use formal vocabulary to build range and give a more ‘serious’ tone to your essay

Explanation

The writer of a high scoring Task 2 response is able to select vocabulary which indicates ability both to avoid repetition and demonstrate awareness of which words fit the topic and a formal type of essay writing in this context.

Example

Informal approach

Formal approach

Family life is really bad today

Family life seems to be deteriorating currently

People work too long

Working hours seem to be excessive

Jobs have a lot of stress

Some occupations seem to be generating

increasing levels of stress

Something must be done about it

Action is required to tackle this problem

Government should stop all this or there'll

The government needs to take preventive

be a really bad situation

measures in order to avoid a social disaster

They should do something now

Immediate action seems important

Why is this important?

The ability to draw flexibly on a wider range of appropriate vocabulary convinces the assessor that you share similarities with a native speaker, even if there are still a few grammatical errors. This builds a positive impression and strengthens the psychological comfort that the assessor feels in relation to you (through your writing). Psychological closeness is good.

131

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

9. Use appropriate idioms occasionally to enrich vocabulary

Explanation

Occasional idioms or less usual vocabulary extend the range and add to the 'colour' and 'personality' of your writing (so long as they are added sparingly and appropriately).

Example

Conversational style

Idiomatic alternative

The government must do something about

The government must **grasp the nettle** in
this problem

terms of this issue

Teenage kids and parents often get annoyed

Parents and teenage children rarely **see**
with each other

things eye to eye

It is better to avoid idioms or sayings that seem clichéd and are just used formulaically or
inappropriately, rather than in the service of the ideas being expressed.

It's also **not a good idea** to:

translate idioms from your own language into English, or

use idioms unless you are really confident that they are currently used, and confident
about precisely when and how they are used.

Avoid these over-used idioms or sayings:

‘Every coin has two sides’

‘To put it in a nutshell’

‘Rome wasn’t built in a day’

Why is this important?

Although the basic tone of an essay is formal, in the IELTS Task 2 there is room to be
occasionally less formal, through use of appropriate idiom (as opposed to just simple
conversational forms). This shows the assessor you have a greater range of options in your

choices of expression. However, it must seem natural, not forced.

132

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

10. Use connectors and referencing pronouns to show relationship

between your ideas

Explanation

Ideas need to be connected using appropriate connecting expressions to help the reader follow the way you are building the explanations of your ideas and developing your point of view.

Example

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2

No connectors

Good use of connectors

Marrying for money is rarely a good idea.

Marrying for money is rarely a good idea

Money leads to lack of feeling. People live

because this may lead to a lack of feeling and

in sadness. They are comfortable, of

ultimately the couple may live together in

course. Being comfortable is not enough.

sadness, **even though** they are comfortable.

People also need to feel loved.

This type of comfort is, **however**, not enough
since people also need to feel loved.

Why is this important?

The use of connecting expressions helps the reader and seems more mature. It also provides the reader with a better sense of your ‘voice’ as a writer.

11. Try not to be too repetitive

Explanation

Being repetitive shows your limitations as a writer in two main ways:

- a) It indicates limitations in the range of ideas.
- b) It indicates limitations in the flexibility and range of your vocabulary and grammar.

Why is this important?

Your principal goal is to achieve the highest score you can in IELTS. To do this you need to show flexibility and variety in terms of ideas, vocabulary and grammatical use.

133

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

Reduce Weaknesses to Achieve a Higher Score

To maintain the good impression you’ve already created you need to reduce the kinds of language weaknesses illustrated in these examples:

Weakness 1 — Word Forms (Adjective/Noun/Adverb)

In simple terms, **errors that relate to basic rules of English grammar leave a more negative impression than other kinds of mistakes** because the assessor may assume that you learnt about these basic rules when you were young and have had plenty of time to learn to use them correctly since that time.

Examples of mistakes that can reduce your score

Mistake

What's wrong?

It is **real** unwise to meet on the Internet

Adverb form '**really**' needed

Marrying for love is always **appropriately**

Adjective '**appropriate**' needed

It is **obviously** that family life is **importance**

Adjectives '**obvious**' and '**important**' needed

Work stress is **certain** a major problem

Adverb '**certainly**' needed

So, **if you still make these basic errors you may give the impression of being like an**

immature schoolchild, even if your own native language causes you to make the errors

because its verb system is much simpler than the English verb system, or its translated word forms are less varied than those in English. The assessor is guided to a rating by your writing and isn't influenced by such complexities as 'first language interference'. The IELTS test, remember, is based ultimately on comparing performance with a native English speaker equivalent.



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

Weakness 2 — Verb Tenses

Explanation

Accurate use of the verb system shows an awareness of how time is marked in English. This is important when writing an essay.

Example

Incorrect tenses

Correct tenses

In the past, family life **is** more important
In the past, family life **was** more important
because most people **live** in the countryside
because most people **lived** in the
and spent more time together, working on
countryside and spent more time together,
the land. In more recent times, the nature of
working on the land. In more recent times,

work **is changed**. People nowadays **living** in the nature of work **has changed**. People cities, and **are travel** away from home to nowadays **live** in cities, and **travel** away work. In the future, this trend **is changing**. from home to work. In the future, this trend **will change**.

Weakness 3 — Subject/Verb Agreement

Explanation

Making the subject and verb agree is a basic aspect of English grammar. It is learnt at the beginner stage but a surprising number of IELTS candidates still make errors, and these may reduce your score.

Example

Incorrect

Correct

Couples who wants to get married should

Couples who want to get married should

put love first. If **they doesn't** feel love, then

put love first. If **they don't** feel love, then

their **life together are** going to be unhappy.

their **life together is** going to be unhappy.

Everyone need someone who love them. As

Everyone needs someone who loves them.

a child it is your parents, but when you are an

As a child it is your parents, but when you

adult your **partner become** that person.

are an adult your **partner becomes** that

person.

135

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Lesson

Weakness 4 – Run-on Sentences

Explanation

Run-on sentences indicate a lack of awareness of the importance of correct punctuation in showing the boundary between one sentence and another. Assessors get frustrated by this problem as it forces them to re-read sentences in order to make sense of them, and wastes time.

Example

Run-on sentence

Improved sentence

Stressful jobs affect psychological health,

Stressful jobs affect psychological health.

they reduce energy and motivation as a

They reduce energy and motivation. As a
result, performance is negatively affected.

result, performance is negatively affected.

Weakness 5 – Omissions from Sentences

Explanation

Perhaps because many learners of English are more comfortable speaking the language conversationally, written English is often ‘telegraphed’, which means words are left out but the meaning is still reasonably clear.

Example

With omissions

Improved version

One advantage working past retirement age

One advantage **of** working past retirement

is that keeps you mentally sharp. Those

age is that **it** keeps you mentally sharp.

retire early often bored at home. Their

Those **who** retire early **are** often bored at

brains slow their reactions also slow and

home. Their brains slow, their reactions also

results in depression.

slow, and **this** results in depression.

Weakness 6... NO, We’re sure you’ve had enough.....for NOW!



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

WRITING TASK 2 FITNESS ACTIVITIES

Before you start

The fitness activities in this section offer you quick practice at the different task types you may encounter in the IELTS Writing test. It's also a chance to use some of the tips from the Writing chapter earlier in our book.

With the help of these fitness activities you will build awareness of key elements of different Task 2 essays. Work through each section, noting the different aspects of the essay being focused on. When you are practising a Task 2 essay under exam conditions, try asking yourself similar questions as part of **managing and improving your written response**.

Since you are probably reading this e-book on a computer or mobile device, it would be best to get some paper to write your answers on.

TASK TYPE 1 » Indicate and Support Your Level of Agreement

Task Question

Shopping is dangerous because it makes people selfish, and careless with money.

Do you agree or disagree?

Write at least 250 words.

Fitness Activities 1–25 for Task Type 1

Activities 1–2 will help you to understand what kind of response is required.

1 ‘Do you agree or disagree?’ means that you need to:

- a) choose and defend one of these views (Yes, I agree OR No, I don't agree) based on the nature of your own viewpoint.
- b) write to show you both agree and disagree equally.
- c) do what you like as long as you talk about shopping.

137

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

2 The key word in the task wording that communicates you should write in support of only one view is:

- a) money b) because c) or

Activities 3–5 will help you to plan your answer.

3 How many paragraphs will work well in this type of essay?

- a) 4 (Introduction, 2 body paragraphs, Conclusion).
- b) 5 (Introduction, 3 body paragraphs, Conclusion).
- c) 3 (Introduction, 1 body paragraph, Conclusion).

4 What’s the best thing to do next?

- a) Start writing.
- b) Write down some key ideas to support and oppose your viewpoint.
- c) Decide on your viewpoint and then write down some ideas.

5 What's a reasonable, approximate number of sentences to aim for in the Introduction?

- a) 2–3 sentences b) 3–5 sentences c) 6–7 sentences

Activities 6–10 will help you to build the Introduction.

6 Look at the Introduction paragraph. What's the main purpose of the first sentence?

- a) To start by talking generally about the overall topic of shopping
b) To stop the opinion sentence (2) from being the first one.
c) To raise the topic of shopping and make a 'bridge' into the writer's point of view.

Introduction

Shopping has become a popular leisure activity in many countries in the developed world, but it has hidden risks. This essay **will suggest** that it is indeed dangerous and **is likely to** make consumers more self-centred and less disciplined with their money.

138

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

7 Which two of these expressions could suitably replace 'will suggest' in Activity 6?

- a) will argue b) will say c) will report d) is of the opinion

8 'is likely to' is a useful phrase in Task 2 essays as it carries more caution than the expression 'will' when making predictions about complex problems.

Make more cautious predictions by using 'likely' to complete these positive and negative sentences:

- a) Shopping will grow in popularity. Shopping is _____
b) Shopping will never die out. Shopping is not _____
c) Overspending will cause problems. Overspending is _____

d) Shopping will never bring happiness. It is highly un_____ that _____

9 Which synonyms are used in the Introduction in Activity 6 to avoid copying these three words from the task wording?

people _____

selfish _____

careless _____

10 How could you complete these phrases with 'make' so that even with a different verb the meaning doesn't really change very much?

a) Shoppers are selfish.

Shopping makes _____

b) Consumers are dangerous when they go shopping.

Shopping makes _____

c) People spend unwisely at the shops.

Shopping makes _____

d) Shoppers lack self discipline.

Shopping makes _____

139

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Activities 11–12 will help you to build Body Paragraph 1.

11 Look at Body Paragraph 1.

What purpose does the topic sentence (first sentence) achieve?

- a) It enables the writer to establish that not all shoppers are rich.
- b) It enables the writer briefly to discuss his central point of view.
- c) It establishes that there is a point of view that is different from the writer's.

Body Paragraph 1

Not all shoppers are poor money managers. As costs and bills are increasing constantly, many families have developed excellent **financial skills, enabling them** to pay their bills and shop fairly for every family member. There are also **financial advisers available** to help develop such skills.

12 The writer economises in the building of sentences in this paragraph.

Complete the same sentences using these equally effective ways.

- a) Many families have developed excellent financial skills which _____.
- b) There are also financial advisers, who _____.

Activities 13–16 will help you to build Body Paragraph 2.

13 What is the central idea in the topic sentence (first sentence) which will be developed in

Body Paragraph 2?

- a) selfishness b) reasons c) advertising

Body Paragraph 2

Advertising is one of the key reasons why people think more selfishly. Many adverts depict glamorous lives where certain products are shown as essential to a sense of being successful, attractive or fashionable. Ordinary consumers are persuaded at a psychological level by advertisers and made to feel inadequate if they don't have products such as cosmetics, brand name goods, new shoes or cars. This creates willing shoppers who put

their desire for personal appearance and wellbeing above their sense of community welfare.

140

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

14 A useful sentence construction for explaining something in an IELTS Task 2

is: ‘ _____ is one of the key reasons why _____ ’.

Complete these sentences in an appropriate way:

- a) The desire for a good job is one of the key reasons why _____
- b) The wish for a more exciting life is one of the principal reasons why _____
- c) The hope for more money is one of the major reasons why _____
- d) _____ is one of the main reasons why marriage is still popular.

15 Using advanced vocabulary appropriately helps to raise IELTS level. Which words in Body Paragraph 2 (Activity 13) are used instead of these simpler options?

Simpler option

More advanced expression in Body Paragraph 2

show (verb)

wish (noun)

look (noun)

shoppers

feeling good

not good enough

goods

social good

16 There are quite a few adjectives in this paragraph. In which two ways do they most help the IELTS candidate's performance?

- a) They add variety and interest.
- b) They enable the writer to show greater range of vocabulary use.
- c) They help build the viewpoint.

141

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Activities 17–21 will help you to build Body Paragraph 3.

17 It's helpful to have options when judging the degree to which something has changed.

Example in Body Paragraph 3: 'far less cautious')

Complete these sentences with 'less' or 'more':

- a) Most teenagers read **considerably** _____ than they did in the past.
- b) Women are **far** _____ intelligent than men (You choose!)

- c) Airline fares are **much** _____ expensive nowadays.
- d) IELTS is **considerably** _____ popular than it used to be.

Body Paragraph 3

The advent of the credit card has encouraged consumers to be **far less** cautious about their money. Credit cards are part of the ‘cashless society’, in which more and more transactions don’t require actual cash. **The result is that money becomes** more abstract and, via constantly increasing credit limits, consumers can pretend to have money that they don’t actually possess, and can buy things that they want immediately, but before they have really earned the money to pay for them. **This** often results in having to face constant debt and to a sense of life being lived ‘here and now’ rather than linked to building a stable future.

18 A useful phrase for IELTS Task 2 is, ‘The result is that....’

Which of a, b, c and d could NOT appropriately replace it in Body Paragraph 3?

- a) As a consequence, money becomes...
- b) This results in money becoming...
- c) An outcome of this is that money becomes...
- d) Money becomes a result that...

19 How many sentences are there in Body Paragraph 3? Guess before checking.

- a) 6 b) 8 c) 4

20 ‘This...’ is a helpful referencing word as it prevents the need to repeat an already-used long phrase. What does ‘this’ in Body Paragraph 3 refer back to?

- a) earning money
- b) buying things immediately
- c) pretending to have money



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

21 Evaluate these effects of long sentences as either + (Positive) or – (Negative)

a) Long sentences can aid reading flow as the writer's ideas are connected

more fluently (+ / –)

b) Long sentences put extra pressure on memory (+ / –)

c) Long sentences show more flexible use of connecting expressions (+ / –)

d) Long sentences may reduce clarity of ideas (+ / –)

Review the length and clarity of your own sentences when you practise Task 2.

Activities 22–24 will help you to build the Conclusion.

22 The purpose of this Conclusion seems to be:

a) to summarise the point of view.

b) to offer some new information.

c) to give the opposite point of view.

Conclusion

All in all then, shopping has become all too tempting for many consumers, who want to feel good and feel rewarded perhaps for their ever-busier working lives. Advertising feeds this desire and credit cards feed instant gratification. The results **may well be** harmful for families and for society.

23 The writer adds expressions to intensify the evaluation of shopping and work.

Find the expressions and write them here:

_____ tempting

_____ - _____ working lives

Now put these expressions into the sentences below

all too ever-growing far too never-ending ever busier

- a) It is _____ easy to spend money, and _____ difficult to save it.
- b) Internet crime is an _____ problem.
- c) Working lives are becoming _____.
- d) There seems to be a _____ rise in the price of food.

143

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

24 Using cautious language like ‘may well be’ instead of ‘will be’ makes opinions in an essay of this type seem more reasonable.

Which three of these expressions are also cautious and could replace ‘may well be’?

- a) will definitely be...
- b) could easily be...
- c) might well be...
- d) can't fail but be...
- e) may turn out to be...

25 Now complete your own essay in 40 minutes without looking at the sample essay.

Use the 5-paragraph structure and make sure that each body paragraph has a clear topic sentence (that is, a first sentence which establishes the topic to be developed in the remainder of the paragraph).

144



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Now read this complete sample answer:

Shopping has become a popular leisure activity in many countries in the developed world. **This essay will suggest that** it is indeed dangerous and is likely to make consumers more selfish and less disciplined with their money.

Not all shoppers are poor money managers. As costs and bills increase constantly, many families have developed excellent financial skills enabling them to pay their bills and shop fairly for every family member. There are also financial advisers available to help develop such skills.

Advertising is, however, one of the key reasons why people think more selfishly.

Many adverts depict glamorous lives where certain products are shown as essential to a sense of being successful, attractive or fashionable. Ordinary consumers are persuaded at a psychological level by advertisers and made to feel inadequate if they don't have products such as cosmetics, brand name goods, new shoes or cars. This creates willing shoppers who put their desire for personal appearance and wellbeing above their sense of community welfare.

The advent of the credit card has encouraged consumers to be far less cautious about their money. Credit cards are part of the 'cashless society', in which more and more transactions don't require actual cash. The result is that money becomes more abstract and, via constantly increasing credit limits, consumers can pretend to have money that they don't actually possess, and can buy things that they want immediately, but before

they have really earned the money to pay for them. This often results in having to face constant debt and to a sense of life being lived ‘here and now’ rather than linked to building a stable future.

All in all then, shopping has become all too tempting for many consumers, who want to feel good and feel rewarded perhaps for their ever-busier working lives. Advertising feeds this desire and credit cards feed instant gratification. The results may well be harmful for families and for society.

Note: This sample answer is **not** a model answer but only one of many, possible responses to the task question. It would probably be awarded Band 9.

145

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE 2 » Present a Two-sided Discussion

Task Question

Some say you should always marry for love; others say that in an uncertain world it is wiser to marry for money.

Discuss both points of view and give your own opinion.

Write at least 250 words.

Fitness Activities 1–20 for Task Type 2

Activities 1–3 will help you to understand what kind of response is required.

1 This type of essay requires you to:

a) choose one point of view only.

- b) give your own opinion on both points of view.
- c) talk about both points of view neutrally, then give your own personal view.

2 The main topic is:

- a) marriage as an institution
- b) the basis of marriage
- c) links between love and money

3 The points of view for discussion are:

- a) whether you should only get married because you love someone or whether you should only get married for financial advantage.
- b) whether it's more sensible to get married for love or more sensible to marry for financial benefit given the modern world's uncertainties.

146

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Activities 4–5 will help you to plan your answer.

4 How many paragraphs seems the most logical for this type of essay?

- a) 5 b) 4 c) 6

5 What's the best thing to do next?

- a) Decide which part of the essay will go into which paragraph.
- b) Note some key ideas for the main paragraphs.

c) Write the introduction.

Activities 6–8 will help you to build the Introduction.

Introduction

The issue of love and marriage has been part of most cultures for centuries. With economic uncertainties, pure romance is under challenge, but can still find a way to maintain its vital place in marriage.

6 Read this introduction and choose a, b or c.

The Introduction:

- a) introduces the topic and hints at the writer's own opinion.
- b) talks generally but doesn't hint at the writer's own opinion.
- c) focuses on historical and economic facts.

7 In IELTS writing, candidates sometimes struggle to write economically.

Which shorter phrases in the Introduction are more economical than a) and b)?

- a) Some people have jobs but don't have a trust in the future of their jobs or their money.

Shorter phrase in the Introduction: _____

- b) True and real love has got many things which are trying to make it weaker.

Shorter phrase in the Introduction: _____



8 Choose the best expression to complete a-d using either 'topic', 'issue' or 'problem'.

- a) Poverty is a _____ facing many nations.

- b) Whether or not to have children is an important _____ these days.
- c) Beauty is a frequently discussed _____.
- d) Climate change is one of the most serious _____ in the world today.

Activities 9–12 will help you to build Body Paragraph 1.

Read Body Paragraph 1 before trying the activities that follow.

Body Paragraph 1

Most couples in western societies **would claim that** they still marry for love. **This is because** they are usually free to choose a life partner. Love provides a strong emotional bond between men and women, and continues into adulthood the strong feelings that most children receive from their parents. **It is well known that** a strong marriage based on love gives each partner the strength, stability and emotional security to pursue their careers with confidence. Lonely, unloved individuals, **often seem to** struggle more in every part of their lives.

9 Verb forms that are less direct often seem more mature and considered. Compare:

‘Most couples would claim that they marry for love’ **with**

‘Most couples marry for love’

The first sentence in Body Paragraph 1 seems to hint that the situation is not so simple.

Which three of these verb expressions would achieve the same effect in that first sentence?

Most couples...

- a) want to get...
- b) clearly want to believe...
- c) only get married...
- d) are probably convinced...

e) would no doubt assert...

148

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

10 ‘This is because...’ is a very useful expression and helps the writer give a confident explanation which links to the previous sentence neatly.

Match sentence 1 with its appropriate sentence 2:

Sentence 1

Sentence 2

a) Many women today marry later.

i) **This is because** neither partner can
always have their own way

b) The number of divorces is rising.

ii) **This is because** many couples want
celebrity-style weddings.

c) Getting married is now very expensive.

iii) **This is because** they want to build
their careers first, just like men do.

d) Marriage involves compromise

iv) **This is because** couples get bored too
easily and lack commitment.

11 ‘It is well known that...’ helps a writer to claim a general truth.

Example: ‘It is well known that a strong marriage based on love gives each partner...’

Write your own ending to complete these sentences in a suitable way:

- a) It is well known that women _____.
- b) It is well known that celebrities _____.
- c) It is well known that divorce _____.

12 ‘often seem(s)’ instead of a simple verb stops the writer appearing too assertive.

Compare:

‘Lonely individuals struggle more in their lives’ **with**

‘Lonely individuals often seem to struggle more in their lives’

Change these verb forms using ‘often seem’:

- a) Men are less committed to marriage than women.
- b) Women are more romantic than men.
- c) Couples today struggle to keep their marriage alive.
- d) A child knows when parents are not happy.

149

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Activities 13–15 will help you to build Body Paragraph 2.

Read Body Paragraph 2 before trying the activities that follow.

Body Paragraph 2

At the same time **it cannot be denied that** economic realities have made everyone more practical. Seeking a partner who has good **career prospects** is a wise and sensible thing to do as it provides a better basis for economic stability within a family. So **it is quite likely**

that the modern marriage may unconsciously be based on both love and money, in the sense that a suitable person to fall in love with may tend to be someone with a well-paid job.

13 Writers often use an introductory phrase to strengthen their viewpoint.

Example: ‘It cannot be denied that economic realities have made everyone more practical.’

Add your own viewpoint about marriage to these introductory phrases:

- a) It cannot be denied that _____.
- b) It is certainly the case that _____.
- c) There is little doubt that _____.
- d) It is undeniable that _____.

14 Using noun + noun is a way to communicate information economically.

Example: ‘Prospects of having a career’ = ‘career prospects’.

Put these phrases into a neat, noun + noun form:

- a) A cake eaten at a wedding = _____.
- b) A ceremony in which you get married = _____.
- c) Your partner in marriage = _____.
- d) An opportunity to get a job = _____.

15 Expressing degrees of probability is helpful when making a prediction in writing.

Example: ‘...it is quite likely that the modern marriage may...’

Arrange these predictions from the most likely (1) to the least likely (4):

- a) It is highly likely that

- b) It is very unlikely that

c) It is quite likely that

d) There is little likelihood that

150

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Activities 16–18 will help you to build Body Paragraph 3.

Read Body Paragraph 3 before trying the activities that follow.

Body Paragraph 3

My own view is that love should, as they say, ‘conquer all’. Without love we, as human beings, are lost to ourselves and lost to others. **Most surveys show that** happiness is **based on** strong, positive relationships **not on** wealth. Marriage should be based on a strong, emotional relationship **so that** children will grow up being loved, and the cycle of love can continue.

16 It is useful to draw on supporting evidence.

Example: “Most surveys show that...”

Which of these phrases seem similar in meaning to the example from Body Paragraph 3?

- a) Much research evidence indicates that...
- b) I have a viewpoint which shows that...
- c) Most of the evidence points to the fact that...
- d) I really believe that...

17 It is often useful to make a contrasting point economically.

Example: ‘Love is based on respect, not on wealth’

Choose expressions from the box to complete these sentences:

proximity

commitment taste

reputation infatuation nutrition

a) Marriage should be **based on** _____, **not on** _____.

b) Choosing a university should be **based on** _____, **not on** _____.

c) A good diet should be **based on** _____, **not on** _____.

151

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

18 Using ‘so that’ to express purpose is effective in formal writing.

Example: ‘Marriage exists so that children can grow up in a stable family’

Complete these complex sentences of purpose with your own ideas

a) Children go to school **so that** they can _____.

b) Couples get married **so that** they can _____.

c) Young married couples save **so that** they can _____.

Activity 19 will help you to build the Conclusion.

19 Which 3 expressions below could replace ‘To summarise,...’ ?

a) All in all b) Finally c) After all d) To sum up e) Lastly f) Summing up

Conclusion

To summarise, marriage is under pressure from the individual's desire for financial security, but ultimately love is still the key to a happy, married life.

20 Now complete your own essay in 40 minutes without looking at the sample essay.

Use the 5-paragraph structure and make sure that each body paragraph has a clear topic sentence (that is, a first sentence which establishes the topic to be developed in the remainder of the paragraph).

152

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Now read this complete sample answer:

The issue of love and marriage has been part of most cultures for centuries. With economic uncertainties, pure romance is under challenge, but can still find a way to maintain its vital place in marriage.

Most couples in western societies would claim that they still marry for love. This is because they are usually free to choose a life partner. Love provides a strong emotional bond between men and women, and continues into adulthood the strong feelings that most children receive from their parents. It is well known that a strong marriage based on love gives each partner the strength, stability and emotional security to pursue their careers with confidence. Lonely, unloved individuals, often seem to struggle more in

every part of their lives.

At the same time it cannot be denied that economic realities have made everyone more practical. Seeking a partner who has good career prospects is a wise and sensible thing to do as it provides a better basis for economic stability within a family. So it is quite likely that the modern marriage may unconsciously be based on both love and money, in the sense that a suitable person to fall in love with may tend to be someone with a well-paid job.

My own view is that love should, as they say, ‘conquer all’. Without love we, as human beings, are lost to ourselves and lost to others. Most surveys show that happiness is based on strong, positive relationships not on wealth. Marriage should be based on a strong emotional relationship so that children will grow up being loved, and the cycle of love can continue.

To summarise, marriage is under pressure from the individual’s desire for financial security, but ultimately love is still the key to a happy, married life.

Note: This sample answer is **not** a model answer but only one of many, possible responses to the task question. It would probably be awarded Band 9.

You’ve now completed fitness activities for two task types. Well done.

Now go and get married! ...Only joking!

Get a cup of tea... much easier!



TASK TYPE 3 » Discuss Advantages & Disadvantages

Task Question

In some countries older people are being encouraged to work longer and not to retire.

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of working beyond retirement age.

Write at least 250 words.

Fitness Activities 1–10 for Task Type 3

Activity 1 will help you to understand what kind of response is required.

1 In this type of essay you need to:

- a) discuss advantages only.
- b) discuss both advantages and disadvantages.
- c) discuss disadvantages only, if you think there are no advantages.

Activity 2 will help you to plan your answer.

2 What number of paragraphs seems the most logical for this type of essay?

- a) 3 b) 5 c) 4

154

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Activity 3 will help you to build the Introduction.

Read the Introduction before trying Activity 3 that follows.

Introduction

The retirement age is no longer fixed in many societies. Some workers prefer to delay retirement as long as possible; others choose to leave while still relatively young.

There are pros and cons of prolonging work past retirement age.

3 Good paraphrasing of the task wording is viewed positively by the assessor.

Find the wording that paraphrases:

a) advantages and disadvantages _____

b) working beyond

Activities 4–5 will help you to build Body Paragraph 1.

Read Body Paragraph 1 before trying the activities that follow.

Body Paragraph 1

Some benefit can be easily identified. One clear advantage of delaying retirement is that it enable the maintenance of well-established daily routines. With age regularity seem to become more important psychologically and physically. A second benefit is that most work provide opportunities for social contact with groups and individual. Again, this is beneficial to a sense of wellbeing and usefulness.

4 It is usually a good idea to put all your advantages in one paragraph.

How many different advantages are there in Body Paragraph 1?

a) 1 b) 3 c) 2

5 The missing ‘s’. This writer has started to make a few simple errors. There are five words in the Body Paragraph 1 that need an ‘s’. Write them correctly below:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

155

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Activities 6–8 will help you to build Body Paragraph 2.

Read Body Paragraph 2 before trying the activities that follow.

Body Paragraph 2

On other hand, working past retirement age is not always a good thing. Physically, full time job can be demanding especially these days, and workers of retirement age are starting to lose their physical strength. Secondly, after forty or more years of work, there is less time remaining to pursue those activities and trips for which there was never enough time. Many retired people, for example, undertake ambitious trips worldwide, while they are still healthy. Finally, staying on past retirement potentially robs younger workers of opportunities for promotion, or may prevent young workers from actually entering workforce.

6 Body Paragraph 2 has more ideas than Body Paragraph 1. How many disadvantages can you find? How many of them are supported by examples?

Disadvantages:

a) 5 b) 4 c) 3

Supporting example(s):

a) 1 b) 2 c) 3

7 ‘a’ and ‘the’. The writer has missed two uses of ‘the’ and one use of ‘a’.

Can you find them? Write the complete forms here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

8 The writer chooses some good quality vocabulary to move beyond simple words.

Which words does the writer use instead of these simpler possibilities?

a) hard _____

b) left

c) go on _____

d) stop _____

156

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Activity 9 will help you to build the Conclusion.

9 What does this conclusion achieve? Choose a, b or c:

a) It repeats all the main advantages and disadvantages.

b) It briefly summarises a key point from each paragraph.

c) It offers some new ideas.

Conclusion

Summing up, working past retirement is good for continuity of daily routines but shortens the time available for exciting activities and pursuits during years when health problems may not have surfaced.

10 Now complete your own essay in 40 minutes without looking at the sample essay.

Use the 4-paragraph structure and make sure that each body paragraph has a clear topic sentence (that is, a first sentence which establishes the topic to be developed in the remainder of the paragraph).

157

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Now read this complete sample answer:

The retirement age is no longer fixed in many societies. As a consequence some workers now prefer to delay retirement as long as possible; others, however, choose to leave while they are still relatively young. There are pros and cons of prolonging work past retirement age.

Some benefits can be easily identified. One clear advantage of delaying retirement is that it enables the maintenance of well-established routines. With age, regularity seems to become more important psychologically and physically. A second benefit is that most work **provides** opportunities for social contact with groups and individuals. Again, this is beneficial to a sense of wellbeing and usefulness. Lastly, working for longer enables greater time to build more savings for the post-retirement period. As living costs increase constantly, financial security is vital.

On **the other** hand, working past retirement age is not always a good thing. Physically, **a full time job** can be demanding especially these days, and workers of retirement age are starting to lose their physical strength. Secondly, after forty or more years of work, there is less time remaining to pursue those activities and trips for which there was never enough time. Many retired people, for example, undertake ambitious trips worldwide, while they are still healthy. Finally, staying on past retirement potentially robs younger workers of opportunities for promotion, or may prevent young workers from actually entering **the workforce**.

Summing up, working past retirement is good for continuity of daily routines but shortens the time available for exciting leisure activities and pursuits during years when health problems may not yet have surfaced.

Note: This sample answer is **not** a model answer but only one of many, possible responses to the task question. It would probably be awarded Band 8.5 (grammar slightly below Band 9).

158

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

TASK TYPE 4 » Explain & Offer Solutions or Consequences

Task Question

Family life is suffering because of the pressure of work.

Why is this happening?

What is the most important way to improve the quality of family life?"

Write at least 250 words.

Fitness Activities 1–8 for Task Type 4

Activity 1 will help you to understand what kind of response is required.

1 In this task type you should:

- a) Say whether you agree or not with the first statement.
- b) Explain why the situation exists, and what to do to make the situation better.
- c) Talk about ways in which work pressure is increasing and how to improve this problem.

Activities 2–3 will help you to plan your answer.

2 How many paragraphs should you aim for between the Introduction and the Conclusion?

- a) 3 b) 1 c) 2

159

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

3 Imagine you are answering this question.

Write down some ideas under these two headings:

Why is family life suffering?

Most important way to improve family life

Activity 4 will help you to build the Introduction.

Read the Introduction before trying Activity 4 that follows.

Introduction

In many countries both husbands and wives work full time. Unfortunately, this sometimes means that they have less time to spend with their children and may have to put even very young children into care. This essay will seek to offer reasons for this phenomenon and suggest the key to making family life better.

4 The writer avoids copying words from the task too closely. Which phrases replace these from the task question?

In the task question

In the Introduction

a) to say why this is happening

b) the most important way to improve

the quality of family life

160

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Activity 5 will help you to build Body Paragraph 1.

Read Body Paragraph 1 before trying Activity 5 that follows.

Body Paragraph 1

There is a range of reasons why the deterioration in family life can be linked to the work

situation. **In the first place**, employers are becoming **so** cost conscious **that** they reduce their workforces as much as they can to reduce costs. **Consequently**, the other workers then may have to work longer hours to cover an increased workload. **Similarly**, workers often feel pressure to get better qualifications in order to remain employable. **As a result**, they enrol for part-time courses which then have to be completed in their leisure time, **thus** robbing them of valuable hours with their children. **Finally**, it seems that work is speeding up. **In other words**, electronic technology saves time in some ways, but increases management's expectations of what employees can be expected to achieve within a working day. **This can mean that** workers have to take work home in order to keep up. **Taken together**, such issues build pressure at home and families spend less time together.

5 Linking expressions. Match each linking expression on the left with one from Body Paragraph 1 on the right that has a similar meaning or function.

Alternative expressions

Expressions from Body Paragraph 1

a) First of all,...

In other words

b) Lastly,...

Taken together

c) All in all...

This can mean that

d) So...

In the first place

e) In the same way,...

Consequently

f) Thereby...

Similarly

g) Putting it another way...

so.... that

h) The result of this is that...

As a result

i) such that...

Finally

j) This can lead to a situation in which...

thus

161

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Activity 6 will help you to build Body Paragraph 2.

Read Body Paragraph 2 before trying Activity 6 that follows.

Paragraph 2

Line

1

There is only one real key to changing the situation. This would involve a big change

2

in social values such that the family and the upbringing of children would be viewed

3

by governments and companies as the biggest social task. Then, work practices and

4

government policies would be built around this good value. As a result workers would

5

be protected and given good time for the big role of socialisation and the building of

6

strong, loving and good relationships with their children.

6 Improve the level of the vocabulary. The writer has missed an opportunity here to lift the level of vocabulary. Which basic words in the paragraph could these replace?

Alternative higher level expression

Word and line number in Body Paragraph 2

a) fundamental

b) most significant

c) vital

d) sufficient

e) empathetic

Activities 7–8 will help you to build the Conclusion.

7 Using 'this' in essays is a good way of making connections economically as a writer.

What do the following uses in the Conclusion refer back to?

'...and **this** is reducing shared family time'

a) What is reducing shared family time? _____

'A major change in social values is the key to changing **this situation**'.

b) What is the situation? _____

Conclusion

To conclude, economic pressures are leading to harder and longer work and **this** is reducing shared family time. A major change in social values is the key to changing **this situation**.

162

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

8 Write a conclusion of your own to this essay in this box. Try to use only two or three sentences.

163

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities

Now read this complete sample answer:

In many countries both husbands and wives work full time. Unfortunately, this sometimes means that they have less time to spend with their children and may have to put even very young children into care. This essay will seek to offer reasons for this phenomenon and suggest the key to making family life better.

There is a range of reasons why the deterioration in family life can be linked to the work situation. In the first place, employers are becoming so cost conscious that they reduce their workforces as much as they can to reduce costs. Consequently, the other workers then may have to work longer hours to cover an increased workload. Similarly, workers often feel pressure to get better qualifications in order to remain employable. As a result, they enrol for part-time courses which then have to be completed in their leisure time, thus robbing them of valuable hours with their children. Finally, it seems that work is speeding up. In other words, electronic technology saves time in some ways, but increases management's expectations of what employees can be expected to achieve within a working day. This can mean that workers have to take work home in order to keep up. Taken together, such issues build pressure at home and families spend less time together.

There is only one real key to changing the situation. This would involve a **big** change in social values such that the family and the upbringing of children would be viewed by governments and companies as the **biggest** social task. Then, work practices and government policies would be built around this **good** value. As a result workers would be protected and given **good** time for the **big** role of socialisation and the building of strong, loving and **good** relationships with their children.

To conclude, economic pressures are leading to harder and longer work and this is reducing shared family time. A major change in social values is the key to changing this situation.

Note: This sample answer is **not** a model answer but only one of many, possible

responses to the task question. It would probably be awarded Band 8.5 (**vocabulary** slightly lower than Band 9).

You should now go and write some Task 2 essays under test conditions!

On second thoughts, go and have a nice hot bath or some strawberries, or both! Do some more practice later!

164

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Rated Sample

WRITING TASK 1 – RATED SAMPLE

As you may know, IELTS writing task 1s are marked using band descriptors in four categories: **Task Achievement, Coherence and Cohesion, Lexical Resource, and Grammatical Range and Accuracy**. You can find the publicly available performance descriptors on the official IELTS website: www.ielts.org.

Task Question

You are going away travelling for the summer. A friend is going to look after your house while you are away.

Write a letter to your friend. In your letter,

say where are you going

describe your house

explain some of the things your friend must do to look after your house

Write at least 150 words.

The sample answer that follows was written by an IELTS candidate. It has been analysed to help you understand what score it might be awarded in each category and some reasons

why.

165

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Rated Sample

Analysing Task Achievement

Dear Jen,

I'm going off for vacation in Australia for the summer. I really need someone to look after my house and I hope that you could do me a favor. I will travel to travel to Perth for one week and please take care of my house when I'm abroad.

As you know my house is located at Centre Villa. There are only a few houses there, therefore it is easy to spot my house. My house is number 22, Lot 7 with orange color paint and grey wooden gate. You will notice there are a lot of trees surrounding my house. It is the only house with bright color painting which is very noticeable.

While I'm away from home, I wish that you could help me to take care of my cats – Papai and Babai. I will get ready the canned cat food and you easily find it in the kitchen. Please remember to switch on the light in the evening as I'm worry that it might attract thieves if the house is too dark.

I'm happy for your help. I'll enjoy my holiday and of course I won't forget to buy you some souvenir as a return of your hard work to take care of my house.

See you soon,

With love

Jessie

Analysis: This letter follows the task requirements quite well by including all three, required parts of the letter but perhaps the first part (the destination of the holiday) is insufficiently developed. The purpose of the letter is reasonably clear from the first paragraph. The style and tone of the letter seem suitable for a written communication between two friends.

Impression score for Task Achievement: This letter seems to be between 6 and 7 level.

166

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Rated Sample

Analysing Coherence and Cohesion

Dear Jen,

I'm going off for vacation in Australia for the summer. [?] I really need someone to look after my house [and] I hope that you could do me a favor. I will travel to travel to Perth for one week [and] please take care of my house [when] I'm abroad.

[As you know] my house is located at Centre Villa. There are only a few houses there, [therefore] it is easy to spot my house. My house is number 22, Lot 7 with orange color paint and grey wooden gate. You will notice there are a lot of trees surrounding my house. It is the only house with bright color painting [which] is very noticeable.

[While] I'm away from home, I wish that you could help me to take care of my cats – Papai and Babai. I will get ready the canned cat food and you easily find it in the kitchen. Please remember to switch on the light in the evening [as] I'm worry that it might attract thieves [if] the house is too dark.

I'm happy for your help. I'll enjoy my holiday [and of course] I won't forget to buy you some souvenir as a return of your hard work to take care of my house.

See you soon,

With love

Jessie

Note: Brackets [] show the connecting expressions.

Analysis: Most connecting expressions are appropriate but one is not ('and' in line 2), and one linking word is needed ([?] in line 1). Coherence is concerned with the effectiveness of what the essay is trying to communicate. The letter is clear and structured into clear paragraphs. The use of references (words like 'it' or 'this') is rather limited, especially in paragraph 2 so the result is a little too much repetition (of words like 'house' for example). Topic sentences (that is, the first sentence in the paragraph which serves to establish what the paragraph will talk about) are reasonably effective. As is often the case with informal letter writing, use of formal connecting expressions is less prominent, and less required cohesively. The candidate uses cohesion effectively but occasionally misses opportunities to aid flow by more extensive use. Using short sentences reduces a sense of friendliness.

Impression score for Coherence and Cohesion: This letter seems to be between 6 and 7.

167

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Rated Sample

Analysing Lexical Resource

Dear Jen,

*I'm going off for vacation in Australia for the summer. I really need someone to look after my house and I hope that you could do me a **flavor** (#1). I will travel to travel to Perth for one week [and] please take care of my house when I'm abroad.*

*As you **know** (#2) my house is located at Centre Villa. There are only a few houses there, therefore it is easy to spot my house. My house is number 22, Lot 7 with orange color paint and grey wooden gate. You will notice there are a lot of trees surrounding my house. It is the only house with bright color painting [which] is very noticeable.*

*While I'm away from home, **I wish** (#3) that you could help me to take care of my cats – Papai and Babai. I will get ready the canned cat food and you easily find it in the kitchen. Please remember to switch on the light in the evening as I'm worry that it might attract thieves if the house is too dark.*

***I'm happy** (#4) for your help. I'll enjoy my holiday and of course I won't forget to buy you some souvenir as a return of your hard work to take care of my house.*

See you soon,

With love

Jessie

Note: ‘#’ (+ **number**) is used to mark each vocabulary item that seems faulty or inappropriate.

Analysis: As can be seen from the small number of vocabulary problems, this area of writing is quite effective. There is occasional idiomatic use, as in ‘spot’ and many words are appropriate choices for a letter to a friend.

Impression score for Lexical Resource: Possibly 7.

(See suggested corrections on the next page)

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Rated Sample

Corrections

#

Explanation of problem

More appropriate forms

1

Simple misspelling (with an amusing
'favour' or 'favor'
result!)

2

This is not really a lexical issue, but the
'As you know, my house....'
omission of the comma ',,' after 'know'
creates a strange and confusing effect

3

This is not the appropriate word choice
'I'm hoping...'
here, as 'wish' suggests something that is
unlikely to be fulfilled (more like a dream)

4

'I'm happy' describes a state but here we
'I'd be grateful for...'

need to suggest a stronger sense of the

‘It would be great if you could help

hypothetical

me out.’ (*less formal*)

169

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Rated Sample

Analysing Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Dear Jen,

*I'm going off **for vacation** (#1) **in Australia** (#2) for the summer. I really need someone to look after my house **and I hope** (#3) that you could do me a favor. I **will travel** (#4) **to travel** (#5) to Perth for one week **and** (#6) please take care of my house **when** (#7) I'm abroad.*

*As you know my house is located at Centre Villa. There are only a few houses there, **therefore** (#8) it is easy to spot my house. My house is number 22, Lot 7 with orange **color** (#9) paint and **grey** (#10) wooden gate. You will notice there are a lot of trees surrounding my house. It is the only house with **bright color painting** (#11) which is very noticeable.*

*While I'm away from home, I wish that you could help me to take care of my cats – Papai and Babai. I will get **ready the canned cat food** (#12) and **you easily find** (#13) it in the kitchen. Please remember to switch on the light in the evening as **I'm worry** (#14) that it*

might attract thieves if the house is too dark.

I'm happy for your help (#15). I'll enjoy my holiday and of course I won't forget to buy you some souvenir (#16) as a return of (#17) your hard work to take (#18) care of my house.

See you soon,

With love

Jessie

Note: '#' (+ **number**) is used to mark parts of the answer that contain grammatical problems.

Analysis: Although the letter is easy to follow, it has too many grammatical errors in too many sentences to merit a 7 score. The variety of grammatical constructions used seems enough for a 6 score, but there are not enough completely accurate sentences to merit a higher score.

Impression score for Grammatical Range and Accuracy: Possibly 6.

(See suggested corrections on the next page)

170

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Rated Sample

Corrections

Explanation of problem

Correct form

1 'vacation' is a count noun and needs an article in the

'for a vacation'

singular form; the alternative fixed expression is 'on

‘on vacation’

vacation’.

2 Incorrect use of preposition. In English you always

‘to Australia’

go/travel **to** a country, but live/stay **in** a country or place.

3 The ‘hope’ is a consequence of the fact of going on

‘so I’m hoping that...’

holiday, and needs a connecting expression that expresses

consequence, not addition. The use of the present

continuous (I’m hoping’)

creates a more natural sense of what is in the writer’s

mind at the time of writing.

4 This is a tricky grammatical area, and the form used by

‘I will be travelling’

the writer is not actually incorrect, just less natural than

the continuous form. The continuous form communicates

a sense of an ongoing activity (travelling) in the future, as

opposed to a time schedule (On Sunday 14th you will

travel to Cairo, then on to.....)

5 This is redundant.

Delete ‘to travel’

6 To use ‘and’ successfully the rest of the sentence needs to

‘ and would be really

be re-shaped to show that the writer is not adding a new

grateful if you would....’

point but expressing a consequence of the first part. The word ‘so’ could be put in to show this (‘and so...’) but is optional.

7 ‘while’ implies the period of absence, whereas ‘when’ ‘while I’m abroad’

implies the fact of the absence at a particular time

(Strictly speaking ‘when’ is also correct but less natural)

8 ‘therefore’ is too formal for this situation and for this type ‘so’

of informal correspondence.

171

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Rated Sample

#

Explanation of problem

Correct form

9

‘color’ / ‘colour’ is a noun, but the adjective ‘colored /

‘orange-coloured’

coloured’ is needed here

‘orange-colored’

10 ‘gate’ is countable and requires an indefinite article ‘a’

‘a grey gate’

here

11 The writer has chosen incorrect word forms here

‘brightly-coloured paint’

12 The word order is not appropriate as it creates

‘I will get the canned food

ambiguity (is it the writer getting ready, or is the writer ready...’

getting something else ready?)

13 The sentence requires consistency of future tense verb

‘You will easily find it....’

use as it contains two verbs linked by ‘and’.

14 Incorrect word form. In English you can say ‘I worry’

‘I’m worried...’

(verb) but you have to say ‘I’m worried (adjective)

15 This sentence doesn’t work in English. ‘I’m happy’ is a

‘It will make me really

statement of a current feeling but the situation is still

happy if you can help me’

hypothetical as the friend hasn’t yet said whether or not

she can help.

16 ‘some’ really needs a plural noun, because it implies

‘buy you a souvenir’

more than one, given that ‘souvenir’ is a countable

‘buy some souvenirs’

noun.

17 This is a fixed expression and should be learned as a

‘ in return for....’

whole.

18 Gerund (-ing) required here after ‘hard work’ as it acts

‘taking’

as a parallel phrase (hard work = taking care of my

house)

Impression-based Overall Score for the Sample Letter: 6.5

172

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Rated Sample

Improving the letter to achieve an IELTS 7

The same letter now at around a 7 level might look something like this.

Read it carefully and compare it with the original:

Dear Jen,

I'm going off on vacation to Australia for the summer and I really need someone to look after my house. I hope that you can do me a favour. I will be travelling to Perth for one week so would be pleased if you would take care of my house when I'm abroad.

As you know, my house is located at Centre Villa. There are only a few houses there, so mine is easy to spot. My house is number 22, Lot 7 with orange colored paint and grey wooden

gate. You will notice there are a lot of trees surrounding my house. It is the only one with bright colored paint, which is very noticeable.

While I'm away from home, I hope that you could help to take care of my cats – Papai and Babai. I will get the canned cat food ready and you will easily find it in the kitchen. Please remember to switch on the light in the evening, as I'm worry that it might attract thieves if the house is too dark.

I'd be grateful for your help. I'll enjoy my holiday and, of course, I won't forget to buy you some souvenirs in return of your hard work taking care of my house.

See you soon,

With love

Jessie

173

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Rated Sample

Improving the letter to achieve an IELTS 8

To turn the level 7 letter into a level 8 might require slight expansion of the first part of the letter, further improvement in range and accuracy of grammar, a wider range of appropriate, higher level vocabulary, and more flexible use of referencing.

The same essay now at around an 8 level might look something like this.

Once again, read it carefully and compare it with the original:

Dear Jen,

I'm really excited as I'm going off on vacation to Australia during the summer. I'm taking a month's trip to the spectacular Great Barrier Reef. But, I really need someone to look after my house while I'm away, and I'm desperately hoping that you can help. I will be flying to Perth soon so would be really delightful if you will take care of my house.

As you know, my new place is located at Villa Centre. There are only a few houses there, so mine is easy to spot. It is Lot 7, number 22, with orange-colored paint and a grey wooden gate. You will notice there are a lot of trees surrounding the house, but It's the only one with brightly-colored paint, which is very noticeable.

While I'm overseas, I'm also hoping that you could help to take care of my cats – Papai and Babai. I will get the canned cat food ready and leave it in the kitchen. Oh yes, please remember to switch on the outside light in the evenings, as I'm worried that thieves might be tempted if the house is too dark.

I'd be eternally grateful if you can help me out. I look forward to a hard-earned rest and, of course, I won't forget to buy you some Aussie souvenirs in return for your hard work taking care of things.

See you soon,

With love

Jessie

Note: please remember that these re-written letters are only samples of those levels for guidance, not official scores. Neither are they models of task responses at those levels, as there are many ways to write a more successful letter of this type.

WRITING TASK 2 – RATED SAMPLE

Task 2 is also marked using band descriptors in four categories: **Task Response, Coherence and Cohesion, Lexical Resource, and Grammatical Range and Accuracy**. You can find the publicly available performance descriptors on the official IELTS website: www.ielts.org. As you may have noticed, the first band descriptor category is different from that used in task 1: task 1s are rated for **Task Achievement**, whereas task 2s are rated for **Task Response**. This is because in task 2 you are required to present a well-developed point of view in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well-supported ideas.

This sample essay has been analysed to help you understand what score it might be awarded in each category and some reasons why.

Task Question

Some say you should always marry for love; others say that in an uncertain world it is wiser to marry for money. Discuss both points of view and give your own opinion.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

175

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

Analysing Task Response

Nowadays, money is one of the most significant materials in our lives. To many people, it is appropriate to marry for money rather than love. However, I believe that both love and money should be bounce together in any marriages.

Certainly, money is an important part in our lives. It is hard for any persons to accept a partner which does not have money or at least a job to take care of future family. Hence, said “marry for money” also has its right in some extent.

However, love should be the root of any marriages. Firstly, it is because love is such a glue to connect two persons which have their own lives, become one. So, they can share each other’s the sadness, happiness to overcome any difficulties in daily lives. Moreover, love makes people growing up because they do not only have responsibility to themselves, but also to their partners as well. That is why marrying with love is always encouraged.

In my opinion, I think that both love and money is both necessary. Marriage relying on money would be rapidly disintegrated when unfortunately the money is run out. In contrary, marriage relying on love would sometimes come to end when they could not earn money to carry out family, such as paying bills, buying food, etc. Therefore, love and money should stand together in marriage even though their contribution could be unbalanced.

As we have seen, marriage without either money or love would come to an unhappy ending. So I believe that they both have their own contribution to a merry family.

Analysis: This essay follows the task requirements quite well. Both points of view are discussed (in paragraphs 2 and 3) and the writer’s personal opinion is offered (in the introduction, paragraph 4 and the conclusion). The opinion is clear. The paragraph on money is not very well developed and not entirely clear.

Impression score for Task Response: The essay seems to be good enough for a 7 level.



IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

Analysing Coherence and Cohesion

[Nowadays], money is one of the most significant materials in our lives. To many people, it is appropriate to marry for money rather than love. [However], I believe that both love and money should be bounce together in any marriages.

[Certainly], money is an important part in our lives (TS). It is hard for any persons to accept a partner [which] does not have money or at least a job to take care of future family. [Hence], said “marry for money” also has its right in some extent.*

[However,] love should be the root of any marriages (TS).[Firstly], it is because love is such a glue to connect two persons which have their own lives, become one (NC). [So], they can share each other’s the sadness, happiness to overcome any difficulties in daily lives. [Moreover], love makes people growing up because they do not only have responsibility to themselves, but also to their partners as well. [That is why] marrying with love is always encouraged.

[In my opinion], I think that both love and money is both necessary (TS). Marriage relying on money would be rapidly disintegrated [when] unfortunately the money is run out. [In contrary], marriage relying on love would sometimes come to end [when] they could not earn money to carry out family (NC), such as paying bills, buying food, etc. [Therefore], love and money should stand together in marriage [even though] their contribution could be unbalanced (NC).*

[As we have seen], marriage without either money or love would come to an unhappy ending. [So] I believe that they both have their own contribution to a merry family.

Note: Brackets [] show the connecting expressions, (TS) denotes topic sentences,

(NC) denotes sentences where ideas are not clear.

Analysis: Most linking expressions are appropriate but two are not (See asterisk *).

Coherence is concerned with the effectiveness of what the essay is trying to communicate. The essay is well structured – each paragraph announces its topic clearly (TS) and the introduction announces the opinion of the writer. Sometimes the ideas are not entirely clear inside the paragraphs (see NC). Also the writer has a tendency to be repetitive.

Impression score for Coherence and Cohesion: Possibly 7.

177

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

Analysing Lexical Resource

*Nowadays, money is one of the most significant materials in our lives. To many people, it is appropriate to marry for money rather than love. However, I believe that both love and money should be **bounce** (#1) together in any marriages.*

*Certainly, money **is** (#2) an important part in our lives. It is hard for any persons to accept a partner which does not have money or at least a job to take care of future family. Hence, **said** (#3) “marry for money” also has its right in some extent.*

*However, love should be the **root** (#4) of any marriages. Firstly, it is because love is such a **glue to connect** (#5) two persons which have their own lives, become one. So, they can share each other’s the sadness, happiness to overcome any difficulties in daily lives. Moreover, love makes people growing up because they do not only have responsibility to themselves, but also to their partners as well. That is why marrying*

*with love is always **encouraged** (#6).*

*In my opinion, I think that both love and money is both necessary. Marriage relying on money would be rapidly disintegrated when unfortunately the money is run out. In contrary, marriage relying on love would sometimes come to end when they could not earn money to carry out family, such as paying bills, buying food, etc. Therefore, love and money should **stand together** (#7) in marriage even though their **contribution could be unbalanced** (#8).*

*As we have seen, marriage without either money or love would come to an unhappy **ending** (#9). So I believe that they both have their own contribution to a **merry** (#10) family.*

Note: ‘#’ (+ **number**) is used to mark each vocabulary item that seems faulty or inappropriate.

Analysis: The use of vocabulary seems quite reasonable but attempts to use a wider range are not always successful (see corrections #1–10 on the next page). Probably not quite good enough for a 7.

Impression score for Lexical Resource: Possibly 6 or 6.5.

178

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

Corrections

#

Explanation of problem

More appropriate forms

1

‘bounce’ is usually used with ‘ball’ as in

‘love and money should **combine**

‘bounce a ball’

together in any marriage’

‘love and money **should both be present**

in any marriage’

It’s possible, too, that the writer meant to

*write ‘**bound together**’, which is also fine.*

2

‘the expression ‘part’ is usually preceded

‘money plays an important part in our

by its ‘word friend’ ‘play’ as in ‘play a

lives’

part’

3

‘said’ is a verb in the past tense and

‘Hence the saying, “Marry for money”...’

cannot be used without a subject word, so *(Or, alternatively, changing the grammar):*

a better lexical option is needed

‘Hence it is sometimes said, “Marry for

money”...’

4

‘root’ is often used to talk about ‘cause’ as

‘love should **be the basis** of any

in ‘root cause of’... but not just about

marriage’

marriage

‘love should **form the foundation** of

every marriage’

‘love should **underpin** every marriage’

‘every marriage should be **built on** love’

5

‘glue’ sounds rather unusual here and

‘love **cements** the relationship between

doesn’t normally go with ‘connect’

two people’

‘ love is a kind of glue that **bonds** two

people’

‘...love **bonds** two people’

‘...love is the bond that **holds** two people

together’

6

‘encouraged’ seems incomplete

‘That is why marrying for love is always

(encouraged by whom?) and may not be

an **advantage**’

what the writer is trying to mean

‘For these reasons, marrying for love

should always be encouraged’

179

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

#

Explanation of problem

More appropriate forms

7

‘stand together’ makes sense but is not a

‘For the above reasons, love and money

standard usage

should co-exist within marriage’

‘For these reasons, love and money **should**

both be present in a marriage’

‘For these reasons, a marriage needs a

felicitous blend of love and money’

8

‘unbalanced’ here is ambiguous and

‘...even though their relative contribution

could mean ‘mentally unstable’; the

to it could be **uneven**’

overall meaning could be made more

‘...even though they **may not each**

precise

contribute evenly to it’

9

‘ending’ is used usually to describe the

‘...would come to an unhappy end’

conclusion to stories, films or plays

10 ‘merry’ is not usually used as a

‘...their own contribution to a **happy**

description of a family; most often used

family’

with ‘Christmas’ as in ‘Merry

‘...their own contribution to a

Christmas’

well-balanced family’

‘...their own contribution to a **successful**

family’;

180

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

Analysing Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Nowadays, money is one of the most significant materials in our lives. To many people, it

is appropriate to marry for money rather than love. However, I believe that both love and money should be bounce together **in any marriages** (#1).

Certainly, money is an important part in our lives. It is hard for **any persons** (#2) to accept a **partner which** (#3) does not have money or at least a job to take care of **future family** (#4). Hence, said “**marry for money**” (#5) also **has its right in** (#6) some extent.

However, love should be the root of **any marriages** (#7). Firstly, **it** (#8) is because love **is such a glue to connect** (#9) two persons **which** (#10) have their own lives, **become one** (#11). So, they can share each other’s **the** (#12) **sadness, happiness** (#13) to overcome any difficulties **in daily lives** (#14). Moreover, love makes people **growing up** (#15) because they do **not only have** (#16) responsibility to themselves, but also to their partners as well. That is why **marrying with love** (#17) is always encouraged.

In my opinion, I think that both **love and money is** (#18) both necessary. Marriage relying on money would **be rapidly disintegrated** (#19) when unfortunately **the money is run out** (#20). **In contrary** (#21), marriage relying on love would sometimes **come to end** (#22) when they could not earn **money to carry out family** (#23), such as paying bills, buying food, etc. Therefore, love and money should stand together in marriage even though their contribution could be unbalanced.

As we have seen, marriage without either money or love would come to an unhappy ending. So I believe that they **both have their own contribution** (#24) to a merry family.

Note: ‘#’ (+ number) is used to mark parts of the answer that contain grammatical problems.

Analysis: Although the essay is quite easy to follow, it has too many grammatical errors in too many sentences to merit a 7 score (see corrections #1-24 on the next page). The range of grammatical constructions used seems quite good.

Impression score for Grammatical Range and Accuracy: Possibly 6 or 6.5.

181

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

Corrections

#

Explanation of problem

Correct form

1

‘any’ takes a singular noun

‘any marriage’

2

‘any’ takes a singular noun

‘any person’

3

‘which’ is used to refer to things (not a

‘partner **who** does not have money’

person)

4

‘future family’ needs further specification to

‘take care of **their** future family’

establish whose family it is

‘take care of **their** family in the

future’

5, 6 After a subject noun phrase (‘the saying,

‘the saying, ‘marry for money’, **is**

‘marry for money’) the verb should be ‘is +

also **right** to some extent’

right’ and the preposition should be ‘to’

because ‘right’ means ‘correct’ (adjective)

here, not ‘a right’ (noun)

7

The writer repeats this same error frequently

‘any marriage’

and should try to use alternative forms to

‘all marriages’

reduce mistakes

‘every marriage’

8, 9 ‘it’ is not the most appropriate backward

‘**This** is because love is a glue

reference word here, when adding an

connecting two persons...’

explanation, and neither is ‘such’

‘which’ is not used when the preceding noun

‘This is because love is a glue

is a person;

uniting two persons **who** have their

own lives...’

11

‘become one’ no longer fits with the whole

‘This is because love is a glue

sentence and needs to be replaced by a more

uniting two persons who hitherto

suitable vocabulary word ‘uniting’

have had their own, independent

lives...’ (*makes the sense more precise*)

182

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

#

Explanation of problem

Correct form

12

’the’ is not needed here

‘...share each other’s sadness **and**

happiness to overcome any

13

the comma between ‘sadness, happiness’ is
difficulties in **their** daily lives’
not correct as there are only two items listed;
conjunction ‘and’ is required

14

a word needs to be inserted before ‘daily...’ to
complete the sense (*whose lives?*)

15

‘makes’ takes bare infinitive form ‘grow up’
‘love makes people **grow up**
because they have responsibility **not**

16

‘not only’ could be positioned better
only to themselves but also to their
partners’

17

preposition ‘with’ is not correct here
‘marrying for love...’

18

‘love and money’ is plural; ‘both’ is repeated
‘both love and money are necessary’
unnecessarily
or, ‘love and money are both
necessary’

The passive form is not normally used with

‘Marriage relying on money would

‘disintegrated’

rapidly disintegrate’

‘Marriage relying solely on money

would **rapidly disintegrate’**

(completes the sense more precisely)

Use of hypothetical ‘would’ in the preceding

‘when unfortunately the money ran

part of the sentence (‘would disintegrate’)

out’

means that the verb form in this later clause

requires a ‘simple past’ verb form

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

#

Explanation of problem

Correct form

21 ‘In contrary’ isn’t used as a linking

‘Similarly, marriage relying on love

expression – this form is a confusion of two

would sometimes come to **an** end'

other forms: 'In contrast to...' and 'On the

(This sentence parallels the writer's

contrary...'

previous one, it is not in contrast to it)

In any case the writer doesn't need a

discourse marker of contrast here.

'Similarly, a marriage relying on love

22

alone would rapidly disintegrate'

'to end' requires an article

(marriage is being used in a countable

sense; 'alone' completes the sense using

an alternative form to 'solely', used

above in #19)

23 'money' needs to be given more precision;

'enough money to carry out **family**

'carry out family' is not complete *(family*

duties such as paying bills or buying

what?); use of 'etc' is not to be encouraged in

food.'

formal writing as it seems lazy

24 'have' is not used to form the expression

'...they both make their own

‘have a contribution’ unless the words

contribution...’

‘to make’ are added as in, ‘...have a

‘...they both have their own

contribution to make’; otherwise ‘make’ is

contribution to make...’

used

Impression-based Overall Score for the Sample Essay: 6.0 or 6.5

184

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

Improving the essay to achieve an IELTS 7

The same essay now at around a 7 level might look something like this.

Read it carefully and compare it with the original:

Nowadays, money is one of the most significant materials in our lives. To many people, it is appropriate to marry for money rather than love. However, I believe that both love and money should be combined in any marriage.

Certainly, money plays an important part in our lives. It is hard for any persons to accept a partner who does not have money or at least a job to take care of their future family. Hence, it is said, “marry for money” is right in some extent.

However, love should be the root of any marriage. Firstly, it is because love is such a strong bond between two persons who have their own lives, and become one. So, they can share each other’s sadness, happiness to overcome any difficulties in their daily lives.

Moreover, love makes people grow up because they do not only have responsibility to

themselves, but also to their partners as well. That is why marrying for love is always encouraged.

In my opinion, I think that love and money are both necessary. A marriage relying on money would rapidly disintegrate when unfortunately the money ran out. In contrary, a marriage relying on love would sometimes come to end when they could not earn money to carry out family duties such as paying bills, buying food, etc. Therefore, love and money should stand together in marriage even though their contribution could be unbalanced.

As we have seen, marriage without either money or love would come to an unhappy end. So I believe that they both make their own contribution to a merry family.

185

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Rated Sample

Improving the essay to achieve an IELTS 8

To turn the level 7 essay into a level 8 would require further improvement in range and accuracy of grammar, greater clarity and better connection of ideas, and a wider range of appropriate, higher level vocabulary.

So the same essay now at around an 8 level might look something like this.

Once again, read it carefully and compare it with the original:

Nowadays, money is one of the most significant elements in our lives. So, for many people, it may seem appropriate to marry for money rather than love. Certainly, money plays an important part in our lives. It is challenging for any persons to accept a partner

who does not have money, or at least a job to take care of their future family. Hence, the expression, “marry for money” seems appropriate, in some extent, at least. However, I believe that marriage should involve a combination of both love and money.

Clearly, love should be the foundation of any marriage. This is because firstly, love is such a strong bond between two persons, who have their own lives, yet become one. They can share each other’s sadness or happiness in order to overcome any difficulties in daily lives. Moreover, love fosters maturity because each member of a couple no longer has responsibility only for themselves, but also for their partner. These are just two, key reasons why marrying for love should always be encouraged.

In my opinion, love and money are equally necessary. A marriage relying solely on money might rapidly disintegrate in the unfortunate event of the money running out. Similarly, a marriage relying on love alone might sometimes come to an end if the couple could not earn enough money to manage their family’s obligations such as paying bills, or buying food. Therefore, love and money should stand together in marriage, even though their contribution might often be somewhat unequal.

To summarise, marriage without either money or love could come to an unfortunate end. For that reason, I would claim that they both make their own, vital contribution to the creation of a merry family.

Note: please remember that these re-written essays are only samples of those levels for guidance, not official scores. Neither are they models of task responses at those levels.



IELTS

WRITING

DOCTOR

WHAT'S INSIDE:

IELTS Grammar

Writing Task 1 (expressions, verb tenses, sequence of events)

Writing Task 2 (suggested language for all essay types)

Article types and use

Prepositions

IELTS Vocabulary

Writing Task 1 – vocabulary and expressions (all letter types)

Writing Task 2 – vocabulary and expressions (all essay types)

187



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 1

IELTS GRAMMAR — WRITING TASK 1

Purpose and Formality

Grammar can sometimes make you feel a bit sick, right? But, it's so important in IELTS. In

General Training Task 1, often the problem is in choosing language that is not just correct but language that fits the relationship and the degree of formality of the situation.

This first section shows some of the different purposes you might want to express in different types of letter, with examples at different levels of formality. Why not take a look! You might even feel better afterwards!

Introducing yourself

More Formal

Less formal

My name is ... and I am writing to you to...

I'm John Smith, your next door neighbour, and I just wanted to...

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is...

It's John here. I was just wondering if you...

Before I begin, I would just like to introduce myself. I

Before I start, let me introduce myself. I'm...
am...

Explaining your reason/purpose for writing

More Formal

Less formal

The reason I am writing is to...

I'm writing to you because...

I am writing in order to...

I'm writing to...

My reason for writing concerns...

I'm writing about...

This letter is in regard to...

This letter is about...

Sample sentences:

My name is John Roberts and **I am writing in order to** apologise for having lost your phone.

My reason for writing concerns the behaviour of your sales staff.

I am writing to explain what happened.

This letter is about the problems I've been having with my apartment recently.

I'm writing about my leaving party next week.

188

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 1

Expressing your thanks

More Formal

Less formal

I should like to thank you (for...)

Thanks for...(+ noun or + “-ing”)

I am/We are most grateful (to you) for...

It was really great of you to...

We should like to express our gratitude to you for...

A big thank you for...

I cannot thank you enough for...

Thanks a million for...

I very much appreciated your/the...

Thanks so much for...

Sample sentences:

I am most grateful to you for having allowed me to join your association.

I cannot thank you enough for your hospitality.

It was really great of you to let me stay at your place last week.

Thanks a million for letting me stay in your beach house during the summer.

Offering explanations

More Formal

Less formal

I would like to explain what...

I'll tell you what...

There is a simple explanation for what happened.

Let me explain what.../why I can't come

I would like to offer you an explanation of what...

I want to tell you what happened...

Allow me to explain what happened.

If it's OK, I'll explain what...

Sample sentences:

I would like to explain what I would like you to do.

I would like to offer you an explanation of what took place...

I'll tell you what happened last Friday.

If it's OK, I'll explain what the situation is now.

Talking about when something happened

More Formal

Less formal

The event/robbery took place a week ago

It happened last week

Recently we held a party to celebrate my birthday

We had a party for my birthday not long ago

He stayed with us for several months

He was at our place for a few months

He left the house approximately a month ago

He left here about a month back now.

Sample sentences:

The wedding ceremony **took place a week ago.**

We recently held a meeting to discuss the company's expansion plans.

He was at our place for quite a few months.

189

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 1

Seeking explanations

More Formal

Less formal

We would be most grateful if you could inform us of the

Please tell me why you...

reasons for...

I should really like to know why...

Why on earth did you...?

Could you

could you

by

either

maybe

perhaps

no

possibly

or

perhaps

possibly

or

or

... or

of the reasons for...?

Could you tell us why...?

Could you possibly explain to us why...?

Can you please explain why you...?

Sample sentences:

I should really like to know why the gate was left open.

Please tell me why you can't come to my party.

Why on earth did you leave the house unlocked?

Making suggestions/giving advice in your letter

More Formal

Less formal

It would be a good idea (for you) to...

Why don't you (+ infinitive)...?

My advice to you would be to...

I think you should...

May I suggest that you...

How about (+ verb in “-ing” form)...?

I advise you to...

If you take my advice, you should...

It would be better if you...

You'd better (+ infinitive without ‘to’) /

You'd better not (+ infinitive without ‘to’)...

Sample sentences:

It would be a good idea for you to contact your lawyer.

It would be better if you went to the police.

Why don't you come over for lunch on Sunday?

How about phoning your sister and asking her to lend you the money?

You'd better find out the cost of the flight first.

You'd better not tell your wife about the broken ring.

190

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 1

Saying you are not responsible for something

More Formal

Less formal

I do not consider that I am responsible for...

It's not my fault that...

It is/was not my responsibility to...

It's not my job to...

Responsibility for this event lies elsewhere.

It was someone else's fault, not mine.

It is your responsibility to...

It's up to you to...

The responsibility rests squarely on your shoulders.

The ball's in your court.

Sample sentences:

I do not consider that I am responsible for the problem.

It's not my fault that the car has broken down.

It's not my job to clean the flat every week.

It's up to you to take the gift back to the shop.

Describing facilities

More Formal

Less formal

There is a...

It's got a...

It has a...

It's also got a...

Another (positive) feature of... is ...

Another (good) thing about...is...

You will find...

You'll find...

Sample sentences:

There is a bathroom just off the bedroom.

It has a large bath.

Another feature of our club is that it is cheap to join.

It's also got a tiled floor.

Another good thing about the apartment is that it's near to the city centre.

191

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 1

Suggesting options or choices

More Formal

Less formal

You could opt for...

You could go for...

The choice is entirely yours.

It's up to you what you choose.

There are a number of alternatives...

There are several possibilities.

These are the best options.

These are your best bets...

The best option might be to... / the...

Your best bet is to... / the...

Sample sentences:

You could opt for the cheaper travel insurance plan.

The best option might be to buy the apartment with the extra bedroom.

You could go for the car with the low mileage.

Your best bet is to pay a deposit and then get the vehicle inspected.

Exploring possible solutions to a problem

More Formal

Less formal

One answer to this problem might be to...

The answer is to...

A possible solution could be to...

(verb in “-ing” form) ... is a possible answer

You could try (+ verb in “-ing” form)

The way to go is to...

Sample sentences:

One answer to this problem might be to train new teachers.

You could try phoning the local representative.

The answer is to invest more money in organic foods.

Eating less sugar **is a possible answer** to poor dental health.

Rejecting someone else’s explanation

More Formal

Less formal

I must refute your explanation/claim entirely.

What you said/say is just not true.

Your explanation of events lacks all credibility.

No one would believe that story.

You are deluding yourself if you imagine I would accept You must be crazy if you think I'd fall for that.

that.

Sample sentences:

Your explanation of my reason for complaining **lacks all credibility.**

What you said about my behaviour at the office party **is just not true.**

192

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 1

Denying that you did something

More Formal

Less formal

I categorically deny (+ verb in “-ing” form)...

I didn't have anything to do with...

It was not of my doing.

I didn't do it.

I was not involved at all in...

It was nothing to do with me.

Sample sentences:

I categorically deny breaking the window.

Believe me, **I didn't have anything to do with** the broken window.

I didn't damage your car.

Requesting information

More Formal

Less formal

I should like to know when...

Can you let me know me when...?

I should appreciate some information on...

It would be good to hear from you about...

It is important for me to know...

I need to know...

Would you mind giving me some background on...?

Could you fill me in on...?

Sample sentences:

I should like to know when my refund will be granted.

It is important for me to know the likely cost of the repair.

Can you let me know when there will be a vacancy at your hotel?

Could you fill me in on the current situation?

Apologising and making excuses

More Formal

Less formal

I am really sorry but I am unable to attend the function

I was really looking forward to coming, but

due to...

something has come up.

Regretfully, it is impossible for me to attend owing to...

I'd love to come but I just can't because...

I would dearly like to come, but sadly, I...

It's a real pity, as I'd so like to come along, but...

It is with the utmost regret that I must decline your

I'm so sorry to turn down your invite...

invitation.

Sample sentences:

I am really sorry but I am unable to attend the function due to a prior engagement.

Regretfully, it is impossible for me to attend owing to an illness in the family.

I'd love to come but I just can't because my car is off the road at the moment.

It's a real pity, as I'd so like to come along to the wedding, but I'll be overseas that month.

193

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 1

Expressing hope

More Formal

Less formal

I hope that you enjoy yourself in...

Hope you have a good time in...

It is my hope that you...

I really hope you...

With some luck you will now be able to...

With a bit of luck you should now...

Let us hope that in future...

Let's hope that next time...

Sample sentences:

It is my hope that you will thoroughly enjoy your stay in our city.

Let us hope that in future you will have better opportunities.

With a bit of luck you should now be able to sleep more easily.

Let's hope that next time you find a job you really like.

Nearing the end of your letter

More Formal

Less formal

I shall look forward to hearing from you in the near

Hope to hear from you soon.

future.

I will await your response to this letter.

Waiting to hear your thoughts.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

All the best for the future.

I trust you will enjoy your stay...

Have a great time.

I will look forward to receiving your payment.

Looking forward to getting the money.

It is my hope that you will respond favourably to my

Hope to get some positive feedback from you.

request.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Thanks a lot for your time/Thanks for everything.

I'll look forward to seeing you in the near future.

See you soon, ...

Ending the letter

More Formal

Less formal

Yours faithfully,

Best wishes/With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

All the best,

Yours,

Love/Lots of love, (usually between female friends or
between men and women)

194

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



Controlling Verb Tenses

In letters, tense usage often varies quite a lot. The writer may be talking about recent events, future plans, past events, ongoing activities, all inside the same letter! In an IELTS exam, therefore, you need to be careful. Using a variety of tenses accurately makes a letter sound natural. Here are some examples of typical tense usage in letter writing:

(Note the tense ‘cue’ words in **bold** type)

Present tense

My name is...

I live in the same street as you.

I like walking...

Present continuous tense

Currently, I am studying to be a doctor.

I am writing to complain about the poor standard of service in your shop.

At the moment I am visiting my mother in Alaska.

Simple past tense

I came into your shop **yesterday** to buy a computer.

Last week you told me that you couldn’t replace the phone.

I worked for Apple **from** 2010 **until** 2011.

Present perfect

I have lived in Sydney **since** 1999.

I have worked for the government **for** 10 years.

I have **always** been honest with you.

Present perfect continuous tense

I have been trying to contact you **on and off for days**.

I've been dreaming of living by the coast **all my life**.

Past continuous tense

When I phoned yesterday your secretary said you were **in the middle of** writing me an email.

At that time I was hoping to become a senior executive.

Past perfect tense

By the time I realised what had happened the bus had **already** left, with my suitcase still on it.

I phoned yesterday but you had **already** gone home.

195

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 1

Future forms

I'll write again **soon**.

If you **don't refund** my money, I will seek legal advice.

Unless you change your mind, I'll see you **next week**.

I'm going to change my job **after** Christmas.

She's going to find it difficult to live in a large city, **when they move next year**.

We arrive in Lisbon **on the 25th**.

Comment: You could also say, 'We'll arrive' or 'We'll be arriving'—both are also grammatically correct, but the sense is a little different.

I'm leaving for Paris **on Monday**.

Comment: You could also say, 'I'll leave' or 'I'll be leaving'—both are also grammatically correct, but the sense is a little different.

Recounting a Sequence of Events

Have you ever had something stolen? Or had an accident, maybe? Me, too! Often in a letter you need to explain things that happened as a sequence of events. I'm pretty sure most of you will know, '**First/Then/After that/Next/Finally**' for time sequences when telling a story or recounting an event in stages, but here are some other sequence expressions that can be really useful in letters. Learners sometimes find them tricky to learn but you'll be fine! As a bonus, I have given you some helpful expressions for situations in a letter when you want to add a new piece of information, but in a natural way.

Expression

Explanation

Example

At first

Often used to indicate a temporary,

At first I was very nervous, but slowly I became

initial situation that changes

more and more confident

Meanwhile/

Used to talk about something else

My husband was feverishly phoning the police;

At the same time

happening within the same time

meanwhile/at the same time, I was chasing after

period

the thief with my umbrella.

Eventually

Often used for talking about some

First he asked her to marry him, but then he met

change or solution that takes place

another woman and changed his mind. So she ran

after a lengthy gap in time but usually away to Spain to forget him and they lost contact.

before the absolute end

Eventually, though, they got back together, and

finally settled down happily in Italy.

In the end

Often used for talking about how a

The police chase them across France, Germany

situation is resolved after some

and Russia and **in the end** they are caught in

difficulties during the earlier parts

Siberia, and then brought back and imprisoned.

At the end/

Often used for talking about the

At the (very) end of the movie, they are seen

At the very end

specific end point in a movie, book or

jumping off the cliff, but you don't get to see

story

whether or not they survive.

196

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 1

Signalling new points when writing to friends

When writing to friends or less formally we often use a broader range of markers to signal each fresh item on our

list of things we want to say.

For added politeness, we often use extended introductions (underlined in the examples) to soften the item of

news, or request, that is about to be revealed, especially if it concerns a sensitive or important issue.

The simple markers 'First/Second/Third/Finally...' are unable to achieve this empathetic subtlety of written

communication.

Examples

First of all, I'd like to say how good it was to see you the other day. I really enjoyed...

Another thing I need to tell you is that...

Something else perhaps I shouldn't forget to mention is that...

One final thing, before I forget, I'd like to ask you if you could possibly...

Another thing I need to tell you is that, sadly, I won't be able to come to your birthday party next month. I'm

really disappointed but it's unavoidable because...

Something else perhaps I shouldn't forget to mention is that you'll need to bring plenty of spending money for

the trip because Switzerland is not a cheap country. I know this won't be easy for you now that you are

unemployed but...

One final thing, before I forget. I'd like to ask you if you could possibly look after my grandmother for a month

while I'm overseas. I know it's a big ask, but...

197

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 1

Using Conditionals to Achieve Different Purposes

Oh no, conditionals, I can hear you groan! In letters, though, conditional forms are really useful because they are able to carry a variety of communicative purposes. Have a look at these examples, and remember that in letters you need to try to maintain a reasonable level of politeness even if you are communicating a low-level threat!

If you let your dog into my garden again, **I'll call** the police.

Purpose: making a low-level threat.

If you can change your dates to October, **then I'll be able** to come.

Purpose: a request.

Unless you repair the shower, **I will** withhold the rent and use a lawyer to protect my interests.

Purpose: making a low-level threat.

If you had told me that the car was faulty **I would not have bought it**, but you chose to keep quiet about its

true condition.

Purpose: expressing a regret about the past.

If your store offered better service then **you would receive** fewer complaints like this one.

Purpose: making a suggestion for improvement.

198

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

IELTS GRAMMAR — WRITING TASK 2

Writing Task 2 places different kinds of demand on your language skills. It involves careful understanding of what the task prompt requires, and then an ability to develop and justify your own point of view, using ideas and examples based on your own knowledge of social issues. The importance of accurate and appropriate grammar needs to be respected, especially as Task 2 carries more weight than Task 1. Let's have a little look at how to use grammar more effectively. Are you ready?

Essay Type 1 — Indicate and Support Your Level of Agreement

In a Type 1 essay task you are required to agree, partly agree or disagree with a stated point of view.

Sample task

“Parents are totally responsible for the bad behaviour of their children.

Do you agree? / Do you agree or disagree? / To what extent do you agree?”

Language for introducing your essay (Introduction paragraph)

Usually an essay starts with a general statement linked to the IELTS Task 2 topic. Then the introduction usually

proceeds with a statement of intention, telling the reader what your essay is going to do and/or what your general

point of view is. Future tense form 'will...' is often used in this part of the essay.

After writing your general statement related to the task topic, you could express your intentions for this type of

essay using language such as shown in these examples:

Examples

This essay **will suggest/argue that** ... is ...

Although/Even though ... is ..., **it will be argued** here that ...

This essay **will express full agreement** with this view **and will offer** reasons for this position.

This essay **will agree in part** with this view, and **will offer reasons** for this position

This essay **will express complete disagreement** with this view and **will justify** this viewpoint.

I totally agree that.../I largely agree that.../I partly agree that.../I totally disagree that...

Here is a sample Introduction:

Parenting is a complex and challenging role in the busy, modern world and it seems to be the case that some

children are behaving less thoughtfully. There are those who believe that the responsibility lies fully with

parents. This essay will agree in part with this view.

199

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Improving grammar in the early sentences of body paragraphs

In a Type 1 essay your body paragraphs will probably involve firstly a shorter paragraph explaining

reasons for

holding the point of view which is opposite to your own (either agreeing or disagreeing), then a longer paragraph

justifying the other side (your own view)

Using ‘There is/there are’

There is a range of/**There are** various agencies other than parents which **share** some responsibility for a

child’s behaviour...

There are various ways in which parents should shoulder the greatest responsibility for the way their

children behave.

Or, more simply,

Various other social agencies **share** responsibility for the way children behave.

Starting body paragraphs with extended topic sentences

(using ‘Even though...’, ‘Although...’, ‘...who...’, ‘...that...’)

Using subordinate clauses helps to create longer, more detailed sentences.

Example

Although it can probably be agreed that other agencies have some role in shaping children’s behaviour, **it must**

be parents **who** carry the most responsibility.

Replacing simple connectors when developing paragraph ideas/examples

It’s really tempting to use simple connectors like ‘**Firstly/Secondly/Thirdly/Finally**’ especially when you are

under time pressure but usually this merely indicates a list rather than a commentary. Look at some alternative

options for connecting different essay points:

Alternative options

Parents clearly **have/carry** the primary **responsibility** for the way their children **behave**. **It seems undeniable that** they are the child's first teachers, and...

Linked to this is the fact that parents are crucial to the development of identity and personality. ... **What is more** ... **Overall then** ...

Finishing off your essay

A short conclusion helps to round off your essay, but sometimes the final paragraph in a Type 1 Essay is used to express your personal opinion.

Starting off the conclusion appropriately

These are the usual ways of beginning/signalling your concluding paragraph:

In conclusion, .../Summing up, .../To conclude, .../To summarise, .../All in all, ...

200

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Using tenses appropriately in the conclusion

See how a conclusion might continue for Essay Type 1 using **Simple Present**:

*Summing up, from a personal perspective it **seems** reasonable to suggest that parents **are** largely rather than*

totally responsible for their children's behaviour because ...

Or you might prefer **It + Present Perfect Passive + clause with Simple Present**:

*Summing up, **it has been argued** in this essay **that** parents **are** largely, rather than totally responsible for their children's behaviour because ...*

For more tips on how to add fluency to your writing, give examples, form complex sentences and much more, go to:

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Essay Type 2 — Present a Two-sided Discussion

In a Type 2 essay task you are required to discuss 2 sides of an argument or 2 points of view, and explain which

one you personally agree (or partly agree) with, and why.

Sample task

Some people think that parents are responsible for their children's bad behaviour; others say that schools are responsible.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Language for introducing your essay (Introduction paragraph)

You would probably first write a general statement linked to task topic, then express your intentions for this type

of essay by using language like the following:

Use of basic ‘will’ form

This short essay **will explore** both perspectives and then offer a personal viewpoint.

Use of passive form

Both perspectives **will be explored** and then a personal view **will be offered**.

Use of ‘-ing’ forms

After exploring/discussing both viewpoints, this essay **will suggest/argue that...**

Having explored both viewpoints, ...

Noun form + ‘will’ future

After an exploration/discussion of both viewpoints, this essay will offer the view that...

Here is a sample Introduction:

The relative influence of home and school on a child's behaviour changes with time. These days everyone seems to be busy. After an exploration of the respective responsibilities of both agencies this essay will offer the view that...

Improving grammar in the early sentences of body paragraphs

In a Type 2 essay, you will recall, your body paragraphs are expected to discuss two different viewpoints and

then, in a final paragraph, give your own opinion.

Using present tense forms to start body paragraphs

Parents clearly **have/carry** the primary **responsibility** for the way their children **behave** (* **for a number of reasons...**).

Note: if you add * **'for a number of reasons'** then you would normally continue by using connecting signal

expressions like, **'First of all .../Another reason why ... is that.../Finally...'**

at the beginning of each sentence which is offering a new reason.

202

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Starting body paragraphs with extended topic sentences

(using 'Even though...', 'Although...', '...who...', '...that...')

Using subordinate clauses helps to create longer, more detailed sentences.

Examples

Although it seems reasonable to suggest that schools are responsible for their pupils, parents are the prime agent of socialisation.

Even though parents have the primary responsibility, schools probably share at least some responsibility for behaviour.

Replacing simple connectors when developing paragraph ideas/examples

It's really tempting to use simple connectors like '**Firstly/Secondly/Thirdly/Finally**' especially when you are

under time pressure but usually this merely indicates a list rather than a commentary. Look at some alternative

options for connecting different essay points:

Alternative options

Schools also **have/carry** a key responsibility for the way children behave. **It seems incontrovertible that** they have

many years of contact with each child. ...**Allied to this is the fact that** schools set and impose their own rules of

behaviour for pupils at school... **Furthermore... To sum up,...**

Finishing off your essay

In Essay Type 2 the final paragraph can be used to offer your own opinion on the topic, so it may be developed

differently.

Starting off the conclusion appropriately

These are the usual ways of beginning/signalling your concluding paragraph:

In conclusion, .../Summing up, .../To conclude, .../To summarise, .../All in all, ...

Using tenses appropriately in the conclusion: Present Perfect Passive

Look at this example of the use of an ‘it + present perfect passive’ sentence, followed by the personal opinion with a present tense form:

Example

*To conclude, **it has been shown/suggested/argued** that both parents and school seem to share responsibility for shaping the behaviour of children. **My own opinion/view/perspective is that...***

***Personally, I believe/think that** responsibility for behaviour can never be in the hands of parents only,*

except, perhaps, in the very early years of life. It is only during those early years that the parents are the sole

agents of socialisation patterns. At this time, they lay the vital foundations for the child's future, successful

adaptation into the wider society.

For more tips on how to add fluency to your writing, give examples, form complex sentences and much more, go to:

‘Grammar suggestions for all IELTS Task 2 essay types’ on page 208.

203

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Essay Type 3 — Discuss Advantages & Disadvantages

In a Type 3 essay task you are required to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a given situation or a

viewpoint.

Sample task

It is widely believed that a child who behaves badly should be punished.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of punishing a child?

Language for introducing your essay (Introduction paragraph)

You would probably first write a general statement linked to the task topic, then express your intentions for this

type of essay by using language like the following:

Example

This response **will explore** the relative advantages and disadvantages of ...

This essay **will compare** the advantages and disadvantages of ...

Or, a passive

Both pros and cons of ... **will be discussed** in this short essay.

Here is a sample Introduction:

No child is perfect, but the long process of socialisation enables parents and other agencies to shape

children's behaviour so that they can fit into their culture and society effectively. This essay will explore the relative pros and cons of punishing...

Improving grammar in the early sentences of body paragraphs

In a Type 3 essay your two body paragraphs will probably examine the pros, and then the cons of the situation

described in the task prompt.

Use of complex sentences with 'that...'

There are several advantages of punishing a child's inappropriate behaviour. One clear benefit **is that** ... Another

advantage **lies in the fact that...**

Starting body paragraphs with extended topic sentences

(using 'Even though...', 'Although...', 'who...', 'that...')

Using subordinate clauses helps to create longer, more detailed sentences.

Example

Although many parents would advocate the judicious use of appropriate punishment, there are

some parents

who believe that all punishment brings negative consequences for a child's healthy development.

204

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Replacing simple connectors when developing paragraph ideas/examples

It's really tempting to use simple connectors like '**Firstly/Secondly/Thirdly/Finally**' especially when you are

under time pressure but usually this merely indicates a list rather than a commentary. Look at some **alternative**

options for connecting different essay points:

Alternative options

A variety of advantages can be put forward for punishing a child's poor behaviour. **Foremost among these** is the

establishment of clear rules for right and wrong... **A further benefit** involves the building of awareness about

consequences of one's actions... **Yet another advantage** comes from the reinforcement of parental authority...

Finishing off your essay

A short conclusion helps to round off your essay, summarising what was previously said without too much

repetition.

Starting off the conclusion appropriately

These are the usual ways of beginning/signalling your concluding paragraph:

In conclusion, .../Summing up, .../To conclude, .../To summarise, .../All in all, ...

Using appropriate tenses in the conclusion: present perfect

*To summarise, this essay **has outlined** a range of advantages and disadvantages of punishing children. **It has***

suggested** that punishment enables a child to acknowledge wrongdoing, and acts as a deterrent. In contrast, **it

***has argued** that punishment always risks resentment and rebellion if not administered sensitively.*

For more tips on how to add fluency to your writing, give examples, form complex sentences and much more, go to:

‘Grammar suggestions for all IELTS Task 2 essay types’ on page 208.

205

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Essay Type 4 — Explain & Offer Solutions or Consequences

In a Type 4 essay task you need to explain the reasons why the situation in the task prompt has arisen, and how it

can be solved, or what consequences it gives rise to.

Sample task

Children's behaviour seems to be getting worse.

Why is this happening and what can be done to improve it?

Language for introducing your essay (Introduction paragraph)

You would probably first write a general statement linked to the task topic, then express your intentions for this

type of essay by using language like the following:

Example

This essay **will explain why...** and **will suggest what** can be done.../**will suggest what** X should do...?

After explaining why..., this essay will suggest what...

This essay **will suggest that the reason why...**is that...

It will be argued that the best way to... is to.../... that the best solution to this problem is to...

Here is a sample Introduction:

There seem to be more incidents involving bad behaviour at school and in society generally than was

the case fifty years ago. This essay will try to explain why this is happening and suggest measures which might improve the situation.

Improving grammar in the early sentences of body paragraphs

Use of passive

In response to ‘Why’ part of task:

Various reasons **can be offered to explain** falling behaviour standards in children.

Falling behaviour standards **can be explained** in terms of these key reasons. Firstly...

In response to ‘What’ part of task:

A number of solutions **can be offered** with respect to changing children’s behaviour.

Improvements to a child’s behaviour **can be achieved** in a variety of ways.

There is.../There are...

There are numerous reasons/explanations **for** the deterioration in children’s behaviour.

There is a variety of **reasons why** children's behaviour is worsening/...**explanations for** the worsening

behaviour of children.

Note: it is excellent if you can change the word forms/vocabulary given in the task wording when building your

paragraphs. All of the above examples illustrate this.

206

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Starting body paragraphs with extended topic sentences

(using 'Even though...', 'Although...', 'who...', 'that...')

Using subordinate clauses helps to create longer, more detailed sentences.

Example

There are many parents **who believe that** kindness is by far the best way to improve behaviour among children.

Replacing simple connectors when developing paragraph ideas/examples

It's really tempting to use simple connectors like '**Firstly/Secondly/Thirdly/Finally**' especially when you are

under time pressure but usually this merely indicates a list rather than a commentary. Look at some alternative

options for connecting different essay points:

Alternative options

There are various courses of action that can be taken to improve behaviour among children. **First and foremost,**

children need to be taught firm boundaries of what is or isn't acceptable. **Another, important factor**

concerns/involves/is... **Also of some significance** is... **All in all** then...

Finishing off your essay

A short conclusion helps to round off your essay, summarising what you have said without too much repetition.

Starting off the conclusion appropriately

These are the usual ways of beginning/signalling your concluding paragraph:

In conclusion, .../Summing up, .../To conclude, .../To summarise, .../All in all, ...

Using tenses appropriately in the conclusion

For Essay Type 4, the present continuous/progressive can work well if the topic is a **current** issue. When

summarising the second part of the task a tense change is needed to mirror the task wording.

Example

To summarise, children's behaviour **is worsening** largely because...

In order to improve the situation, parenting skills **need to/should** become a compulsory school subject

because...

Or, with a passive

To improve the situation, better parenting skills **are required/are needed**.

For more tips on how to add fluency to your writing, give examples, form complex sentences and much more, go to:

'Grammar suggestions for all IELTS Task 2 essay types' on page 208.



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Grammar Suggestions for all IELTS Task 2 Essay Types

The advice below may help with any of the four essay types.

Using ‘reduced’ clauses

This is a device for making your writing a little more fluent. Look at one or two examples and note that passive

forms and ‘-ing’ forms work best. The words in brackets are left out of the sentence but the grammar is still

considered correct.

Parents (*who are*) **looking after** more than one child often have to be more careful to treat each child similarly.

Children (*who are*) **cared for** in families which are unstable, are more likely to develop poor behaviour.

Grandparents, if (*they are*) **used** wisely, can be good models of appropriate behaviour.

The children (*who were*) **given** sugary drinks were found to behave worse than other children.

Note: clauses are not usually reduced when the verb is in the present simple tense, the future tense, or the

present/past perfect.

Referencing

In Task 2, referencing skills (meaning the use of little words to replace or ‘refer back to’ words used in previous

sentences) are another effective way of maintaining fluency and economy, while avoiding repetition. Compare

these two texts:

Text 1 - without referencing

Parents are responsible for their children's bad behaviour. Bad behaviour is learned, not genetically transmitted. Bad behaviour has negative, social consequences. The negative, social consequences often lead to a child feeling isolated or too 'different' from peers. Feeling isolated from peers may reduce the desire to fit in even more. Feeling isolated may reduce desire to 'fit in', and even worse behaviour may occur.

Text 2 - with referencing

Parents are responsible for their children's bad behaviour. **Such** behaviour is learned not genetically transmitted.

It has negative, social consequences. **These** often lead to a child feeling isolated or too 'different' from peers.

Feelings **like these** may further reduce the desire to 'fit in', **which** may lead to even worse behaviour.

Giving examples

It is a good idea to offer examples to illustrate your ideas/points/opinions; however, it's not a good idea to

introduce every example repetitively, using 'For example' every time.

208

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Read this range of options:

Parents mould their children's behaviour by the way they conduct their own lives.

For instance, parents who argue regularly may find that their child both imitates them and sees arguing

as a successful life strategy.

Parents shape their children's behaviour unconsciously, too. **For example**, a parent

who never hugs a child, may unconsciously be communicating to the child that physical affection is not important.

A young child can develop poor behaviour if parents fail to set and apply clear boundaries in areas **such as** bed times, eating times, and times for getting up in the morning.

Examples of poor parenting might include failure to make clear to children the difference between right and wrong, and failure to model good behaviour.

One example of poor parenting might involve punishing a child without explaining the reason for the punishment or without any consistency.

Poor parenting is **easily exemplified in** the practice of inconsistent punishment.

Using modal forms to communicate a cautious viewpoint

Modals like '**may**', '**might**', '**could**' are really helpful in preventing your own viewpoint from seeming over-

confident, or even unreasonable. But, if you have a strongly-held opinion, writing directly is sometimes more

honest.

Look at these:

Parents **may well be** the most important shapers of a child's behaviour.

Children **might behave** better if **there were** real consequences for poor behaviour.

Schools **could teach** parenting skills as part of the core curriculum.

Now, compare with these:

Parents **are** the most important shapers of a child's behaviour.

Children **behave** better if there **are** real consequences for poor behaviour.

Schools **must teach** parenting skills as part of the core curriculum.

Developing your ideas using other subordinate clause types

When time permits it helps your grammar score if you can use a variety of complex sentence forms appropriately

and accurately to express, when, for example:

Giving Reasons

Children need good parenting **because/as/since** they too may be parents eventually.

Expressing Result

Parents should teach their children good behaviour consistently **such that** they become responsible and

caring adults.

Good parenting is considered **so** important in some countries **that** it is now taught in schools.

As a result of poor parenting, children often lack awareness of what is appropriate.

209

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Expressing Purpose

Children need to behave well **so that** they can learn how to fit into social groups.

Parents need to learn parenting skills **in order to** raise standards of behaviour.

Expressing contrast

Well-behaved children fit into society, **whereas/while** poorly-behaved children always struggle to be accepted.

Well-behaved children fit into society; poorly behaved children, **however**, rarely do.

Well-behaved children fit into society; **however**, poorly behaved children rarely do.

Well-behaved children fit into society; poorly-behaved children, **on the other hand/in contrast**, rarely do.

Expressing degrees of similarity

Just as well-behaved children need love, it is even **more likely that** poorly-behaved children also need to feel loved.

All mothers need support; **equally**, all fathers need to feel supported in their role.

Being a good parent is **as** vital **as** being a good son or daughter.

Being a good parent is (**much/somewhat/considerably/a little**) **more** vital **than** being a good son or daughter.

Having a polite child is (**much/somewhat/considerably/a little**) **less** important **than** a successful child.

Being rich is **not (at all/quite/nearly)** as important **as** being a good parent.

Using 'if' clauses

'if' clauses can be useful when you need to state the conditions under which something might improve.

Read these:

If schools teach parenting skills as an obligatory part of their curriculum then bad behaviour amongst children **will gradually decrease**.

If parents are taught the most important principles of child rearing, then the behaviour of their sons and daughter **will obviously improve**.

If parents were forced legally to guarantee financially the good behaviour of their children, then obviously careful parenting **would increase**.

Using ‘unless’ constructions

‘Unless’ is similar in meaning to ‘If not’ but useful for expressing the wish to avoid a negative situation in the future. Take a little look at this **example**:

Example

Unless children **are** shown good models of behaviour, it may well be that standards **will deteriorate** even further.

210

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Using ‘whether’ constructions

‘**Whether**’ or ‘**whether or not**’ are very useful especially in the introduction or conclusion of an essay which asks you to discuss two points of view.

Look at the examples below:

It is undeniably difficult to assess **whether** parents **or** schools are more responsible for the bad behaviour of children.

Whether or not children’s behaviour is getting worse is in itself probably debatable, but this essay will assume it to be so.

Whether parents **or** schools should be held responsible for bad behaviour in children is an issue that relies

very much on cultural context.

Developing your essay's ideas in other ways

As you develop your ideas and viewpoints, you may want to connect sentences using other expressions in order

to signal what the sentences are doing. This shows variety and flexibility. Perhaps you want to...

...add something

Parents could **also** apply their rules consistently.

In addition/Additionally/In addition to that/Moreover/Furthermore/What is more, they could give their

children real punishments for disobedience.

...express levels of probability

Without better parenting, behaviour levels are bound **to/almost certain to/very likely to/likely to/quite**

likely to/perhaps likely to deteriorate further.

Without better parenting, **there is every likelihood/a major possibility/some likelihood/a small possibility**

that behaviour levels will deteriorate further.

With better parenting **there is little likelihood/no possibility/absolutely no likelihood that** behaviour levels

will deteriorate further.

...express doubt and uncertainty

It seems unclear whether or not behaviour will improve in the next decade.

It is doubtful that behaviour will improve in the next decade.

There is uncertainty about whether behaviour will improve in the future.

It is difficult to determine whether bad behaviour is increasing in schools.

A lack of certainty surrounds predictions of future behaviour.

211

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Grammar Writing Task 2

Using adverbs as emphasis or as indicators of attitude

Adverbs (when used sparingly) are a really helpful way both of adding a sense of your own attitudes to ideas,

and of adding emphasis. Compare these:

Without an ‘-ly’ adverb

Parenting is one of the most important tasks you’ll ever have in your life.

With an ‘-ly’ adverb

Obviously/Surely/Clearly/Actually/Certainly parenting is one of the most important tasks you’ll ever have in your life.

Parenting is **arguably/possibly/unquestionably/probably/definitely/indubitably/undeniably** one of the most

important tasks you’ll ever have in your life.

This was a really detailed section, wasn't it?

Time for a break! Do something relaxing now, and then tomorrow practice a Task 2 essay.

As you practice more essays, try, little by little, to add some of the grammatical features here that fit each Task type. But, use the grammar to develop your own style of writing; don't imitate the samples in this book too closely.

You WILL get better at writing, but please be patient. It's better not to have unrealistic expectations or you might end up being 'a patient'!

212

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Articles

IELTS GRAMMAR — ARTICLES: INDEFINITE ('A'/'AN') AND DEFINITE ('THE')

In English the expression '**articles**' means either '**a**', '**an**', or '**the**'. Is that a deep sigh I can hear? If your first language doesn't have these little words, you will be finding them really tricky to learn. You have my full sympathy!

Articles are used in English to identify something or someone that can be counted (countable). A person or thing being talked about generally is usually considered **indefinite**; if being talked about in a more detailed or particular way then is usually considered **definite**.

Basic differences

'a' versus 'an'

Article

is used

for example

a

before nouns beginning with a

a car, a number, a date, a hotel (*more natural than 'an*

consonant or consonant sound

hotel'),

a one-dollar coin

an

before a word beginning with a

an export, an MP3 player, an economic problem

vowel sound

an hour

'a' / 'an' versus 'the'

Article

is used

for example

a/an

to identify a thing or person

I want **an apple** (*any apple, or not a particular apple*)

that can be counted (e.g. **1,2,3**

apples) but is not a particular

(*i.e. is an 'indefinite'*) one

the

with things that can usually be

I want **the apple** in the fruit bowl.

counted **but** to identify the

(There's one fruit bowl, and it only has one particular, definite

object or person as a particular

apple in it)

one *(a defined or 'definite' one)*

I want **the green apple**

(There's only one green apple (so it is a particular one); the

other apples may be red)

213

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Articles

When to use 'a' / 'an'

1. If you want to mention a particular person or thing without detailed identification.

Examples:

They live in **a new apartment**. *(I mention a simple, general fact for the first time)*

He gave me **a watch**. *(I'm less interested in the make, more in the gift itself)*

She married **an Ethiopian** *(I don't know his name, only where he's from)*

2. If you want to talk in a general way about a member of a professional or other group.

Examples:

A teacher must be patient *(meaning all teachers/any teacher)*

A cow is more useful to humanity than **a dog** is. *(as a general rule, I believe this)*

She's **an actress** *(she's a member of that profession; it's her job)*

3. Numbers.

'a' is used with 'round' numbers or with duration of time – such as 'a thousand', 'a hundred', 'an hour'.

Note: *when the number is more complex 'one' is often preferred:*

Examples:

Three thousand one hundred *(not 'three thousand and a hundred')*.

One thousand, six hundred and two *(not 'a thousand six hundred and two')*.

4. To specify things even if you don't normally count them.

Something you don't usually count is called 'uncountable'. For example, words like 'cream', 'heat', 'consumption', 'globalisation' are uncountable *(we don't say 'two consumptions' or 'two heats')*.
Most uncountable

words don't usually need articles.

Examples:

I like cream in my coffee; Heat is necessary in order to boil water;

Globalisation has increased international interaction

But... if the same expressions are **described in more detail**, 'a' or 'an' is sometimes used.

Example:

The heater gives off **a heat** which is very dry.

214

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Articles

'the' is usually necessary...

1. When two people both know the specific item or person they are talking about.

Examples:

Did you remember **the sunscreen**? *(the one usually in the bathroom at home)*

Could you pass **the water**? *(the water jug is on the table at which they are sitting)*

2. When something has been previously mentioned (and thus is defined).

Examples:

He has **a brother in Spain** and another in Thailand. **The brother in Spain** is a flamenco guitarist.

There was **an increase** in 2012, but **the increase** that year was very small.

3. When there is only one.

If you write about something that is unique, use ‘the’.

Examples:

The earth, the moon, the world

Note: *with countries ‘the’ is **not** normally used even though they are unique, unless they are **made up of letters**.*

Examples:

I love Japan and Korea *(**not** the Japan and the Korea)*

I love **the UAE**, more than **the USA**.

4. When information is added that makes something more defined.

Examples:

The beauty of a summer’s day in Paris is unsurpassed.

(the non-count noun ‘beauty’ is described more definitely and so attracts ‘the’)

The group with incomes below \$50,000...

The economic problems of 21st century America are complex.

Even short expressions with ‘of’ require ‘the’, as in:

the number of passengers, **the length** of stay

5. When talking about the familiar, natural environment in which you live, and weather.

Examples:

The sea is rough today.

I can hear **the wind**.

We live near **the mountains**.

The countryside is festooned with wild flowers at the moment.

The weather seems to be unusual for this time of year.

215

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Articles

6. With most..., least..., ...—est.

When you use a superlative form, use ‘the’ before it.

Examples:

The largest room has three windows.

Older people seem to have **the least free time** on average.

The most significant change in our shopping centre has been...

7. When talking about the peoples of particular nations or particular groups of people.

Examples:

The French are often more outspoken than **the Finns**.

The blind receive more support than either **the deaf or the elderly**.

8. To identify a plural thing that is particular (defined).

Examples:

She was supposed to deliver **the strawberries** this morning

(the particular strawberries ordered for delivery)

Those are not **the prices** we were given on the phone

(the prices that were previously specified)

Note: If you talk **generally about plural things** 'the' is not necessary.

Examples:

Strawberries are good for you. *(all strawberries)*

Prices are going up *(prices of many things in general)*.

216

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Articles

DON'T use articles...

1. After fixed expressions, often with prepositions.

Examples:

I first met him **at university**

He's **at work** every day until 5pm

I travel **by train** every day.

I **left home** when I was 20

2. After 'both' or 'all'.

Examples:

Both kinds *(not usually 'both the kinds')*

All three groups *(not usually 'all the three groups')*

3. With possessive expressions.

Examples:

John's coat (*not* 'the John's coat')

Spain's economy (*not* 'the Spain's economy')

4. With street names, towns, cities, states, lakes, famous town or city buildings.

Examples:

Oxford Street, Wall Street

Bristol, Paris, British Columbia

Lake Titicaca

Cambridge University, Sydney Airport, London Zoo

Westminster Cathedral

*Note: art galleries take 'The' as in **The** National Gallery, **The** Louvre.*

217

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Articles

Typical examples of 'a' / 'the' in General Training Task 1 answers

I bought **an iPad** from your shop yesterday. When I returned home it didn't work.

I'd like you to exchange **the iPad** I bought for a different one.

Comment: second mention of 'iPad' requires 'the' as it has now been defined.

Note: The underlined words signal that greater definition is being given to the preceding noun by

adding more

information about it.

The tree with large leaves is blocking **the light** in my garden.

I'd be most grateful if you could offer me **a refund**.

I interested in getting **a job** in your organisation.

Comment: 'job' is not specified - the writer means **any** suitable job in that particular organisation.

I am interested in **the job** advertised in the local paper yesterday.

Comment: There is only one job - the one advertised yesterday.

You will enjoy seeing **the Acropolis** and **the Parthenon** when you visit us in Athens.

The cost of flights to Cairo is much less in Spring.

The intelligence of your sales staff seems to be somewhat limited.

You will find **a vacuum cleaner** in the cupboard.

Comment: There may be more than one cleaner in the house, or the writer is not familiar with the cleaner, only

with the location of it.

The vacuum cleaner is in the cupboard.

Comment: It's the only one in the house, or it belongs to the writer.

I've visited Westminster Cathedral, but not **the Houses** of Parliament or **the Louvre**.

Do you now know your 'a' from your 'the' now?

The only acceptable answer is **a** cautious 'yes', **an** affirmative.

The IELTS test will be **a** chance to show what you have learnt!



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Prepositions

IELTS GRAMMAR – PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions in English are a real nightmare, aren't they?!

Whether you are writing an IELTS Task 1 letter or a Task 2 essay, you need to be as careful as you can with prepositions.

Prepositions and time expressions

'At' — for times and night/dawn

At 5.30pm/at midnight/at noon/at night/at dawn

'Between' — for years

Between 2010 and 2012, for the years **between** 1990 and 2010, the statistics were...

'By' — for months/years/seasons/most parts of the day

By 2012/By September/2012 (*when writing about a series of months/years*)

'In' — for months/years/seasons/most parts of the day

In April/In 2012/In Spring/In the evening/...morning/...afternoon

'On' — for days/dates

On Monday/on the 6th

Prepositions (and one or two adverbs) for of time

She has been in France **since** 1999. (*She went there in 1999 and has not returned*)

I'm going on holiday to Florence **for** three weeks. (*I will spend three weeks in Florence*)

The exhibition lasted **from** September **to** December. (*It began in September and ended in December*)

The construction program will last **from** summer **until** spring. (*It will start in summer and will end in spring*)

I fell asleep **during** the performance. (*I was asleep for some part of the performance*)

He has to pay the fine **within** a month. (*No longer than a month*)

‘A kaleidoscope’ of prepositions with the word ‘time’

I was **in time** for my interview.

At that time I was unemployed.

I always try to be **on time** for appointments.

Pain heals **with time/over time**.

From time to time/At times I get bored with my job.

I’ll keep working **for the time being/for a long time**.

By the time you read this, I’ll be in Istanbul.

219

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Prepositions

Prepositions that are followed by “–ing” expressions

About

I’m **excited about** starting my new job.

They’re **pleased about** moving to a new house.

She’s **sad about** leaving her family.

At

I was **disappointed at** failing the driving test again.

I’m afraid I’m **not very good at** keeping my own accounts.

He's **useless at cooking** Italian food.

She's really **good at making** speeches.

By

He paid for it **by working** every night for 3 months.

By concentrating on preparing for the test, I improved my score.

I think it was **by living** cheaply that I was able to stay overseas for so long.

For

Thank you for letting me stay.

He's **responsible for** arranging the accommodation.

In

I'm **interested in** buying your car.

Of

I don't like **the idea of** travelling by plane.

I'm **fed up of** arguing with you.

I'm **tired of** going to the same restaurant.

He's **frightened of** losing his job.

On

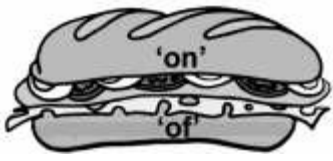
They always **insist on** giving us meat to eat.

She's so **keen on** moving to New Zealand.

To

I **look forward to** hearing from you soon.

220



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Prepositions

Preposition sandwiches

There are many useful expressions for letter writing which have a preposition at both ends!

She's **in trouble with** her boss.

She's **in fear of** losing her job.

He knows she's **on good terms with** her colleagues.

He wants her to be **in charge of** the redundancy program.

She's **at odds with** her colleagues on this issue.

But she's **in tune with** management on the need for greater efficiency.

I joined the company's social club **in the hope of** making new friends.

The manager was **at pains to** remind me of the poor salary.

But later he said I was **in line for** promotion.

Because of the low salary, I was **on the verge of** leaving.

But **for the sake of** my colleagues, I stayed.

Also I was **in love with** one of my co-workers.

Later, I got **in touch with** an old friend, whom I had always been **in awe of** because of his great ambition.

Out of respect for this friend I sent my resume.

He wrote back saying: **In answer to / With respect to / With reference to / With regard to** your letter and **by**

virtue of / on account of our friendship, and **for reasons of** expediency I want you to work for me. You'll soon

get **on top of** things here and become **up to date with** our processes, even though right now, you may

feel a bit

out of touch with the new technology. Welcome aboard.

Two colloquial examples:

That dress is **to die for**.

I'm pretty much **in synch with** the way they do things.

Common verb forms + prepositions

Preposition

Examples of use

On

To stand on

You should learn to **stand on** your own two feet.

To rely on

We **rely on** my wife's income.

To spend on

I **spend** very little **on** luxuries.

To

To listen to

It's better if you **listen to** instructions carefully.

To complain to

I **complained to** the police.

To attend to

I'll **attend to** your problem in a moment.

In

To live in

Many people **live in** poverty.

To settle in

It didn't take long to **settle in** to our new house.

To send in

Please **send in** your resume.

221

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Prepositions

Preposition

Examples of use

With

To play with

I often **play with** my mobile phone applications.

To help with

She **helps with** the cooking at the retirement home.

To assist with

The government **assists with** relocation costs.

By

To stand by

I'll **stand by** the entrance and wait for you there.

To travel by

We always **travel by** train.

To get by

Although we are not well paid, we manage to **get by**.

For

To ask for

I'm going to **ask for** a pay rise.

To look for

I've been **looking for** my passport everywhere.

To come for

I've **come for** the money you owe me.

About

To talk about

We must **talk about** this new problem.

To hear about

I **heard about** your accident.

To worry about

I'm **worried about** my health.

To know about

I **know about** your situation.

At

To laugh at

It's too easy to **laugh at** other people.

To stare at

It's not polite to **stare at** others.

To glare at

When I overtook him in my new car, he **glared at** me.

From

To suffer from

This country **suffers from** too much unemployment.

To hear from

I haven't **heard from** my brother for ages.

To leave from

The train **leaves from** the main station.

Of

To remind of

This town **reminds me of** home.

To think of

I'll be **thinking of** you when I'm on the cruise/ What do you **think of** the new iPad? (***Note:** the second example means 'What is your opinion of...'*?)

Prepositions for ways of getting around

By plane/by car/by train/by bicycle/by taxi/by boat/by camel

on foot/on horseback

222

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Prepositions

Some useful adjectives + prepositions

Expression

Example of use

angry with

I'm not **angry with** you, but I am annoyed.

annoyed about/at

I'm **annoyed about** the damage to my computer.

aware of

You may not be **aware of** the problem.

blind to

I'm certainly not **blind to** your abilities as a manager.

comfortable with

I'm not **comfortable with** the way they treat their customers.

concerned about

I'm **concerned about** your behaviour.

confident in

We are **confident in** your ability to give us sound financial advice.

crazy about

I'm **crazy about** Russian folk music (*informal*).

curious about/to

I'm **curious about** the origin of your name/I'm **curious to** know more about it.

dependent on

I'm still **dependent on** my parents for financial support.

hungry for

I'm **hungry for** new experiences.

interested in

I'm **interested in** doing a PhD at Harvard.

keen on

I'm **keen on** travelling to Antarctica to study the penguins.

mad about

I'm **mad about** tennis (*informal*).

nice to

She's seldom **nice to** her little brother.

pleased with

I'm **pleased with** the new dress I bought.

polite to

He's always **polite to** the customers.

rude to

It's not a good idea to be **rude to** your work colleagues.

satisfied with

Overall, they were **satisfied with** my progress.

sorry about/for

We are **sorry about** the delay you experienced/I feel **sorry for** his wife.

surprised at

I'm **surprised at** your attitude.

tired of

I'm **tired of** your constant complaints.

wrong with

There's something **wrong with** my computer.

Prepositions and passive forms

The most common preposition with passive forms is 'by'.

Examples:

I **was taught** the piano **by my mother**.

This novel **was written by Steinbeck**.

But there are **other examples**:

I don't like being **laughed at**.

(*Note: 'by' can follow, as in, 'I don't like being **laughed at by my friends**'.*)

He **was operated on** last night.

This bed looks **slept in**.

The movie star was tired of being **looked at**.

Other common uses of prepositions

What's **on TV**?

He is **under age**, and can't watch this movie, I'm afraid.

I feel a bit **under the weather**, so I'd like to postpone our meeting until next week.

I was **under the impression** that you had gone overseas.

She didn't break the plate **on purpose**.

On balance, I'm satisfied with my job.

The photo is **on page 10**.

223

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com





IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Prepositions

A few, common phrasal prepositional forms

I don't **get on with** my parents because they are always critical of my lifestyle.

I'll **look out for** you when I arrive.

She tries **to get by on** less than \$300 a week.

I need **to find out about** accommodation options in Bulgaria.

I can't **go along with** your analysis of the situation, I'm afraid.

Describing objects in detail, using prepositions

It's possible you may be asked to describe an article that you lost or was damaged and so you need to use

prepositions carefully.

Examples:

It is a green suitcase **with** a black leather handle.

There is a grease mark **on the front of** the jacket.

On the back of the parcel is my address.

Down the side of the sofa is a large tear.

In the corner of the room **just below** the ceiling there is a damp mark.

The vase is in the entertainment unit, **right beside** the TV.

The hotel was located **right opposite/right next to** a noisy night club.

Prepositions of position

Q. Where's your ball?

A. It's... **on** the table, ...**under** the table, ...**on top of** the cupboard, ...**inside** the bag, ...**behind** the door, ...**in** the hedge, ...**next to** the tennis racket, ...**at** the corner of the street, ...**over** the road. Actually, I've lost all eight of them! Pretty careless, eh?!

Q. Where do you live?

A. I live... **opposite** the shopping centre, ...**next** to the church,...**between** the hotel **and** the park, ... **among** the trees, ...**near** the school, ...**by** the police station, ...**below** the water in a submarine, ...**beneath** the branches of that huge tree, ...**underneath** that huge umbrella. In fact, I suppose I live just about anywhere and everywhere!

224

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Writing Doctor Prepositions

Position of prepositions

Position of prepositions can sometimes affect the level of formality.

Examples:

With whom did you go? (*more formal*)

Who did you go **with**? (*less formal*)

About which person are you **talking**? (*more formal*)

Which person are you **talking about**? (*less formal*)

It's a great place **in which to live**. (*more formal*)

It's a great place **to live in**. (*less formal*)

(**Note:** *'It's a great place to live' is also used*)

Feeling better now? Oh dear, so you're still feeling sick...I see...but only sick of grammar! Oh well, never mind. Have an early night and then practice writing IELTS letters or essays using some of the grammar in my various 'Writing Doc' sections. This will make you better prepared for the IELTS writing test. Write accurately and appropriately, of course! Trust the writing doctor!

225

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS VOCABULARY — WRITING TASK 1

Hello there! Welcome to the General Training Vocabulary resource section.

Although I can't offer you every word or phrase you might need for Task 1 in the test, I have tried to choose some of the more common general topics that occur in letters and have offered you a range of potentially helpful expressions. I hope these may also give you a few ideas to use in Task 1 letters.

Vocabulary linked to the letter's topic and purpose

Banks, bills and money

Banks

I'd like to...

... apply for a loan/...borrow some money/...take out/pay back a loan

... set up a bank account/a savings account/a deposit account

... apply for a credit card/...reset my password/...change my pin number/...set a credit limit

... pay off my overdraft/...reduce my bank fees/...find an ATM machine/
a cash machine

Bills

I'm always struggling to ...

... pay the bills/the weekly food bill/the electricity/water/gas/phone bill

... have trouble paying the bills/...get behind on my bills/...pay my bills late/

Sometimes I ...

... borrow money from my brother, but I always promise to pay him back/repay him.

Attitudes to money

I'm often...

... squeezed for money/broke/penniless

... money worries/...money troubles

and have...

... comfortably off/well-off/rolling in money/

and I'm certainly not...

made of money/filthy rich/mega-rich

In fact, occasionally

... live like a pauper/...scrounge off other

I have to...

people/...live on next to nothing

226

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

... be generous/... live beyond my means/...spend money like

But it's in my nature to...

water/...live for the moment/...throw my money around as if there

is no tomorrow/...waste my money

... lives within his means/...is careful with money/...is a scrooge

My brother,

on the other hand...

with money/...is tight-fisted/...is a miser/...counts every

penny/...squirrels his money away

... money isn't everything/...money doesn't

I just say to him that...

buy you happiness/...easy come, easy go

... money opens doors/...every cent counts/

But he just laughs and

... money is power/...he lets his money do the

replies that...

talking/...you have to make your money work

for you

But he would, wouldn't he,

... made of money/used to making money

because, unlike me, he's...

Still, I suppose I'll definitely

... cut down on.../...cut back on.../

have to...

... spend less on... all those little luxuries

... any money I get is always burning a hole in my pocket*

even though...

Note * This means you can't wait to spend it.

Saving

I'll have to build up my...

... pocket money/savings/nest egg

and start to...

... save up for.../...put some money aside for.../

... monitor my weekly expenditure/

... watch the cost of living

227

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Buying or renting?

I'd really like to...

... buy a house/...take out a mortgage on a house/...invest in property

and be...

... asset rich instead of cash poor...

... pay rent/excessive rent

but at the moment

... rent a room/an apartment/

I have to...

a house

Actually, my landlord

... a huge rent rise/a rent increase

has just announced...

... appeal to the rent tribunal/...contact the estate agent

so I may have to...

The later years

One day when I'm rich

... make a will/...leave all my money to a cats' home...

and old, I'll...

... inherit a house when my relatives die/...build up a good

If I'm lucky before that,

pension/...accumulate a healthy superannuation lump sum/

I may...

... retire on a government pension

... squander my inheritance. Such is life!

but, no doubt I would

just...

Complaining about a neighbour

... to complain about...

I am writing...

... to make a complaint about...

... a complaint about excessive noise/noisy parties late at night which is/are affecting my sleep/making it impossible for me to get any sleep

... tipping your rubbish into my garden

I would be most grateful if

... parking your car in front of my driveway
you would stop...

... letting your children come into my garden

... mowing your grass at 6 am in the morning

... throwing rubbish into my garden so please dispose of your rubbish

I am tired of you...

responsibly and take responsibility for your own waste

I suggest that you...

... take your rubbish to a recycling centre

228

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com





IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Complaining about a neighbour's pets

... your dog/cat tries to bite me/my child

Every time I walk out of my

house/apartment...

... you don't look after your dog/cat properly

It seems to me that...

... your dog is barking constantly

... your cat is uncontrollable

... your dog is untrained

... your parrot is always squawking

... your dog is constantly fouling the pavement

Moreover,...

... your cat is always hunting and killing little birds

... your dog/cat is destroying all the plants in our garden

I think...

... you should keep your dog on a lead, otherwise, I'll have no alternative

but to contact the police

Shopping

... I'd like a refund.

The appliance you sold me

... I'm writing to see if you are/might be willing

is faulty so...

to exchange it for a new one.

The reason is simple...it doesn't work.

Also, the size/the shape/the colour/the range of functions is unsuitable.

Luckily, there is a one-year guarantee/warranty on this item.

I'm afraid...

... the warranty period has expired/...we have run out of that model

I have to say that ...

... the service in this store is appalling/mediocre/excellent

I'd very much like to

... you still stock that model/...you have that model in stock currently

know if...

Could you let me know

... opening hours/closing hours?

your...

The shop is open from... to...

The problem is that...

... the battery is missing/...the switch has broken/...a part/a component is

missing/...it's defective/...we've sold out of that item

I now prefer...

... shopping online/...the convenience of shopping on the internet



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

I would like to pay...

... by credit card/debit card/

... in cash/by cheque/with a gift token

... a deposit/the balance on the deposit later/in monthly instalments, or

I'd like to know if I can

just make a small down payment

pay...

Is it possible for you

... reserve the item?/put the item on lay by?/put the item on one side for

to...

me?

The store offers...

... summer sales/...plenty of bargains at

‘giveaway’ prices/discounted prices

but not...

... poor quality goods at exorbitant prices/excessive prices

Holidays and travel

I’d like some information

... domestic flights to.../international flights to...

about...

and to find out about...

... outward flights on the fifth.../return flights on or

around...

It would be helpful to

... the cancellation charges/the refund policy

know about...

... a stopover/a non-stop flight/the shortest flight time/to overnight

I think I’d prefer...

at...

... a one-way/return flight/ticket

I’d like to know if it is

... book a ticket/...book accommodation beforehand

necessary to...

... a good quality airline/...a low-cost charter flight/

I’d prefer...

... a local airline

... a cruise/an all-in holiday/a guided tour

I usually travel...

... by train/by taxi/by boat/by bus

The type of holiday I'm

... a backpacking holiday across America/around Europe

looking for is...

... an adventure holiday/a study holiday

230

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

... change money/...take out travel insurance

It's a good idea to...

... pack your suitcase/...keep within the baggage

allowance/...take a carry-on bag

At the airport you have

... check in/...go to the gate/...board the aircraft/...depart on time

to...

The airline offers...

... in-flight entertainment/flight attendants/a good level/standard of

service/duty free goods

Before departure, or on

... pass through customs/...collect your baggage from the carousel

arrival you have to...

... have a current visa/a current passport which is valid for

more than six months

... check that your visa is not out of date

... an excursion to.../a day trip to.../a half-day tour to historical

I'd like to book...

monuments/museums/art galleries/the ruins/the cathedral/the castle/the

main square

The city has...

... winding streets/cobbled streets/dark alleys/knick-knack

shops/souvenir shops/handmade goods/lively street cafes

It's OK to...

... barter/...take photos of.../... eat the local food/... ask for help

but be careful not to get...

... lost/sick/swindled out of your money/robbed/mugged

... my luggage was damaged/...the flight was cancelled/...the hotel was

Unfortunately...

overbooked

... a popular resort/an upmarket resort/a

It is...

cheap resort/a quaint village/a popular night

spot/a lesser known part of the city/

away from the tourists/picturesque areas

... pristine beaches/crowded beaches/

The resort has...

colourful, local fishermen/luxury apartments

... a fair amount of squalor/a dangerous

but also...

downtown area/very few public

conveniences

... tourist industry and we have many travel agencies which offer

Our company is prominent

discount travel/bargain holidays/luxury cruises/weekend breaks/cheap

in the...

flights

231

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Accommodation

... a luxury hotel/a three-star hotel/a cheap hotel/a

I would like to stay in...

guest house/bed and breakfast accommodation/an
apartment/a backpacker hostel/a caravan/a motor
home/a tent, or maybe sleep in the open air/sleep
under the stars

When you arrive you usually

... check in/... register/...get the keys to your room/
have to...

... phone room service/... unpack

You can use...

... the hotel swimming pool/the fitness room/the hotel coffee shop

... full board/half board/bed and breakfast

I'm staying...

... meals are not included in the price and I will be charged extra for ...

but...

a room with its own bathroom/a single room/a double room/

a family room/a room with a view of.../I don't want...

a dormitory/...to share a bathroom/I prefer excellent facilities

The price/room rate

... a buffet breakfast/full breakfast/continental breakfast/
includes...

tea and coffee-making facilities

It's cheaper...

... in the low season/out of season, as there are usually more vacancies

... there are special deals/bargain rates

When it's half-empty...

At the reception desk you

... a safety deposit box/the concierge/

can ask about...

the bell boy/the lifts

You'll need to make a note

... the checkout time/any extra charges/the room rate per person

of...

... cooking over a camp fire/sleeping under the stars/

I really enjoy...

packing my rucksack

... to be attacked by insects/to be bitten by mosquitoes/

but I don't want...

to sleep on hard ground

... have trouble keeping warm/...feel the cold/...get soaked to the

When I go camping I seem

skin/...suffer from backache/...keep waking up/...hear strange

to...

noises/...have no hot water

... to pitch the tent on flat ground/... to pack everything up neatly

You need...

/...to collect wood for the fire/...a powerful torch/...walking boots/...a

lightweight sleeping bag/...an inflatable mattress/...insect-

repellent/...warm gloves/...rainproof clothing/...a compass

232

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Staying in someone's house

... look after someone's house/...house sit/

It's a big responsibility to...

... be invited to stay at...

... feed the pets/...water the garden/...keep an eye

but, I have offered to...

on.../...look out for the.../

... sleep in the guest room/...collect the mail/

... take the dog for a walk/...lock up/

... switch off everything before I go out/...clean the

house from top to bottom before I leave

... locate the/activate the alarm system/...turn on the watering system/

I'm afraid I was unable to...

... work out how to use the dishwasher/

washing machine/cooker/television remote

I like to...

... help out with the cleaning/...leave everything just as I found it

... a list of dos and don'ts/a list of useful contacts

I will leave...

If you have any trouble...

... call the security company/...don't hesitate to call me/...send me a
text message

... letting me stay in your fantastic house/...looking after my house so

Thank you so much for...

well/...leaving the house in spotless condition/ ...leaving everything
spick and span

Describing character/personality

...really/very/extremely pleasant/kind/talented/

lively/energetic/active/unassuming/sensitive/

He's...

enthusiastic/focused/easy-going/hard-working

... quite/rather/a bit/somewhat...

whereas, she's...

... difficult/unfriendly/uncooperative/lazy/diffident/

careless/unmotivated/ordinary/

down in the mouth/negative/cynical

My mum's...

... a bundle of energy/ generous to a fault/

a breath of fresh air/a star

She...

... will do anything for you/to help

My dad, on the

... a bit of a dead loss/a workaholic/a liability/retired

other hand is...

233

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

... a real saint/a rare find/a good catch/one in a million/

My best friend's...

a treasure/very independent/self-motivated/super-efficient/

extra special/multi-talented

Though sometimes,

... impolite/clueless/unmotivated/eccentric/downright rude/accident-

she's...

prone/antisocial/ hyperactive/over-rated/at a loose end

Such a pity, though,

... under-valued/misunderstood

that my dad's so...

Me? I'm just ME, I

suppose!

The workplace

... apply for a job/...complete the application

I'm going to...

form/...submit my application

... invited for an interview/...appointed to the

I hope I get....

job

... part-time/...full time/...overtime/...two days a week/

I'd prefer to work...

... as an assistant to...

... in the same department as.../...alongside Ms ...

Could you let me know

... pay rate/hourly rate/salary/wage

the...

... earn an income/...be paid fortnightly/weekly/monthly

It's important for me to...

... receive back pay/holiday pay/... take annual leave

but not be either...

... overpaid or underpaid/fired/sacked

... resign/hand in your resignation/quit* (**American English*)

The manager has informed

... be promoted/... move sideways/... be demoted

me that you wish to...

... get on well with your boss/manager/workmates/colleagues

I hear that you...

... tend to clash with your boss over.../are in dispute with the company

about.../... work hard/...overwork/...can't cope with the working

hours/... do shift work/...used to work a 40-hour week

... do voluntary work/... get work experience/... train as a.../

You might try to...

... get work as a...

234

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



... get to work at.../...leave work at.../...travel to work by...

Usually, I....

... working on a project/...collaborating with.../

At the moment, I'm...

... working alongside (Dr. Jones)...

... working long hours/...often tired after work/...enjoying my

job/...finding my job boring/repetitive/...looking for a job with good

prospects, not a dead-end job

... be ambitious/...work for

People tell me that I

myself/...start my own

should...

business/...get to the top/

... find a steady job/

... try not to end up unemployed/

... avoid being out of work/

... not become unemployable

... enjoy physical work more than

Ask yourself whether you...

brain work/...want a sedentary

occupation/a varied job/want to work for an international company/

to run your own business

The neighbourhood

We live in...

... a run-down/a new/a very quiet/a dangerous

neighbourhood

Ours is...

... a multiracial community/an ethnically diverse

neighbourhood

It has...

... busy streets/traffic noise/...the constant sound of

traffic/tree-lined streets

... my next-door neighbour/the people who live over the road/down the

I've never met ...

road/next door

... within walking distance of the shopping centre/near a tram stop/

Our house is...

a bus stop/a train station/a bicycle lane/apartment blocks/several parks

... detached houses/terraced houses/semi-detached houses/a corner

In our neighbourhood

shop/a local market/newspaper kiosks/street musicians/beggars/food

you can find...

stalls/a lively nightlife/stray dogs/litter in the streets/funky restaurants

... talk to my neighbours/...fall out with my neighbours/...go for a walk

Sometimes, I...

in the local park/...ask my neighbours for help

235



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

It's a pity there are...

... noisy parties/...neighbourhood disputes

... give the neighbourhood a bad name/...give

because these...

the neighbourhood a bad reputation

... a quiet area, but... the neighbourhood has

It used to be...

changed dramatically since...

... to make the neighbourhood safer for

They should try...

children/...having a street party

... have just moved into the neighbourhood because it's ...

We...

... the sort of neighbourhood that attracts..../

the most prestigious neighbourhood in the city/and it now has a

neighbourhood watch scheme

Joining clubs and organisations

I'd like to...

... join the local (tennis) club/...apply to join the local

(tennis) club

I know I'll have to

... membership fees/...annual club fees

pay...

The club is always

... to attract new members/...to welcome new members/...not to lose

trying...

members/...to advertise for new members

From what I

... club meetings are held monthly/weekly/most weeks

understand...

... a club committee which...decides club policy/...organises fund-raising

and there is...

events/an annual general meeting/...makes club rules/

... elects the club chairman/president/secretary/

... holds a club raffle

In terms of facilities, there is...

... a club social room/plenty of

catering equipment

They are always looking for

... help out with.../... organise.../

volunteers to...

... put their hand up for.../... offer

their services to the club

Our club is ...

... an exclusive club/an upmarket club

My friend seems to...

... spend all his spare time at the club/...devote a great deal of time

to the club

236

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com





IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Telecommunications

Phones

I couldn't survive

... mobile phone/cell phone/iPad/iPhone

without my...

My new phone has

... apps./applications/features/functions/

loads of...

ring tones

It's cheaper to...

... send text messages/Skype

Sometimes I find my

... has a weak signal/...is out of range

phone...

... long distance phone calls/international calls from a landline using

and usually I make...

my phone card

I hate it when ...

... the phone battery runs down /

needs re-charging

Once I...

... lost my phone/phone charger/...had my
phone stolen

... people using their cell phones on trains/...a phone ringing in the

I dislike hearing...

middle of a movie

I have a good...

... phone plan to keep call costs down

Internet

... to search for/look up information/to do my

I use the Internet ...

emailing/...for social networking/

... to keep up with friends/news/

... to go on Facebook/...to tweet/...to view YouTube

I have my own...

... website/e-commerce website/website

address

and luckily I found a...

... reasonably-priced Internet Service Provider (ISP)

... dodgy websites/unreliable websites/bogus websites/online scams

There seem to be lots of...



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

At first I had to...

... set up an email account/address/

... choose a password/...log-in

... checking my messages/...clearing my inbox/...deleting spam/...pressing

But soon I got used

the 'send' button/...going through my messages/...emptying my mailbox/

to...

... opening my mail/...downloading files/...uploading files/...buying online/

SEO (Search Engine Optimisation)

For travelling, I

... a netbook/a notebook/an iPad/a tablet

bought...

... sufficient memory/adequate battery

having made sure

life/enough RAM

they had...

These days, you need

... gigabyte/megabyte/kilobyte/byte you can get

every...

Sometimes I worry

... privacy issues/...getting hacked/...becoming technophobic

about...

and I make sure I...

... back my data up regularly/... use a memory

stick/flash drive

... upgrades/good scanners/laser printers/printer

but, it's sometimes

cartridges

expensive to buy...

I get really frustrated

... my printer jams/the computer crashes/the connection drops out/the line is

when...

busy

Like most people,

... electronic gadgets/electronic gizmos/electronic devices

though, I just can't do

without all these...

TV and entertainment

TV

I've found that my...

... digital TV is less flexible than my tablet, and less energy-efficient

... reality TV shows/quiz programs/police

With all these pay TV

dramas/lifestyle programs/wildlife

channels there are too

programs/movies/news and current affairs

many...

programs/game shows/soap operas

238

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



So, I seem to spend too

... channel hopping/...changing channels/...fiddling with the remote
much time...

... adverts/repeats/imported shows/old

I get really weary of all

movies/cooking shows

the...

... teletext and subtitles, but I still use the

It's so helpful these days

printed TV Guide sometimes

to have...

I suppose I watch too

... a telly addict/..a couch potato/or someone who just sits in front of the

much TV but I'm not

telly all day

really...

Cinema/DVD

... science fiction/action movies/a light,

I prefer going to watch a

romantic comedy/a good thriller/a Hollywood

good movie, especially...

blockbuster/any movie starring _____/

recent foreign movies/independent movies

I also like the

... checking performance times online/

convenience of...

... multi-screen theatres

and enjoy the technology of...

... 3D movies/surround sound/split screen/modern sound systems

I think most actors these

days...

... give good performances/...enjoy celebrity status

but are often...

... overpaid/overrated/narcissistic/obsessed with body image/

too much in the limelight

Actually, I enjoy the

atmosphere of...

... live theatre performances/live music concerts

... DVD collection/digital music collection

and I now have quite a

large...

which I watch on...

... my home theatre/DVD player/portable DVD player

I have to confess that

... watch movies online/...download movies/pirated copies,

sometimes I also...

but don't tell anyone, will you!

I hope you aren't feeling overwhelmed by all this vocabulary? Treat this section like a gold mine ...full of valuable things but not a place in which to spend all your time!

Look for fresh expressions when you are practicing IELTS Task 1 letters. Aim to build variety of appropriate vocabulary to improve your chances of a higher score.

239

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

IELTS VOCABULARY — WRITING TASK 2

Writing Task 2 places different kinds of demand on your language skills, and involves, of course, an ability to justify your point of view by developing ideas and examples based on your own knowledge of social issues.

Varied and appropriate use of vocabulary is vital to the development, clarity and precision of your ideas, especially as your Task 2 score carries more weight than Task 1.

Let's have a little look at some options for enriching your use of vocabulary.

Are you ready?

Expressions for the Introduction paragraph

Of course, the topic of the essay will determine some of the vocabulary used in the early sentences; however, it is

useful to have a range of options when stating what the essay is going to do or what view it will try to put

forward.

Essay Type 1 — Indicate and Support Your Level of Agreement

(Essay topic)... is a **significant/major/an ongoing issue/growing problem/issue/a challenging dilemma in the modern world/in a globalised world/nowadays/currently/these days.**

Tackling/Addressing/Solving/Making headway with this issue is **challenging/complex** especially **given limited**

resources/the pressure of modern life/the speed of social change.

Some believe/are of the opinion that...; others suggest that.../point to the fact that.../are convinced that...

This essay **will express/articulate** its **full agreement** with this view **and will offer/indicate/suggest/put**

forward/outline reasons for this position/**argue/justify** this **position/stance/standpoint.**

This essay **will agree/accord in part** with ..., and **will ...**

This essay **will express/assert** its **complete disagreement** with ... and ...

Essay Type 2 — Present a two-sided Discussion

This essay **will discuss/explore/examine** both points of view and **then offer/present** a personal **view/viewpoint/perspective/on this dilemma/issue/situation.**

Both **standpoints/perspectives** will be **analysed/scrutinised** and then a **personal slant/take** on the issue will be **put forward/advanced.**

240

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Essay Type 3 — Discuss Advantages & Disadvantages

There are **numerous/a range of/various/a plethora of/a myriad...** **pros and cons/benefits and pitfalls/positive**

and negative aspects ...with regard to/in terms of/with respect to/

regarding... *(Essay topic)*

One **clear/definite/obvious/unequivocal/indisputable/undisputed/advantage** of...

Essay Type 4 — Explain & offer Solutions or Consequences

This essay **will explain/outline/offer/identify/nominate/highlight** some key reasons why (*Essay topic*) is ... and

will suggest/will propose what can be done.../(someone/some organisation) should do.../**a range of measures/steps** that can be taken to improve the situation/**some options/possibilities** for **improving/changing** the situation.

...will **identify/propose/briefly highlight**... one or two/just a few...
likely/potential/probable/possible...

consequences/knock-on effects/outcomes of...

Finishing off your essay

Sometimes the final sentence can be used to make a final comment or to offer an interesting thought or prediction.

This is a final chance to brighten up the vocabulary.

It remains to be seen whether or not.../if...

What the **future holds is a mystery**, but it may well be that...

Looking into my own crystal ball, I would predict that...

It will be **fascinating to see/intriguing to see** if...

In the short term... will probably... ; **in the long term**, the situation seems far less predictable...





IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Choosing topic vocabulary for the body paragraphs

One of the challenges of Task 2 is that you have no idea what the topic is going to be about.

It could be on almost anything. We have tried to put together some vocabulary resources on typical topic areas.

One of the reasons why some IELTS candidates have difficulty in achieving a higher vocabulary score is that they know some individual words but can't always use them naturally, because they don't know the collocations (the other words that usually 'go with' the word they may know) that help to make the vocabulary appropriate and fluent.

You will notice that although we occasionally use single words, most of the time we offer expressions which involve collocation, or even sentences. This is both to give you some possible ideas for topic content and to help you build 'natural-sounding' vocabulary strings. We have also put many verb forms together in their infinitive form under 'T' for ease of access. Hope this works for you.

Topic vocabulary for the body paragraphs (all essay types)

A Animals :: Pets

A aggressive dogs

N (*a*) nation of dog lovers

T taking a dog for a walk

(*the*) **need** to commit time to

to abandon a pet

B being bitten by a dog

looking after a pet

to give a pet away

neglecting a pet

to treat a pet like a child

C (*the*) cost of keeping a pet

to underestimate the impact of pet

O obedience training

ownership

E exercising a dog sufficiently

exotic pets

P pet food

U unusual pets

pets as companions

G guard dogs

preferring pets to people

V veterinary fees

guide dogs

L losing interest in your pet

Animals :: Animal protection

A anti-ageing products

L (*the*) loss of natural habitat

S selling rare species on the black

market

B bears

M maintaining numbers

T to prioritise the wellbeing of

C cosmetics

N national parks

endangered species

to trade illegally in exotic species

E endangered species

P park rangers to protect

animals from poachers

U (*the*) use of animal parts in

I (*the*) illegal export of animals

traditional medicine

(*the*) illegal trade in...

R rhinoceros horn

W (*the*) World Wildlife Fund

242

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



Animals :: Zoos

A animals showing signs of boredom **G** giving large animals enough

S safety issues in zoos

space to roam freely

school visits

B being attacked by an animal

souvenirs

breeding program

K keeping children entertained

U (*the*) **u**pkeep of a zoo is expensive

C cooperation between zoos

M **m**aintaining public interest

Z (*a*) **z**ookeeper

D (*the*) **d**ifficulty of reproducing

R restricted enclosures

zoos' educational programs

E each animal's natural habitat

(*an*) **e**scaped animal

B Books and Reading

A autobiographies

N **n**on fiction

S stimulating a child's imagination

novels

store thousands of books easily

B biographies

(a) successful genre

(a) bookshop

P (a) page-turner (*means – a book that really makes you want to keep*

T to be glued to a book (*idiom*)

C (*the*) classical works of fiction
reading)

to borrow books

cooking books

plays

to buy books on the internet

poetry

to find reading boring

D detective stories

to not be able to put a book down

R reading a book on a tablet

to read between the lines (*idiom*)

E (*an*) e-book

reading a book takes too long

to read in bed

encouraging children to read

reading an actual book

to read only very occasionally

reading for pleasure

F fiction

to read voraciously

(the) reading habit

to read widely

reading has lost some popularity

I it's a book about...

travel books

reading on the train/flight/bus

L literary treasures

reading to children at bedtime

(a/the) local library

romantic fiction

C **Climate change :: Signs**

C cyclones

G global warming

M *(the)* melting polar ice caps

(the) greenhouse effect

milder winters

D drought

dwindling water supplies

H hotter summers

R record temperatures

(a) reduction in agriculturally

E El Niño events

I it is scientifically clear that

productive land

extreme weather events

human activity exacerbates the

rising sea levels

situation

rising sea temperatures

F floods

L La Niña patterns

S shorter winters

243

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Climate change :: Causes

A air pollution

I (*the*) inability of politicians to act **N** natural variation in weather

early to modify economic activity patterns

C climate skeptics

increasing population

industrialisation

O over-farming of livestock

E excessive carbon footprint in the **insufficient** evidence
developed nations

R reliance on oil-based economy

L (*a*) lack of education about the
(*the*) rich world over-consumes

G greed

fragility of the planet

resources

(*a*) lack of international agreement
on action

Climate change :: Solutions

A applying a carbon tax

G growing low carbon crops

P policing the implementation of
global agreements

C carbon-offset schemes

I individual action to consume
less

S (*a/the*) shift from animal to plant

E educating children about

international action to alter
farming

sustainability

lifestyles and reduce harmful

solar energy

economic activity

(a) switch to green energy

F forging new and binding

international agreements

N nuclear energy

W wave energy

wind farms

Communication :: Internet

A applications

I *(an)* informative website

P *(a)* personal website

internet addiction

C chat rooms

(the) internet as a means of

S *(a)* suspicious website

creating an online identity

increasing democracy

(a) cyber bully

internet crime

T *(the)* time spent on the internet is

internet dating

increasing

D download speed

(an) internet provider

U *(the)* use of the internet for social

F

M monitoring children's use of

finding information

interaction

the internet

H *(a)* helpful website

N

W *(a)* web camera

news online

(the) wider use of e-commerce

I illegal downloading

O online bullying

inappropriate use of the internet

online learning

online movies

244

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



Communication :: Mobile phones

A (*an*) annoying ring tone

M monthly costs

T to replace your mobile

to use your mobile phone constantly

C (*a*) cell phone

S switching off your mobile

to use your mobile phone for

emergencies only

(*a*) cell phone plan

T to have your mobile phone

too young to have a mobile phone

I (*the*) illegal use of mobile phones

stolen

while driving

to lose your mobile phone

(*the*) inappropriate use of mobile

phones in public places

Communication :: Computers

B battery life

I intellectual property

S (*the*) short life of a computer

internet addiction

(*a*) software update

C computer literacy

spending all your free time in front

computer-based learning

L *(a)* laptop computer

of a computer screen

(a) **C** computer nerd

low-price computers

(the) steadily reducing price of

computers

E *(the)* easy availability of computers **M** megabytes

memory

T technophobic

F *(a/the)* failure to develop

(a) **m** mouse

(a) **t** touchpad

interpersonal skills because of over-

my computer crashed

to be a social networker

using the computer

to email constantly

N *(a)* **n**etbook

to search the internet

G gigabytes

to twitter

(a) **g**EEK

P **p**oor posture/back pain/tired
eyes

U *(an)* **u**pgrade

H **h**acking into confidential

processing speed

information/government sites

(the) **u**se of computers in elementary

(the) **h**ard drive

R **r**eliability

school

Crime and Policing :: Crime

B **b**reaking and entering

O **o**n trial for...

T **t**o be under arrest

to blackmail (*someone*)

D **d**rug trafficking

P *(a)* **p**arking offence

to carry an offensive weapon

to carry out a physical assault

E **e**arly release

R **r**elaxed on parole

to commit robbery with violence

S **s**erving a prison sentence

F *(a)* first offence

for...

to commit a crime

found guilty (or not guilty) by the

(a) speeding offence

to murder (*someone*)

jury

to undertake/carry out a robbery

T tax evasion

H *(an)* habitual offender

tax fraud

U under-age drinking

held in custody

to be drunk and disorderly

M money laundering

245

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Crime and Policing :: Policing

C *(the)* chief of police

S special weapons assault team

T to give chase

(the) superintendent of police

to handcuff

D death in custody

to have bail refused

drug raid

T to hold back a crowd

to identify a suspect

to accept a bribe

to interview a suspect

E *(an)* escaped offender

to arrest

to lie to the police

to ask for legal representation

to make a false arrest

F *(a)* full investigation

to be heavy-handed

to patrol the streets

to be under suspicion

to question a suspect

H *(a)* high speed chase

to break up a disturbance

to release on bail

hunt for a criminal

to breathalyse

to release without charge

to charge someone with an offence

I inspector of police

to search someone

to contact an informant

to spot someone on close circuit

M military police

to cooperate with the police

television

to elicit a confession

to take into custody

P plain-clothes police

to find a witness

to use a police baton

(a) police car

to give a warning

to use excessive force

police cells

to withhold evidence from...

(a) police constable

police corruption

U uniformed police

(a) police dog

(a) **p**olice sergeant

E **E**ducation :: **S**chool years

B being absent

L learning social skills

P poor performance

broadly-based curriculum

limited attention span

preparing students for the

(the) level of discipline in schools

workplace

C class sizes

R reading age

corporal punishment

I *(the)* importance of creativity

rising absenteeism

inclusive classrooms *(means -*

D dealing with behavioural

including disabled or slow learners in **S** single sex schools

problems

the mainstream classroom)

(the) social status of teachers is

declining in...

E empathetic teaching

M making school subjects

exam nerves

interesting and relevant

T teaching life skills

exam-oriented curriculum

mixed schools

teaching skills

test-driven

F face-to-face teaching

O online learning

treating pupils more as adults

fear of failure

V violence in schools

246

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Education :: College or university

A aspects of university life

E education for life or

P practical degrees linked to

assignment-driven courses

education for work

occupations

(the) **a** availability of lecturers for

elite universities

(the) **p**roportion of international

support

entry based on merit

students

B *(the)* **b**enefits and drawbacks of

F flexible study arrangements

R reduced government funding

online course components

building independence

H **h**aving to combine study

S specialising too early

buying a university place

with part-time work

T **t**aking more responsibility for your

C *(the)* **c**ost of studying in another

I increased fees

studies

city or country

(the) **c**osts of a degree

L language support

U **u**niversities are lowering/raising

(the) long-term debt caused by
their standards

D *(the)* decline in Arts subjects
tuition fees'

universities are now more like
(the) decline in social
businesses

opportunities for networking

M making friends

university entrance exams

university league tables

N *(a/the)* need for degrees that
can be completed quickly

Entertainment :: TV / radio

A adverts

M *(a)* movie made for tv

S *(a)* serial

(a) series of documentaries

C cartoons

N *(a)* news announcer

serious programs

channel-hopping

(a) news broadcast

(a) soap opera

children's programs

superficial content

(a) **comedy** show

P **pay** channels

(a) **cooking** program

pay tv

T **talk** shows

(a) **couch** potato

(a) **police** series

(a) **talk** show guest

current affairs programs

poor reception

(a) **talk** show host

pop music stations

(the) remote

D **documentaries** on social issues

program content

to watch too much tv

(a) **drama** series

programs on...

(a) **tv** announcement

dumbed-down program content

(a) **tv** celebrity

R *(a)* **radio** announcer

(a) tv channel

E endless adverts

(a) radio shock jock

(a) tv meal

(a) radio station

a tv show

G (a) game show host

(a) reality tv show

(a) repeat

U unsuitable for children

I interrupted by the adverts

unsupervised viewing

L late-night movies

W (a) weekly tv program

local radio

(a) wide-screen tv

247

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Entertainment :: Film / movies

A (an) action movie

M movie stars

T the action takes place in...

(an) **a**dventure movie

The best part of the movie is when...

(an) **a**nimation

O *(an)* **o**ld movie

The film drags...

at the end of the movie.....

(an) **O**scar-winning

The film draws you in immediately

performance

The film is about...

C *(a)* **c**ameo performance

(an) **o**ver-rated star

The main characters are played by...

(a) **c**omedy film

The movie lasts about 100 minutes

(a) **c**urrent release

R *(a)* **r**omantic comedy

This movie stars Brad Pitt

to show a movie at...

F *(a)* **f**ilm director

S *(a)* **s**cience fiction film

to star in...

(a) **f**ilm festival

she gives a powerful

performance as...

U *(an)* **u**nder-rated actor

H *(a)* **h**orror movie

special effects

(a) spellbinding performance

I **I** couldn't take my eyes off the

(a) supporting role

screen

(a) suspense film

it was filmed in...

it's being shown at the...

it's on at 9pm

Environment and sustainability

B **b**leached coral

I **i**llegal ivory trade

T **t**o care enough about the

impact on the environment

environment

D **d**evelop sustainable farming

increased salinity

to damage the environment

methods

increasing levels of toxicity

to degrade the environment as a

international agreement on

result of intensive farming

E encourage education about the

environmental protection

to feed a growing world population

environment

to move to renewable energy sources

endangered species

O oil pollution

to plan for a sustainable future

environmentally-friendly

oil spills

to pollute the environment

environmentally-insensitive

over-fishing

to protect and maintain water

building development

quality

erosion

P polluted waters

to protect the environment

for future generations

F food production methods

R renewable energy

to reduce levels of waste

future wars based on access to

to reduce our carbon footprint

reliable supplies of food and water **S** sea warming

to tread lightly on the earth

rather than territory

species are losing their habitats

stopping whale hunting

H hunting whales

248

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

H Happiness

C (*the*) constant creation of

L leading a life that gives space **P** prevents happiness

unnecessary consumer needs

for the important people in

(the) **p**ursuit of happiness

your life

H happiness depends on having

(a/the) **l**ink between

S *(the)* **s**ecret of happiness

basic needs met

unhappiness and depression

surveys suggest that people in

happiness is a goal that many

affluent countries are often less

people aspire to

N *(a/the)* **n**eed for a

happy than people who are living

happiness is a state of mind

government ministry for the

simple lives in developing countries

happiness is a temporary state

promotion of happiness

(the) **h**appiness of giving

T **t**hinking of others more than

P **p**ermanent happiness

yourself

K **k**eeping active rather than

(a) **p**ositive outlook on life

to find happiness unattainable

dwelling on things

to have a happy nature/personality

keeping life simple

to yearn for happiness

training yourself to think positive

thoughts

Health :: Health problems

A allergies

H heart disease

P poor diet

higher life expectancy

poor self image

B bacterial infections from

higher proportion of elderly

poor work-life balance

hospitals

people

poorly paid nurses

being overweight

profit-driven, global pharmaceutical

I inadequate sun protection

companies

C (*a*) cancer sufferer

Inadequately-tested drug

chronic lifestyle diseases

treatment

Repetitive strain injury

constant costly improvements in

infectious diseases

resistant viruses

medical technology

influenza strains

resurgence of tuberculosis

insufficient government

Depression

expenditure

Sexually transmitted diseases

(the) diseases of aging

(a/the) shortage of doctors

diabetes

Lack of exercise

skin sensitivity

drug dependency

low motivation

sleeping disorders

spiralling costs

Eradicating infectious diseases

M malaria

stress

expensive drug treatment

(a) stressful job

N not eating healthily

symptoms of depression

F faulty drug tests

O overwork

T too many fatty foods

G (a) global pandemic

tuberculosis

U uncontrollable health costs

249

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Health :: Health care

A (an) annual medical check

F (a) filling

O (an) organ transplant

outpatient treatment

B being aware of risk factors

G giving up smoking

blood tests

greater knowledge of the genetic

P prevention is better than cure

basis of many diseases

preventive care

C *(a)* check up

promoting a healthy lifestyle

compulsory vaccination

H health education

(a) cosmetic procedure

health insurance

R reducing the length of hospital

(a) cosmetic surgery

holistic approaches

stay

hospital treatment

regular monitoring of early

D dental care

hospital waiting lists

symptoms

dental treatment

M maintaining healthy gums

S signs or symptoms

E early detection

more information available about *(a/the)* shortage of organ donors

ensuring a healthy diet

health issues and disease

(a) surgical operation

(an/the) extraction

prevention

Health :: Sleep problems

B *(the)* build up of sleep

I *(the)* importance of melatonin to to get to sleep

deprivation

sleep

to go to bed worrying

burning the candle at both ends

(an) increased risk of stroke or

to have difficulty falling asleep

(saying)

heart attack

to keep waking up

insomnia

to read before going to sleep

C *(a)* chronic lack of sleep

irregular working hours

to see a sleep therapist

constant napping

to sleep fitfully

R rapid eye movement sleep

to sleep late/sleep in

D disturbed sleep

to sleep on and off

S shift work

to sleep soundly

E (*the*) effects of stress on sleep

sleep apnoea

to wake up feeling tired

sleep deprivation

G going to bed too late

sleep medication

U (*the*) use of meditation

(*a*) good night's sleep

sleeplessness

(*the*) undoubted importance of sleep

H health risks of inadequate sleep

to wellbeing

T to avoid caffeine in the evening

to be a poor sleeper

250



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Holidays and travel

B (*a*) bumpy landing

T to be ripped off (*informal*)

T to lose your bags

to be stopped at customs

to need a visa

C (*a*) crowded flight

to be stung by a jelly fish

to never want to go to... again

to book a holiday to...

to pass through customs

F (*the*) flight attendants were

to book tickets

to pay through the nose for... (*idiom*)

very helpful/rude

to buy souvenirs

to put on sunscreen

(*the*) food in economy/business

to change money

to read through brochures

class was awful/surprisingly

to check-in at the airport

to relax by the hotel pool

good/tasteless

to collect your baggage from

to stay in a budget hotel/backpacker

the carousel

hostel/luxury hotel/room only/bed

I (*the*) in-flight entertainment

to complain to the hotel

and breakfast/an ensuite room/with

broke down

receptionist/manager about...

a beautiful view of.../over the bay/of

O one of the local customs

to experience some turbulence

the river

involves ...ing

to find the departure hall

to sunbathe

to get sunburnt

to swim in the sea

S (*a*) smooth take off/landing

to go on a bus tour to..

to take a taxi to/from the

sniffer dogs

to go on an excursion to...

airport/hotel

to go through the x-ray

to take in the night life

T to bargain with...

machine

to take some wonderful photos of...

to be attacked by...

to have a delay

to try out the local food

to be bitten by a mosquito

to have a trouble-free flight

to wait for hours at the airport

to be charged for...

to have an up-to-date passport to want to return to...

to be constantly harangued by

to have something confiscated

to watch the in-flight movies

local traders/beggars

by customs

(a) travel agency/agent

to be late for your flight

to have your baggage searched

to be overcharged

to have your flight cancelled

251

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

L Languages

A (*an*) archaic expression

L language is changing

T to be completely fluent in...

(*a*) language is dynamic

to encourage people to speak

C code switching

(*the*) language is now only

to find it easy to learn

D (*the*) dominance of English

spoken by...

to forget a language

dynamic nature of language

(*the*) language learnt in colonial

to go to language classes

times

to immerse yourself in the culture

E (*an*) educated language user

(*a*) language that is dying out

to improve rapidly

error correction

learning language in context

to know some slang expressions

F first language acquisition

loan words

to know the basics of a language

(*a*) formal language

to learn a completely different

M maintaining your first

language from your own

G (*a/the*) global language

language

to learn a new language

(*the*) grammar

O (*the*) official language

to learn vocabulary

to lose a language

I (*an*) idiolect

P (*the*) pronunciation of...

to make slow progress

(*an*) inappropriate expression

to not be able to understand

incorrect grammar

R (*the*) range of meaning

language spoken at normal speed

it is our local dialect

(*a*) regional accent

to practise every day

resistance to Anglicised

L language as a functional tool of

to speak like a native speaker

expressions

communication

to speak several languages

language as a marker of identity

S (*a*) society where the

translation methods

language as a means of creating

language is spoken

U (*a*) universal language

imaginative cultural masterpieces

speaking with a terrible accent

language is becoming more informal subtle meanings of language

W (*the*) written form of the language

Leisure activities

A ‘All work and no play...’

T to go jogging regularly

to go to the theatre

C camping

L leisure time

to go to concerts

carrying out voluntary work

leisure-time activities

to go to the beach

community work in...

to go to the fitness centre

M mountaineering

D do-it-yourself activities like

to grow your own food

renovating a kitchen or painting the

R rock climbing

to have a hobby

house

to learn new things

S sky diving

to live a life of leisure

F free time

to need more leisure time

T theme parks

to relax in front of the television

G gardening

to be a couch potato (*idiom*)

to try something new

to be interested in personal

H healthy, outdoor activities

to use leisure time wisely

growth activities like meditation

hiking

to volunteer to...

to do nothing

to walk in the park

I (*the*) importance of having a

to do something creative

too much leisure in retirement

hobby after retirement

to eat out at good restaurants

trekking

the importance of leisure to a

to enjoy the opera

balanced lifestyle

to go for a picnic

W walking

252

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

N Nutrition :: Diet

A anorexia

L (*a*) low, carbohydrate diet

T to eat less processed food

to eat more fresh fruit and vegetables

B (*a*) balanced diet

M (*a*) Mediterranean diet

to gain weight

balanced nutrition

mild obesity

to go on a diet

my diet didn't work

C caffeine intake

to lose weight

O (*an*) obsession with losing

to maintain liquid intake

D dietary supplements

weight

to need more protein

to overeat

E excessive sugar intake

S (*a*) special, low-fat diet

to restrict your intake of...

H (*a*) high-protein diet

stress-fuelled overeating

to watch your diet

I I couldn't maintain my diet

T to change your diet

V (*a*) vegetarian diet

insufficient dietary fibre

to eat a healthy diet

Nutrition :: Food / drink

A adjusting your food intake

G genetically modified food

R raw food

alcoholic drinks

government policy towards

rice

allowing food to digest properly

labelling

rising grocery bills

anxiety about eating

growing control of the

supermarket chains

S salad

B bland tasting food

growing your own food

shopping for food daily

bottled water

(the) slow food movement

H health benefits of moderate

snack foods

C carbonated drinks

wine-drinking

spicy food

cheese

(a) herb garden

staple crops

chemically-treated food

home-cooked food

supermarket brands

D dairy products

sushi

decaffeinated coffee

I imported food

inadequate food labelling

T targeting children

E eating good food

instant meals

tasteless

eating on the run

international foods

tasty food

eating slowly

to stop snacking between meals

energy drinks

L locally-grown food

expensive food

U undercooked

M milk

F fast food

V vegetable garden

food additives

O olive oil

vegetables

food advertising

organically-grown foods

food markets

overcooked

W *(the)* weekly trip to the

food packaging

supermarket

food shortages

P *(the)* popularity of food

foods that are damaging to your

programs on tv

Y yoghurt

health

processed food

foods that are good for you

pulses

fresh fruit juice

fruit

253

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

P Parents and children

A *(an)* abused child

I in my grandparents' time

R refusing to take responsibility for

(an) average child

inter-generational conflict

their own life

respecting your parents

B badly-behaved children

L lack of respect for parents

bringing up children in today's

leaving home too early

S *(a)* single-parent family

world is very challenging

(a) spoilt child

M my parents are always there *(a)* stubborn child

C *(a)* child born on the wrong side

for me

of the tracks

my parents are very traditional **T** to be more influenced by your

(a) child from a wealthy family

mother than your father

(a) child who is out of control

N *(a)* nagging child

to be responsible for the upbringing

children these days have less

(a) needy child

of your children

respect for their elders

(a) neglected child

to drift apart from your parents

children who have everything

to follow your parents' advice

O open-minded

to have parents who are very liberal

D (*a*) demanding child

over-protective parents

to have your grandparents living

depending on parents for

with you

P parental expectations

everything

to hold traditional values

parental guidance

disciplinarians

to let your grandparents go into an

parenting skills

disobedient children

aged care facility or home

parents need to teach children

to miss your parents

F feeling close to your parents

more self discipline

to need your own space

parents who split up when the

to not talk openly to your parents

G (*the*) generation gap

children are young

to obey your parents

(a) gifted child

permissive parents

to tell your parents everything

(a) poor family

H helping out at home

progressive parents

Population

A *(an)* aging population

M migration

S state encouragement to have

children

D *(a)* dwindling population

N net migration

(a) sustainable population

E economic migration

O overcrowding

T to adapt

emigration

overpopulation

to apply for citizenship

to assimilate into a new society

G *(a)* growing population

P permanent residency

to be granted citizenship

population growth

to be issued with a visa

I illegal entry

population issues

to seek a better life

immigration

R refugees

to be worried about the kind of

insufficient infrastructure to

(a) reluctance to have a large

future that your children will inherit

support the level of population

family

L *(a)* lower birth rate

(the) rising costs of child-rearing

254

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



Public transport

A assaults on trains or buses

I (*an*) important part of urban

S safety on public transport

automated ticket systems

infrastructure

schemes to make public

C (*the*) cost of travelling by bus or

M (*a/the*) metro system enables

transport more attractive

train needs to be attractive, especially mass public transit in large cities

T to reduce congestion by

to those who are less well-off

multi-trip tickets

taking public transport

crowded buses/trains/trams

N (*a/the*) need for regular services,

to run intermittently/

F fare discounts between peak hours especially outside rush hours

occasionally/irregularly

(*the*) future possibility of electric

(*a/the*) need to limit the use of

to run on time

buses

private cars in cities

to take a bus/train/tram to

I investment in public transport is

P public transport is less

work

essential for future needs

environmentally damaging than

U user-friendly timetables

private cars are

W well-lit bus stops

R Relationships

A *(an)* abusive relationship

T to be against institutional care

T to hold in your feelings

B *(a)* baby sitter

to be bedridden

to keep in regular contact with

(a) blended family

to be betrayed by

to learn from your mistakes

boyfriend-girlfriend

to be blind to someone's faults

to live for *(someone)*

(a) broken family

to be close to your parents

to look after your aging parents

(a) brother

to be co-dependent

to lose contact with (*someone*)

to be critical of...

to lose mobility

C (*a*) caesarean section

to be grateful for...

to lose someone

E (*the*) eldest child

to be infatuated with

to miss someone

emotional abuse

to be jealous

to move on with your life

(*an*) estranged husband

to be let down by (*someone*)

to need constant care

expensive child care

to be over-possessive

to never get over the loss of...

(*an*) extended family

to be refused access to your children

to never see someone again

F (*a/the*) first child

to be taken in by (*someone*)

to no longer see eye to eye on

to be the prime carer

to offer love and support

I identical twins

to be too macho

to pay maintenance

induced labour

to be totally dependent on (*someone*)

to practice some ‘give and take’

H (*a*) house husband

to discuss your feelings

to raise your child as a single

L life goes on

to drift apart

parent

to fall in love

to respect each other

M (*a/the*) middle child

to fall out of love

to separate from

N natural birth

to fall out with (*someone*)

to settle down

(*a*) nuclear family

to feel a duty towards...

to share the household tasks

P parenting skills

to feel helpless

to share the same interests

(*a*) partner

to feel responsible for...

to spend quality time with your

pregnancy

to find someone else

children

to find the right one

to still be independent

S shared parenting

to find your soul mate

to treat a woman with respect

siblings

to get married

to trust your partner

(*a/the*) sister

to get over (*someone*)

(*a*) toxic relationship

step children

to give the other person enough space

twins

T

to be a feminist

to have a de facto relationship

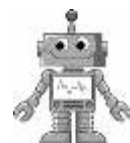
W (*a*) wife

to be a good listener

to have different interests

255

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

S Sport

A (*an*) amateur player

R running shoes

T to make sacrifices in order to get to

the top of your sport

B (*a*) brand name racquet

S spectators

to not be sporty

brand name sports clothing

sport has become too much of a to play for fun only

business

to play sport for exercise

C (*a*) champion

sport is too commercialized

to play sport regularly

(*the*) commercialisation of sport

(*a*) sports commentator

to practise constantly in order to

(*a*) sports magazine

E (*an*) elite athlete

improve

(*a*) sports personality

extreme sports

to represent your country

(*a*) sports report

to retire from sport

F fitness

supporters

to take up a sport

football hooliganism

to watch live sport

T tennis is beginning to take off to watch sport on television

G *(a)* global audience

(idiom) in...

to win easily

global coverage

to be a dedicated sportsman

(a) top athlete

to be a fan of...

I income from product endorsement

(a) top competitor

to be a loyal fan

(a) top player

to be interested in sport

M *(a)* match report

top sports stars are overpaid

to be a sportsman

(a) medal winner

top sports stars should be good role

to be very good at sports

models for...

O *(the)* Olympics

to dedicate themselves to their

sport

W *(a/the)* world record

P paid too much

to go to every match

(a) **p**rofessional sportsman

to join a sports club

Y young people are less willing to

to lose

train hard

T Technology

A advanced technology

H hi-tech. industries

P patenting

automated manufacturing processes

production costs

I intelligent robots

B bioengineering

intermediate technology

R research and development

robotics

C *(a)* college of technology

K keyhole surgery

S satellite technology

D design costs

L (*a/the*) lack of technology

(*a/the*) shortage of modern

developing new manufacturing

laser technology

technology

techniques

solar technology

M medical technology

space technology

E (*an*) electric car

microchip technology

‘state of the art’ technology

electronics

miniaturisation

(*the*) environmental impact of

T technological innovation

N nanotechnology

technology

technological progress

nuclear technology

thermal energy

F futuristic technology

O outdated

3D (three dimensional) printers

G gene technology

outmoded technology

W wave motion technology

genetically modified food

256

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

The future

A (*an*) apocalyptic

F (*the*) future looks bleak

O (*the*) option to live for ever could be

vision of environmental destruction (*a*) future marked by electronic achieved
control

organ replacement will become

B battles over resources

(*a*) future of bitter struggles

commonplace

(*a*) bleak future

between the 'haves' and the

‘have-nots’

R (*a*) rosy future

C cloning

(*the*) colonisation of outer space

G genetic engineering

T to anticipate the future

to be optimistic about the future

E electronic surveillance

I (*the*) inability of the human

to predict the future

endless corruption

race to manage the planet

to see into the future

F (*a*) future characterised by

M medical progress

U (*an*) uncertain future

unimaginable inventions

(*the*) future holds many surprises

N (*the*) need to secure a safe

W (*a*) war-torn future

(*a*) future in which peace reigns

world for future generations

we need a sustainable future

supreme

world government

W Work :: Workplace

A annual bonuses

T to be a casual worker

T to hope to become a...

annual leave

to be fired

to lose your job

to be flexible

to make a great deal of money

B boring work

to be offered an interview

to multi-task

to be offered the job

to quit

C challenging work

to be posted overseas

to respect your boss

to be promoted

to retrain as a...

E exciting work

to be put on short-time

to start your own business

F fringe benefits

to be successful

to struggle in retirement

to be underpaid for the

to struggle on your earnings

I I didn't get the job

responsibility you have

to travel overseas as part of your job

to develop your career and

to work for a local business which

M *(a)* manufacturing company

become a...

makes...

(a) multinational company

to fill in an application form

to work for an international company

to find work

to work full-time

P *(a)* part-time position

to find your boss difficult... *(to* to work in a democratic company

get on with)

to work in a hierarchical company

R rather routine

to get on well with work

to work past retirement age

S *(a)* salary package

colleagues

W working conditions

(a) software company

to go for an interview

(a) starting salary

to hand in your notice

stimulating

to have a good boss

to have enough to live on in

T to apply for a better job

retirement

to apply for a job

257

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Vocabulary Writing Task 1

Work :: Work-life balance

C caring for elderly parents

T to feel unappreciated as a

T to lose too much sleep because of

worker

work

S stress often prevents the effective **to** find work stressful

to make more of your life

completion of tasks

to grow as a person

to need a better quality of life

to have insufficient time for

to need a complete change

T **to** be burnt out

your family

to need more holidays

to be under too much pressure

to have more time to do the

to need more quality time with your

to build up a pension

things you enjoy

family

to change to part-time work

to have more time to spend

to plan for retirement

to do something more with your

with friends

to retire early

life

to learn new skills

to work long hours

to feel too much pressure

to lose motivation

to work too hard

Y You can do it!

Congratulations on looking through just some of this vocabulary – you have done really well! We are now at the end of our resource sections.

I can't sit with you when you take the IELTS test but, one way or another, I'll be there cheering you on! Good luck!

258

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS

SPEAKING

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Speaking Lesson

First questions answered

What if I...? Some problem situations

13 secrets of how to achieve a higher score in the IELTS

Interview

Speaking Fitness Activities

Activities 1-16 (for Part 1 of the Speaking Test)

Activities 1-7 (for Part 2 of the Speaking Test)

Activities 1-5 (for Part 3 of the Speaking Test)

Speaking Resources

Interview, rated sample

Top score vocabulary

Questions for practice

259

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

SPEAKING LESSON

First Questions Answered

Q. What does the IELTS interview consist of, and how long does it last?

A. The interview has these main elements:

You are interviewed by one, trained IELTS assessor.

The interview is in three parts, lasting a total of 11-14 minutes.

The assessor asks all the questions.

The assessor awards your score.

Q. What is in each of the three parts?

A. The parts are divided up as follows:

In **Part 1** the assessor asks you questions on three everyday topics for a total of four to five minutes. There are usually four questions for each topic.

In **Part 2** you give a short talk on a topic which is given to you beforehand.

The topic is on a task card, such as the one below:

Talk about someone you know, or know about, who has had an interesting life.

You should say:

who the person is

where the person comes from

what is interesting about that person's life

and explain why that person's life seems interesting to you.

You have one minute to plan your talk and have to talk for one to two minutes.

In **Part 3** you are asked questions of a more general nature, but broadly related to the topic of your talk. The assessor may respond to your answers to draw out more detail.

260

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

Q. How can I be sure I perform well in each part?

A. Practise before the test and follow a systematic routine, like this one:

What you should do:

How?

Why?

Part 1 — answer each

By understanding each

To keep the rhythm of

question sufficiently.

question and responding

the test's timing (max. 12

clearly, fluently and

questions in four to five

naturally for about 15

minutes).

seconds or so while varying

To give a positive initial

grammar and vocabulary.

impression of level.

Part 2 — plan your talk

By writing a quick outline of

To minimize chances of a

systematically during the

your answer to each of four

repetitive, confused talk.

one minute preparation

parts on the task card.

To ensure that you talk

time.

for long enough, with

confidence.

Part 3 — develop your

By adding detailed

To sound more mature

answer to each question in

explanations or examples

and more considered.

a more formal and

using formal phrases like,

You can become the

extended way using your

‘By this I mean...’ or

‘expert’ when talking

own knowledge and

‘Let me try to explain it in

about your own society as

experience.

another way’ or

an example.

‘I’ll give you an example

from my own society’.

Aim to extend each response

for about 30 or 40 seconds.

Q. What do I have to do to respond well to the assessor?

A. Your task is to:

Speak as clearly and as fluently as you can while answering the questions coherently, with good grammar, flexible and appropriate vocabulary and clear pronunciation and intonation.

Relate to the assessor as naturally, confidently and with as much interest as you can.

Keep to the timing and rhythm of the test's parts to make the assessor's job easier.

Represent yourself authentically, meaning don't memorise answers or sound

mechanical. Give real information from your life in a genuine way.

261

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

Q. Do my answers have to be truthful and based on my own life experiences?

A. This is a question for your own conscience! The assessor is not assessing truth value, but most people feel more comfortable when they are representing themselves honestly. If you get a question or topic but it is outside your experience try to talk about something that really happened to a friend or to a relative. For example, imagine a Part 2 topic asking you to describe something you made at school, you can say,

'I'm afraid I never made anything at school but I remember that a friend of mine made a wonderful basket, so I'd like to talk about that'.

The assessor will not penalize you, because you are adapting as well as you can to the situation and it is still connected to your own life. It is your language that is being assessed, not your life.

Q. OK, but should I try to say something nice to the assessor? Is it OK to chat?

A. If the assessor is a more formal type of person, then they might see compliments as your attempt to get a higher score, rather than as sincere. If you chat too much and try to involve the assessor, this may seem over-friendly for a first meeting. The best option is to find a 'middle way'.

Be friendly and pleasant but take the test situation seriously as well. Adapt to the different

phases of the test:

In Part 1 the topics are general so you can use a less formal style.

In Part 3 you are discussing issues and developing your opinions, so be a little more formal then.

Assessors differ in terms of their personalities, ages, expectations, but they all have a serious job to do and are trying to do it in the fairest way they can. Help them. This will have the most positive impact on them.

Q. Are there ‘wrong things’ I might say, that will affect my score?

A. The assessor is evaluating your use of language, not your opinions.

If you say something, in Part 3, for example, that the assessor strongly disagrees with, they may try to encourage you to explain in more detail why you have that opinion. But it is probably a good strategy not to express views that are too strong or too controversial in case the assessor is affected unconsciously in a negative way.

262

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

Q. How should I dress for the interview?

A. The test takes place in many countries so there are different cultural considerations. In general terms it is better to dress smartly and tidily but not too formally (this may be seen as trying to influence your score). Clothes are, of course, not assessed directly but may have an effect unconsciously on the assessor’s impression of how serious you are about the test and how much respect you have for them and for the situation. At the same time you need to feel comfortable in your clothes so that you feel confident and at ease.

Q. When does the assessor give me my score?

A. The assessor is thinking about your individual scores for each of four criteria during the test. These **four criteria** are:

Assessment criteria

Some features affecting your score

Fluency and Coherence

How much do you hesitate?

How appropriate and developed are your answers?

How do you link ideas?

Lexical Resource

How flexible are you in your choice of words?

What range of vocabulary do you have access to?

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

How accurate are you grammatically?

What range of sentence types can you use?

Pronunciation

How easy are you to understand?

How well can you put feeling into your voice

through intonation?

How well can you use chunking* and pauses?

** See Secret #5 in the 'Secrets of how to achieve a higher score...' section, Page 271.*

At the end of the interview the assessor gives you a score from 0-9 on each of these four dimensions and then your overall score is calculated by IELTS.



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

Q. What is the best way to get from an IELTS 6 to a 7 score for Speaking?

A. This is a frequently asked question as many candidates need the higher score. We consider these to be important ways to lift your score from 6 to 7:

Make your spoken English as natural as you can (as much like a native speaker as you can) and add variety (life) to your intonation.

Add as much variety and flexibility as possible to your grammar and vocabulary.

Show fluency and confidence.

Relate well to, and cooperate well with, the assessor.

Avoid repetition and reduce simple errors (e.g. wrong tense, wrong subject/verb agreements, lack of plural forms).

Answer questions relevantly in Part 1, give a relevant, well-organised talk in Part 2, and extend your answers intelligently in Part 3.

To find step by step guidance take a careful look at our advice in ‘Secrets of how to achieve a higher score...’ later in this chapter. Then, try out the Fitness Activities on page 278.

GOLD STAR ADVICE No. 1:

An interview gives you an opportunity to help to establish a comfortable social relationship. Try to see yourself as the assessor’s ‘partner’ in the interview situation, not the victim of a test interrogation.



What if I...? Some Problem Situations

Q. What if I don't understand a question in Part 1?

A. Use a polite, formal or even idiomatic request to ask for the question to be repeated, for example:

'I didn't quite catch that. Could you repeat it, please?'

'I'm sorry but would you mind repeating that, please?'

If you heard the question but didn't understand it at all, just say:

'I'm sorry, would you mind moving on to the next question, please?'

Note: The assessor can only repeat questions in Part 1, not explain them.

Q. What if my assessor seems distracted and not interested in the conversation, or stops me before I have a chance to finish. What can I do in this situation?

A. Candidates occasionally report such problems and it is clearly a problem. Your best strategy is to be as lively as you can and to use your voice to maintain interest. Good intonation keeps the attention of the listener usually. If the assessor cuts you off, it probably means that they are worried about the time (i.e. you are taking up too much time for each answer in Part 1) Try to practise giving answers of about 15-20 seconds on average for most of the questions in Part 1.

Q. What if I don't want to talk about the Part 2 topic or don't know much about it?

A. It's probably better to try to talk about the topic you are given, or something close to that topic, than to ask for a different topic, because this causes less disruption to the test timing.

Q. What if I don't understand a question in Part 3?

A. In Part 3 you can use excellent English to ask for clarification if you don't understand the question. For example, you can say:

‘Could you phrase that question in a different way, I didn’t quite follow it?’

‘Do you mean _____ or _____?’

‘If I understood you correctly, you are asking _____. Is that right?’

265

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

Q. What if my mind goes blank because I’m nervous?

A. If your mind goes blank, buy time with some ‘filler’ expressions, for example:

‘I’m sorry but the word has gone out of my mind completely’, or

‘I’m afraid I’ve totally forgotten what I wanted to say’

then try your answer again or start your answer in another way, saying,

‘Let me see if I can explain it/answer the question in a different way’

Use an active, positive strategy, don’t just freeze or panic!

Q. What if I don’t make notes for the Part 2 talk? Or, in the opposite situation, how do I know when to stop making notes?

A. You don’t have to make notes but you do need to offer a coherent talk which seems organized, so the task card and your notes are supposed to help. The assessor will tell you when to stop making notes.

Q. What if I can’t talk for two minutes in Part 2?

A. You only have to talk for a minimum of one minute. If you stop before the two minutes is up, the assessor will check by asking something like, *‘Could you say anything else about that?’*

If you have spoken for at least a minute it is OK to answer *‘That’s all’*. Or, you can continue, like this:

Example

Assessor:

Could you say anything else about that?

You:

Mm, what else can I say?...Well... (and continue)

Q. What if I take a moment to think while answering and there is a bit of silence, will it ruin my score?

A. If you are only thinking before answering, no it won't. If you hesitate too often in the middle of sentences because of struggling for words or accuracy, then this might affect your score negatively.

266

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

Q. What if I freeze when speaking to this stranger (the assessor), how can I fight that?

A. Different cultures have different attitudes to strangers and the IELTS interview is a sensitive situation for any candidate. You need to keep telling yourself that the assessor is just a person who is interested in you (This is probably true anyway!) and so your job is to seem interesting rather than shy. You are a representative of your country, so talk with pride, don't hide in fear. Try to find native speakers of English to practise with before the exam.

Q. What if I talk for too long, especially in Parts 1 or 2?

A. The assessor will usually signal with a hand if they want you to stop at the end of each section. Just say something like, 'Oh, sorry' and wait.

267

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

Secrets of How to Achieve a Higher Score in the IELTS Interview

Your assessor is a busy person with perhaps 15 candidates to interview.

Maybe you are the last candidate of the day so the assessor might be a little tired. Within the limitations of your English, you need to create a positive relationship with the assessor through the quality of your spoken language and social contact.

GOLD STAR ADVICE No 2: *Connecting always counts.*

As well as everything you say and how well you say it, the quality of the connection you make with the assessor comes to represent ‘YOU’ in the mind of the assessor. Be interesting; make good contact.

Q. How can I attract a higher score from the IELTS assessor?

A. There are certain things that always create a good impression.

Follow these detailed suggestions and your Interview will be appreciated by your assessor:

1. Take care when building your answers

Explanation

The assessor has to judge whether or not you have answered the question coherently. This means whether your ideas are linked together in an ‘easy to follow’ way.

Why is this important?

Linking ideas clearly creates a good impression of you as a good communicator because you try to help the listener as much as you can.

Example

I like pets. Pets are friends. Many people have pets. People are less lonely.

*I like pets **because** pets are friends. People have pets **so that** they are less lonely.*

268

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

2. Extend your responses – say it, explain it, support it.

Explanation

If you use a structured and organized approach when starting a response, especially in Part 3, this will help you to extend your response and make it more coherent. It will also give you more opportunities to display a wider range of sentence types and vocabulary.

Example

Assessor:

Do you think weddings are a good idea these days?

You:

Well not really, in fact I suppose I'm a bit anti-weddings.

Say it

By saying this I suppose I mean that at many weddings today

it

there seems, to my mind at least, to be too much emphasis on

display and perhaps not enough attention given to deep

lain

meaning.

xpE

For example, I've seen many of my friends' marriages fail and

this has made me a little pessimistic about expensive, 'showy'

rt it o *wedding ceremonies that seem mainly about displays of wealth.*

pp *It's the deep commitment of two people that is the core of a*

uS *marriage.*

3. Try to use your own personal experience when appropriate

Explanation

Your own experiences are often easier for you to talk about.

Why is this important?

Your own life and culture can be used to generate examples and this helps to extend an answer, especially in Part 3.

Example

I think friends are easier to talk to than relatives.

Friends are much easier to talk to than relatives. In my country, generally speaking, people talk more openly to their friends than to their relatives because our culture is... I'll give you an example from my own situation...



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

4. Try not to drift off topic

Explanation

It's important to make your answers respond to the questions relevantly and coherently.

Why is this important?

'Relevance' here means that your reply fits the usual expectations of an answer to that question and responds to the central intention of the question. If your answer is relevant it tells the assessor you understood the question appropriately and listened to it fully.

Example

Assessor:

What do you imagine will happen to marriage in the future?

You (Response 1):

I'm not sure if I'll get married in the future. I want to get a good job and build my career so that I don't have to worry too much about money. Maybe I'll think about getting married after that.

You (Response 2):

I think marriage will become less popular, at least in this society, because many young people are becoming more self-

centred. They seem to think less about families and more about their own needs. Perhaps in the future this will make them less willing to make a major commitment like marriage, less willing to take responsibility.

Response 1 is not really relevant to the question, which is asking about marriage in general, not the candidate's marriage. Response 2 is more relevant.

270

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

5. Improve your pronunciation

Explanation

The better your pronunciation is, the easier you are to understand. If your pronunciation is weak, it may not be easy to perfect it immediately, but you can make some helpful adjustments.

Example

Part 1 topic about cooking:

Assessor: How often do you cook your own meals?

First of all, the assessor won't want to hear an unbroken answer in a flat, monotone voice, as in:

You: *'Idon'tcookveryoftenperhapstwiceaweekbecauseIsometimesworklate andthenIjustbuyfastfoodonthewayhome'*

So, here are some important ways of improving your pronunciation:

Try skilful 'chunking'

'Chunking' involves speaking in blocks of words and then taking a tiny pause. It helps to build

a slightly slower rhythm consisting of clear blocks of meaning. This helps the listener. But, you mustn't make the pauses too long or too mechanical, or fluency is lost and it sounds unnatural and even hesitant. So the original response might be improved like this:

You:

*I don't cook very often [mini-pause] perhaps twice a week
[mini-pause] because I sometimes work late [mini-pause] and then I just
buy fast food [mini-pause] on the way home.*

Apply good stress and rhythm

You also need to remember to stress the main information-carrying parts of your responses. So, as well as chunking and 'quick-pausing', you would stress the following elements (in bold type) more heavily than others, to communicate key information clearly, while maintaining appropriate rhythm by saying the parts between in an even-timed way:

You:

*I don't **COO**k very **of**ten [mini-pause] perhaps **TWI**ce a **WEE**k
[mini-pause] because I sometimes **WOR**K late [mini-pause] and then I
just buy **FA**st **FOO**d [mini-pause] on the way **HO**me.*

271

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

You also need to be careful to pinpoint correct stress inside words (e.g. souven**IR**, not

soUVE~~n~~ir; ~~MAN~~ager not manA~~G~~er; ~~IN~~ternet, not in~~TE~~Rnet).

Remember there are classes of words that are normally stressed (nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives) but also those that **aren't** normally stressed (prepositions, articles, linking expressions, pronouns) unless a particular contrast is being made (e.g. **I** love her, but **YOU** don't).

Practice intonation to inject life into your voice

Finally, to introduce a little more intonation ('voice music') into your responses you could add a comment which shows your attitude or feeling, by using strong stress PLUS a higher tone and slower pronunciation, so that your response finally becomes::

You:

*I **don't** **COO**k very **often** [mini-pause] perhaps **TW**ice a **WEE**k*

*[mini-pause] because I sometimes **WORK** late [mini-pause] and then I*

*just buy **FA**st **FOO**d [mini-pause] on the way **H**Ome. [pause]*

*I bet it's [higher tone] **R E A L**ly **B A**d for me!*

6. Use variety of vocabulary

Explanation

If you keep repeating the same simple words, the assessor realizes that you don't have much flexibility and are unable to vary your vocabulary, or express precise meaning.

Why is this important?

Variety makes you sound more interesting and more flexible as an English speaker.

Example

My dog is nice. He's a very nice pet. He likes nice walks. It's nice to walk with him every day. Every day I go with him for a walk.

My dog has a very friendly nature and is a very loving pet. He really enjoys his walk

every day, and I get a great deal of pleasure from these daily outings as well.

272

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

7. Use up-to-date idioms or colloquial vocabulary occasionally

Explanation

Hearing occasional, everyday idioms, phrasal verbs or colloquial expression makes the assessor feel that you are similar to them in your cultural style. This is persuasive.

Example 1

Too basic

More varied & interesting

Q: Tell me about your favourite food .

Q: Tell me about your favourite food.

A: *I like curry.*

A: *I'm really **crazy about** curries.*

Q: Why?

Q: Why?

A: *Because it's spicy... and it's very hot... I*

A: *Well, they're so spicy...sometimes they're so
enjoy going to different Indian restaurants...
hot they can almost **take your head off**...
but I really enjoy **trying out** different Indian
restaurants...*

Example 2

Q: Do you like studying in Australia?

A: *I feel a bit like a **fish out of water**, so it's **not really my cup of tea**.*

Q: Do you still play tennis regularly?

A: *No I've had to **call it a day** because I've got my final exams soon.*

The first example would be considered an 'unnatural' response because using two idioms, one immediately after another, seems a bit forced.

273

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

8. Reduce simple grammar mistakes

Explanation

Constantly making simple grammar mistakes doesn't always affect communication or understanding but creates a negative impression. It tends to suggest that you haven't worked

hard to conquer those mistakes from your early years of learning English.

Why is this important?

To get a higher score you need to sound as much like a native speaker as possible.

Native speakers rarely make basic grammatical errors.

Example

With grammar mistakes

Without grammar mistakes

Q: Which other language would you like to

Q: Which other language would you like to

learn?

learn?

A: *I like learn French*

A: *I'd really like to learn French*

Q: Why?

Q: Why?

A: *It is **interested** language. My **father***

A: *It is such an interesting language. Actually,*

***speak** French. He **learn** it when **he's** a child my father speaks French. He **learnt** it when he*

*I like to **talk him** in French.*

was a child. I'd really like to be able to talk

with him in French.

9. Respond to any comments made by your assessor

Explanation

Sometimes your assessor will comment on your answer (as opposed to asking you the next

question). Here is an example of how to respond in a natural way:

Example

Assessor:

It sounds as though you don't really trust the idea of marriage.

You:

Does it? Maybe you're right. I think it's definitely true that marriage seems more risky these days, as in this type of society people are more selfish, more independent and less respectful of tradition and so they may not feel so deeply connected to any promises they make.

274

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

10. Cooperate with the assessor's time restrictions

Explanation

The assessor has to cover the three parts of the interview according to a strict time schedule so you need to help the assessor with this, not cause stress.

Why is this important?

If you talk for too long when answering, for example, Part 1 topic questions, the assessor has difficulty asking all the 12 questions. Conversely, if your answers are too short, the assessor

doesn't use the minimum time for Part 1 (four minutes).

Example

After the Part 2 talk, the assessor asks a quick question. Give a shortish answer so that the assessor has enough time for Part 3. Try to give longer answers in Part 3.

Talk topic: 'Your best friend'. The assessor is asking a quick rounding-off question:

Assessor:

Do you see your best friend very often?

You (Response 1):

Yes I do, very often.

You (Response 2):

Yes, of course. I see him every day when I'm in my country.

I phone him up as soon as I get back and we meet, in a café

maybe, and talk about all the things that we want to do

together, you know, like going to the cinema or having a

meal at our favourite restaurants, like the one in the city

centre where we always went when we were at school

together. The food there is great and pretty cheap still.

You (Response 3):

Yes, of course. When I go back home we meet up and plan

what to do together. We see each other most days, and send

text messages to each other all the time.

Response 1 is too short, Response 2 is too long, and Response 3 is about the right length.



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

11. Treat the assessor as your equal, not as your boss

Explanation

The interview is a social experience between two strangers, where one (the assessor) has the questions and controls time, but doesn't control your answers or your personality.

Why is this important?

Although confidence is not being assessed directly, in western cultural terms it makes you seem weak and limited if your answers show a lack of positive energy and low self-confidence – this suggests you are allowing yourself to be dominated by the situation.

Example

Assessor:

Are you good at cooking?

You (Response 1):

No, I'm not good at cooking, I'm very bad at cooking.

You (Response 2):

Well, I'm not the best cook in the world, but I can cook simple things, and I enjoy eating what I cook, even if others don't.

Response 1 sounds negative, too self critical, whereas Response 2 sounds more positive, but realistic; not over-confident.



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Lesson

12. Try to make appropriate eye contact

Explanation

In western cultures eye contact is an accepted part of a conversation even with someone who has authority over you.

Why is this important?

In the IELTS interview you are not just using English you are creating a brief social relationship with your assessor. The assessor needs to feel comfortable too. If you make appropriate eye contact, it gives the impression that you are interested and so the interview feels more comfortable for the assessor as they can more easily make contact with you.

Actually it is hard for the assessor to make regular eye contact as they have to read the words on the page in front of them accurately. Try not to be put off by this.

Example

You could make gentle, positive eye contact when:

listening to questions or instructions

when giving your answers

13. Don't ask about your performance at the end of the interview

Explanation

When the assessor announces that the interview has ended, don't ask any questions about your performance—this may annoy the assessor, who is not permitted to comment on your

performance. Just say something polite and leave.

Example

Assessor:

That's the end of the interview.

You (Response 1):

Great. How did I do? Was I OK? I was pretty nervous - hope that didn't show.

You (Response 2):

OK. Thank you. It was really nice talking to you. Is it all right to leave now?

277

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

SPEAKING FITNESS ACTIVITIES

The fitness activities in this section will help you to tell some of the differences between a stronger response and a weaker response, and to improve your own responses when you try the IELTS Practice Interview.

Since you are probably reading this e-book on a computer or mobile device, it would be best to get some paper to write your answers on.

PART 1 » Answering Questions on Three Everyday Topics

Fitness Activities 1–16 for Part 1 of the IELTS Speaking Test

Activities 1–5 will help you to build stronger responses to questions on Topic 1:

Topic 1 Let's talk about your home

1

Question: 'Do you live in an apartment or a house?'

Which of these possible responses seems the most appropriate, and why?

- a) 'A house.'
- b) 'I live in a house in West Beach; I've lived there for about 2 years now.'
- c) 'I live in a house. The house is big.'

2

Question: 'Is it a good place to live? (Why?/Why not?)'

Which response is not really answering what the question is asking?

- a) 'Yes, it's the suburb that is near the city centre, with all the best shops.'
- b) 'Not really, as it's located in a very noisy part of town and the landlord never does anything about our complaints.'
- c) 'Yes it's a really good place because the rent is reasonable and it's near to the train station.'

278

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

3

Question: 'Is the area where you live pleasant? (Why?/Why not?)'

Which response is a good one? What seems wrong with each of the other two?

- a) 'It's pleasant, yes. It's pleasant because it has very pleasant parks nearby. These parks are nice and big, with nice flowers, and nice trees.'
- b) 'Yes, it's great. There are plenty of parks, with tennis courts, and many varied, native plants, flowers and trees. Also the houses are all well-built and up-to-date.'
- c) 'Yes it has...er...it has pleasant surroundings...er...and very attractive parks, with sports...erm...facilities...and...very little...erm poll...pollu...pollution.'

4

Question: 'What facilities are there near your home?'

Which seems the best way to ask for this question to be repeated?

- a) 'I'm sorry I didn't catch that. Could you repeat it please?'
- b) 'I don't understand. Can you say it again?'
- c) 'What are 'facilities', please? I need to hear the question again.'

5

Which response to the Topic 1 question in activity 4 seems the clearest?

- a) 'There are facilities, yes, there are a park, I go sometimes, a sports ground for I think for soccer. Kids go there, from street where I live.'
- b) 'There are lots – a park, for example, which I go to sometimes, and a sports ground, for soccer, I think. Some of the kids from my street go there.'
- c) 'Near my home are lots facilities, like there is a park for me to go there and a soccer sports ground for street kids from where I live in.'

279

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



Activities 6–9 will help you to build stronger responses to questions on Topic 2:

Topic 2 Let's move on to talk about friends

6

Question: 'Do you have many friends or just one or two?'

Complete this response using the expressions in the box below.

'I have _____ of friends... some from right back when I was at school, others from various jobs I've had, and there are the friends I play _____ with. I've always been a _____ sort of person so I find it easy to _____ on with people when I _____ them. But, I _____ I'd say I only have one or two _____ friends – friends I completely trust, I _____.'

suppose mean true meet sport friendly get loads

7

Question: 'How often do you see your friends?'

Which response has some high level vocabulary and idioms in it?

a) 'I don't have much chance to catch up with my old friends at the moment, as I'm studying here in Australia and they're not, but I often bump into my new friends at college here, and we hang out together.'

b) 'Most of my old friends are back at home, and I'm here in Australia. I have lots of new friends from college and we like to meet up and do things...all sorts of things together. It's good.'

c) 'Wow...Let me see...I don't see my school friends much...as they're at home and I'm not...if you know what I mean...so I don't see them often...but my new Aussie, college friends...well, of course, I see them all the time...too much maybe!'

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

8

Question: *‘Are you good at making new friends? (Why?/Why not?)’*

Which response is the most grammatically accurate?

- a) ‘As I say, I’m pretty good at make friend because I’m easygoing and I like meet new people when I’m going out to parties or thing like that.’
- b) ‘As I’m saying, I like people so it’s easier making friends. I’m good at chatting, you say ‘small talk’ I think. People seem like me maybe because I laugh much.’
- c) ‘As I said just before, I’m a bit shy but I make friends quite easily, maybe because I’m a good listener, and I like asking questions and showing interest in people.’

9

Question: *‘Which are more important – friends or family (Why?)’*

Which response seems the most interesting and varied answer?

- a) ‘I think family is more important, because everyone has a family. Friends sometimes don’t last but your family is with you for ever. You always have a family – parents, brothers, sisters and if you’re lucky, your grandparents, of course. It’s normal to have a lot of family around you.’
- b) ‘Family definitely. They are with you and care for you from the beginning of your life, they shape the person you become, they always support you and love you unconditionally. They will always be there if you get into difficulties. Friends don’t always feel the same level of responsibility.’
- c) ‘Both are important, but family is more important. I really love my mother, and she

loves me. It's natural I suppose but it's important to me, and to her. My friends like me and I like them but it's not the same really. It's a different feeling, less important really, at least for me.'

281

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

Activities 10–13 will help build stronger responses to questions on Topic 3:

Topic 3 Let's talk now about cars and driving

10

Question: 'Can you drive? (Why?/Why not?)'

Which response uses the most advanced and varied linking expressions?

- a) 'I can't drive at the moment; however, I'd like to learn because it will be useful, even though I don't need to drive as part of my job, as I work in an office.'
- b) 'I can drive, yes. I learnt last year and I have a small car, but I don't drive very often. Petrol is much too expensive for me and I'm only a student.'
- c) 'I've been driving for ten years. In my country it is not easy to learn to drive because lessons are so expensive so it cost me about \$800 to get my licence.'

11

Question: 'Is traffic increasing on roads in your country?'

Which response seems the most relevant?

- a) 'There are many cars on our roads, especially taxis. The roads never seem to be quiet, and it's always so noisy and there is a lot of pollution. It's not really safe to drive these

days.'

b) 'The roads are increasing but we need more because the population is increasing very rapidly too. Everyone wants a car and luckily we make our own cars now and they are quite cheap.'

c) 'It's increasing rapidly, yes. This is mainly because more people can now afford to buy cars, and so the increasing levels of traffic are very noticeable – more traffic jams, and more accidents.'

282

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

12

Question: 'How can car accidents be stopped?'

Which response seems too direct and perhaps even a little impolite?

a) 'It's probably unlikely that car accidents can be stopped completely. Life is often too hectic, so people have more difficulty concentrating and the roads are busier. All these factors put ever greater pressure on drivers, I think.'

b) 'They can't. It's not possible. Think about it. Can you drive and answer your mobile phone and remember what you need to buy from the shops, and talk to the children in the back seat. Nor me. That's why there are accidents.'

c) 'It's not possible, really. If you think about it, many drivers have a lot of stress when they drive – stress from other people in the car, mobile phones, time pressure. Put all these together and it's not surprising that accidents happen.'

13

Question: 'How do you feel when you are in a car that is going very fast?'

In which response is hesitation managed most successfully?

a) ‘I feel...erm I feel scare...scared because I don’t always...I don’t trust the driving...sorry

the driver. If I know the driver...and I know the driver drives...erm, safer, I mean safely, then I could...can relax a little bit’

b) ‘I feel...scare...sorry I meant to say, I feel scared, because I don’t always...how can I put it, I don’t always trust the driving, I mean driver. If I know the driver...erm or more important, if I know the driver drives...safer, or rather, safely, then I could...or can relax a little bit’

c) ‘I feel...I feel scare...scared because I don’t always...I don’t trust the driving...the driver. If I know the driver...and I know the driver drives...safer, sorry, safely, then I could...I’m sorry, can relax a little bit.’

283

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

Activities 14–16 will help you to develop your pronunciation skills

14

Building Awareness of ‘Chunking’

Good speakers group the words they speak into ‘chunks’, which are units of meaning separated by little pauses. This helps the listener to absorb information more easily.

The pauses are only very short otherwise fluency is lost and instead the listener may think you are hesitating.

Example

Compare A with B:

A

I come from Tehran it's a really busy city with many markets and mosques

B

I come from Tehran • It's a really busy city • with many markets and mosques

Now try to 'chunk' the following responses from Part 1 in a similar way

1) I'm sorry I didn't catch that. Could you repeat it please?

2) Yes it's great. There are plenty of parks with tennis courts and many native plants, flowers and trees.

3) As I said just before I'm a bit shy but I make friends quite easily maybe because I'm a good listener and I like asking questions and showing interest in people.

Finally, practise saying each sentence in 'chunks', using only very short pauses.

15

Building Awareness of Stress and Rhythm

English is a stress-timed language, which means that it follows a pattern a bit like a drumbeat, so some words or sounds are spoken more loudly (stressed) and others are spoken more quickly and softly in a fairly regular time. This establishes rhythm.

Example

Let's imagine you want to say this sentence:

'I went for a meal last night but the waiter forgot my order'.

To apply stress and create rhythm you would need to say it a little like this:

284

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

I w**EN**t for a **ME**al last n**IGH**t • but the **WA**iter for**GOT** my **OR**der

What is happening in this version of the sentence? Let's analyse it:

Only part of each stressed word receives the strongest sound (**MAIN STRESS**)

Some words also have some stress but it is less strong (eg last, but, my)

The end of a stressed word may become weakly pronounced in order not to disturb the rhythm (eg the 't' sound in 'went' and 'night' may hardly be heard)

All the unstressed parts (highlighted, e.g. t for a, al last n) are spoken at a faster speed, and each occupies about the same time length, to maintain a spoken rhythm.

The listener 'catches' the information because it is the information-carrying words that are stressed (**went, meal, night, waiter, forgot, order**)

Analyse these spoken responses from Part 1, using the style in the Example

a) It's normal to have a lot of family around you.

b) ...so the increasing levels of traffic are very noticeable.

c) It's probably unlikely that car accidents can be stopped completely.

d) ...I'm a good listener, and I like asking questions and showing interest in people.

Now, practise saying each sentence and try to build the 'drumbeat' of stress, and the rhythm this generates.

Building Awareness of Intonation

Intonation is like the ‘song’ of a language – it helps you to express your feelings and your personality. But some languages invite more variety of ‘song’ than others. When you speak English, it really helps to develop a good range of tones (from high to low) because:

it adds interest to your voice and to the meanings and feelings you are expressing

it makes the listener feel more focused and more connected to you as a person

285

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

A good time to use intonation in IELTS is when you are expressing something you have strong feelings about.

Example

Assessor: Do you like driving?

Speaker A: I **LOVE** it • it's my **TOTal PASSion** • I feel compl**ET**ely al**IV**e when I **DRIV**e.

Speaker B: L O V E

T O tal P A S Sion E T E ly alIVE

I it • it's my • I feel compl

when I **DRIV**e.

Speaker B lifts the tone on some of the stressed words and also says them a little more slowly at the same time to show how much feeling is involved.

Look at these Part 1 responses. Try to identify parts where a speaker might try to

communicate feelings using a higher tone, and a slower delivery.

a) I really love my family, especially my grandmother; she's such a beautiful person.

b) I make friends really easily; in fact I get super excited when I meet new people.

c) I'm a terrible driver. I get totally nervous in heavy traffic, and when I get out of the car I feel like a total wreck! I'm so annoyed with myself about it!

Practice saying these responses in a way which communicates the feelings.

Now listen to Part 1 of Practice Interview 1 (Questions)

Listen to the questions on the recording (or see Page 371) and practice answering as if you were in a real IELTS interview. You can download the interview recording on this webpage:

<http://www.ielts-blog.com/isf-downloads/>

If possible, record your answers for later analysis. For example, you could analyse how long your responses were, how varied, fluent, grammatical, and interesting.

This is part of learning about, and managing your spoken performance.

STOP the recording when you get to Part 2 of the Interview.

286

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

PART 2 » Giving a Short Talk on a Topic

In Part 2 the assessor gives you a task card. On the card, there is guidance on what aspects of

the topic to talk about.

You have one minute to prepare and during that minute you can make notes on a piece of paper. Then you talk for one to two minutes.

Fitness Activities 1–7 for Part 2 of the IELTS Speaking Test

Activities 1–7 will help you train yourself to prepare effectively for the talk and deliver a relevant and coherent speech.

Task Card: An interesting life

Talk about someone you know, or know about, who has had an interesting life.

You should say:

who the person is

where the person comes from

what is interesting about that person's life

and say why that person's life seems interesting to you

1

To practice in getting ideas, choose either a), b) or c) below and list four interesting things about the life of the person you choose:

Interesting things 1

2

3

4

Person

a) Someone you know well

b) A famous person

c) Yourself

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

2

Imagine a candidate who received the task card on a person with an interesting life, and has chosen to talk about their brother.

Match the notes (a-k), about the candidate's brother, with the 4 parts of the task card.

Notes

- a) my brother, Pierre
- b) born deaf
- c) brilliant scholar
- d) 5 years' older than me
- e) now lives New Zealand
- f) took risks, unlike me
- g) born Paris
- h) now an artist
- i) sailed solo to NZ
- j) met his wife in NZ
- k) never allowed disability to spoil his life

Task Card Notes (a-k)

1) Who the person is

2) Where the person comes from

3) What is interesting about that person's life

4) and say why that person's life seems interesting to you

3

Which beginning to the talk (a, b, or c) seems the most appropriate to you, and why?

a) My brother is interesting. His name is Pierre. He is five years' older than me so I'm the younger one. He comes from Paris originally but now he is in New Zealand

b) All right. Well, I suppose all lives are fascinating in some ways, but I'd like to talk briefly about my brother, Pierre. His life has been really extraordinary, at least in my opinion. Let me explain.

c) Pierre is my brother. He's my older brother in fact – five years older. He has had an interesting life, for sure, very interesting. Mine has been not so interesting. He was born in Paris, in fact we both were born there.

288

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

4 Sometimes candidates have trouble talking for two minutes, for different reasons.

Which two of these candidates are having trouble and for what reasons?

a) My brother Pierre, is from Paris. He is interesting because he is deaf. He has done many things – he was good at school, he was an artist, he sailed to New Zealand on his own and got married there. Why is he interesting? Because he never let disability spoil his life, he took risks, not like me.

b) We born...were born...in France...in Paris. His name, my brother's name...is

Pierre...and he is five years' more...five years' old...five years' older...of...I mean, than I...me. So...she is...his...he is my grand...big brother...and my...I am a...baby...the baby for...of the family.

c) My brother, Pierre, in fact he's my older brother, as there's five years' difference in our ages, was born in Paris, actually very close to the centre of Paris, where our parents had a very popular local bakery . Although he was born deaf, Pierre was brilliant at school, especially at mathematics and Art...

5

The last part of the task card usually asks you to explain why you think something, so it is an opportunity to offer your opinions instead of just information.

Which one of these last parts does this the best?

a) Why my brother is interesting? He is interesting because he has done all those things – sailing, art, moving to a new country. He has done more things than me. I didn't travel much and don't take many risks, like he does. I tend to stay at home.

b) My brother has always seemed especially interesting to me because he was born deaf and this created distance between us. As a younger brother I wanted to look up to him, but it was not easy as his disability made him seem so different. But he inspired me because he never let his deafness stop him from taking risks, or from seeking adventure.

c) His life is interesting. It is not easy to be a deaf boy and he has still managed to do lots of things, often things that are risky. Sailing to New Zealand was risky but he did it, and he did it alone. It took him nine months, but he finally got there to New Zealand. We met him there...the whole family met him.

289

6

If you stop talking after only a minute or so, the assessor may invite you to say more.

This is a good opportunity to enrich your use of language. If you end just before the two minutes, you can signal the end of your talk.

Which of these ways of ending your talk seems the most appropriate and polite?

- a) I finish now.
- b) That's it, no more to say. I said it all.
- c) I think that's all I have to say on this topic, for now, anyway.

7

The assessor may ask you a 'rounding off' question after you have finished your talk.

You should answer it briefly but try to answer in an interesting way.

Which of these answers seems the most appropriate?

Assessor: Do you see your brother very often?

- a) No, not really. I live in Paris still and he's in New Zealand. It's a long journey to go from France to there, or even the other way...it takes a long time, too long for me.
- b) No, not often. He doesn't make contact very often...he's busy. I think he's too busy to make regular contact. I'm quite usually busy too most of the time, I must say.
- c) Not as often as I'd like. He came over to Paris last year for our parents' 30th wedding anniversary but flights are a bit too expensive for us to get together regularly.

290



Now listen to Part 2 of Practice Interview 1 (Questions Only)

Listen to the recording and practice answering as if you were in a real IELTS interview.

You can download the interview recording on this webpage:

<http://www.ielts-blog.com/isf-downloads/>

1. After the introduction to Part 2, **pause** the recording for **one minute** to make notes.

Here is the task card:

Talk about a time when you were a child and got into trouble.

You should say:

how old you were

what you did that got you into trouble

what happened afterwards

and say why you still remember this occasion

2. After the one minute, **start** the recording again. After you hear, ‘Could you start talking now, please’, **pause** the recording again and start talking.

3. Start the recording again after **two minutes** and listen to the rounding off question.

4. Answer the question.

STOP the recording when you get to Part 3 of the Interview.

291

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



In Part 3 the assessor asks you some questions broadly related to the topic of your talk. This is your opportunity to take your use of spoken English to a higher level. The assessor usually starts with a simpler topic.

Fitness Activities 1–5 for Part 3 of the IELTS Speaking Test

Activities 1–5 will help you to build stronger responses to questions in Part 3:

1 Which response (a, b, or c) to the first question, extends the topic most but at the same time answers the question relevantly?

Assessor: Let's talk about exciting activities. Can you tell me about some exciting leisure activities in your culture?

- a) There are many exciting activities in my country. You can do sports, of course, like soccer, and basketball, or you can do more exciting activities like mountain climbing or skiing. It all depends on your interest and your money, of course. Some of these sports cost a lot of money so not everyone can do them. I wasn't able to do such things as a child.
- b) It's true that these days people are more interested in exciting activities, even dangerous ones, In my country skydiving has become popular, and also hunting for wild boar. Hunting is dangerous because it is unpredictable, partly because the boars are aggressive and can run very fast. This mix of danger and excitement seems increasingly attractive, at least to some people.
- c) I think it all depends on what you think is exciting. I'm not a very brave person so many things are exciting for me. Some of my friends, however, love excitement and like to do more interesting things. If I go for a picnic in the mountains, this is really exciting for me, not the food of course, but the steep places and the views.

2 Occasionally the assessor may respond to your answer with a rounding off question.

Which response (a, b, or c) seems the most relaxed and natural?

Assessor: Why don't you like dangerous activities?

a) I don't know. I don't like them. They seem rather stupid to me. I never liked to do dangerous activities when I was younger, and I'm the same now. I like an easy life not a difficult life. In a nutshell, I like to stay in the land of living.

b) Why do you think I don't like dangerous activities? I like some. I like skiing for example. That's dangerous sometimes. Some people get killed from skiing accidents, but I never think of that. I like this sport too much.

c) Well, maybe I'm just a bit of a coward, though I don't think so. I like to think I'm just sensible, that's all. Everyone has to decide what they can or can't do, and so I just try to be careful. I don't think I'm alone, I'm sure many people are like that.

3 The next question might ask you to imagine the situation in the future.

Which of these responses (a, b or c) has the greatest variety of grammar?

Assessor: Do you think in the future people will choose to lead more dangerous lives?

a) Yes, I do for sure. I think people will try to do very unusual things like space trips or they will go on endurance walks in dangerous places with no guide or maybe they will even sleep in haunted houses or shoot rapids on a log.

b) Yes, more and more dangerous, you're right. It is part of life. People always want to go beyond their limits and other people are happy to take their money and to organise some new dangerous activity, like shark hunting.

c) It seems likely that this trend will continue, yes. This is probably because people

psychologically seek danger even though they know it's risky. However high the risk, there are always people who are willing to have a go.

293

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

4 The assessor may now move to a slightly more complex topic. This is your chance to discuss ideas in a more complex way using a good variety of language.

Which of these responses (a, b, or c) has the richest use of vocabulary?

Circle any word that you think is a higher level vocabulary item.

Assessor: Let's talk now about the best ways to build your life. Can you explain why nowadays more young people wait until they are older before they get married?

a) I suppose there may be a whole host of reasons, but generally speaking, I think the pressure of building a career is stronger now. In fact, sometimes young graduates struggle to find permanent jobs and if they have a succession of temporary positions they probably don't feel financially secure enough to face the responsibility of marriage. Also, most marriages depend on both partners having the potential to earn good salaries, so for many women a career is built first, and marriage and family is put off until later.

b) I think there are many reasons but many people need a career today and it is very difficult to find a good job, even if you have been to university. Some people have one temporary job after another and don't think they have enough money to get married. Today husband and wife often both have jobs, and actually both need jobs. Many women try to have a good job before they think about getting married and having children. They will probably work again too even when their children are young.

c) You have to have a good job these days, it's very important, because it's hard to find a really good job - I mean a job that is not part-time or just for a few months. So without a real job and a good salary many men and many women don't have the confidence to get married, and to have children, especially as children are expensive too! This is a problem for many women, I think, who know they must probably work and have children, so they try to get a good job first and they marry later, have children and then try to work part-time.

5 The assessor only needs to use 4 minutes minimum for Part 3 so may not use the full 5 minutes if already confident to judge your level. So, develop all your answers to Part 3 questions with as much range and variety as possible.

In this final question, the assessor asks for comparisons.

Which response (a, b, or c) uses the most effective linking expressions between sentences (e.g. 'However', 'For example') to build coherence in the response?

Read these responses and mark the linking expressions.

294

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Fitness Activities

Assessor: Do you think your life has been more interesting than your parents' lives?

a) I don't think it is easy to answer this question. I have certainly travelled more than my parents but it's not easy to say my experiences have been more interesting. My parents had a simple life when they were young but it was rich in its own way. They had more regular contact with members of their extended family – erm cousins, aunts, uncles, and

grandparents. I have to say I don't even know some of my cousins as they live in other countries, and are dotted all over the world. Perhaps my life has been less interesting in terms of contact with wider family. Their family life was richer, for sure.

b) To be honest, I can't really say. Even though I think I've had more opportunities to travel than my parents did, it's not very easy to compare different experiences in terms of level of interest. While my parents' early life was simple, it did have its own richness. Compared to my upbringing, for instance, theirs involved more regular contact with family members. For example, they spent more time with cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents, whereas I haven't met some of my cousins, simply because they live in other countries. So, from that point of view, my life has probably been less interesting than theirs.

c) This is an interesting question. I don't think interest can be compared...it's very personal. OK I know I have travelled more than my parents did. It was interesting for me but different from their early life. My parents' early life tended to be simple but to them I'm sure it was really interesting. I know they had a lot more contact with family members like cousins, aunts and uncles and grandparents than I've had. In fact I don't know many of my cousins and have never even met them. They live all over the world in different countries. So my parents' family life was definitely more interesting than mine, I believe.

Now listen to Part 3 of Practice Interview 1 (Questions Only)

Listen to the recording and practice answering as if you were in a real IELTS interview.

You can download the interview recording on this webpage:

<http://www.ielts-blog.com/isf-downloads/>

If possible, record your answers and listen to them. It's good practice to re-record your own responses, each time trying to improve some aspect of your language – pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and coherence.



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Sample Interview

RATED SAMPLE IELTS INTERVIEW (Audio time: 12 min)

Did you answer all the questions for the practice interview in the previous section? Well done! For comparison,

you might now like to listen to Pragnesh practising a full, IELTS interview. Here's what to do:

1. Download the interview recording on this webpage: <http://www.ielts-blog.com/isf-downloads/>
2. Start the sample interview recording and follow the transcript below. Pause the recording any time you want to compare what Pragnesh says with the suggested 'better responses' alongside the transcript.
3. After you have listened to the interview, read the detailed analysis of his performance, noting the discussion of the four IELTS assessment criteria.
4. For practice, try answering each of the assessor's questions yourself!
5. Later, try some of the many test practice questions/topics (Pages 312-328) and try out one or two of the many idioms (Pages 305-311).
6. It's an excellent idea to record your own responses and to analyse your own spoken English while trying to move it closer to IELTS styles.

Pragnesh Speaking Interview Transcript, Part 1

Speaker

Original Version

A better response would be...

Assessor: Hello my name is Sally Robinson. Could you tell me your full name, please?

Pragnesh: *Er hello Sally, my name is Pragnesh...Pragnesh*

Er hello Sally, my name is

Takka but you can call me Pragnesh, if you like,

Pragnesh...Pragnesh Takka but you can call

yeah

me Pragnesh, if you like

Assessor: Can I see your identification?

Pragnesh: *Yeah, sure... here is my passport, and I guess that Yes, of course... here is my passport, I imagine*

should serve the purpose

that should serve the purpose

Assessor: Thank you. Now in Part 1 of the interview I'm going to ask you some questions about yourself..

Let's talk about where you live, Pragnesh. What

kind of apartment or house are you living in at the moment?

Pragnesh: *Er..I live in er...a three-bedroomed house...at the*

Er..I live in a three-bedroomed house...at the

moment, er... which is single storey...yeah

moment, it has just a single storey

Assessor: And what do you like about your house?

Pragnesh: *Er well our house is located in one of the close*

Er well our house is located in a cul de sac

roads so that's er I guess that is the most er
which I suppose is the most attractive thing
beautiful thing I like about that...we don't have
about it...we don't have much traffic going past
much of ...an... a traffic er going through the
the street... which is good...we live in a lovely
street... so that is good... er...we have got er a
neighbourhood as well...with only eight houses
lovely neighbourhood as well...er...in close look
there... and very good neighbours... yeah it's a
we have only eight houses there...very good
really nice place to live in
neighbours.. yeah it's nice place to live in

Assessor: How far is your house from public transport and
shops?

296

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Sample Interview

Speaker

Original Version

A better response would be...

Pragnesh: Well..er..we are just one street away from the
Well..we are just one street away from public
public transport..er we can use it..er..as and

transport...so we can easily use it as and when
when needed...er we are a little bit far from the
needed...we are a little bit far from the
shopping area er but I guess like er it's OK we
shopping centre er but it's generally OK
most of us... most of the time we rely on..er
because most of the time we rely on private
private transport. I have got my own car so er
transport as I have my own car so shopping
shopping and things are not too bad to go
and things like that are not hard to do...so
through...so that's quite OK with me at the
overall everything is really good at the
moment

moment

Assessor: If you could change er one thing in your house,
what would it be?

Pragnesh: Er...well...er I'm quite happy at the moment so it's Er..well..as I said, I'm quite happy at the

a difficult question for me to answer...er... but I
moment so it's a difficult question for me to
guess...er I might go more er near the shopping
answer..but perhaps it might be more
area that will help me when ...er... I don't have
convenient.er to be located a little nearer to the

my own car so I can go easily there ...go walking shopping area as that would help me whenever there...er... I guess that will help me

I didn't have my car and could easily walk there. I think that would be helpful

Assessor: Thank you. Let's go to talk about eating now.

What foods do you eat that are really healthy?

Pragnesh: *Er...well...er I'm a vegetarian person so er...er*

Er..well.I'm a vegetarian so the main part of main part of er like er quite lot we rely on salads ...so we rely quite a lot on salads and fruit and and fruit and er that I guess is..quite a healthier that I suppose is the healthiest aspect of my part of my diet...mm

diet..mm

Assessor: Do you eat sweet things very often?

Pragnesh: *Oh yes I love my sweets*

Oh yes I love sweet things

Assessor: Why?

Pragnesh: *er like culturally a part of India where I*

er well culturally, in the part of India where I belong...like...er...er sweet is a core

belong sweet things are a core component of er...component of our food anyway, so er most our food anyway, so most of the time we eat

most of time we have sweet at least once or twice sweet things at least once or twice a day... and a day... so...er I have grown in that culture and I as I grew up in that culture, I love sweet things love my sweets

Assessor: Are you eating healthier food now than you were when you were a child?

Pragnesh: *Er..unfortunately not...er...as a kid...er well I was Er...unfortunately not as a child...er well I*

er grown in an environment where my grew up in an environment where my parents...er ...used to er encourage more healthier parents...used to encourage me to eat healthy foods now than what I'm having now I don't foods but now they are not around so no one is have any limitations on that ...and I guess I'm not putting any restrictions on my diet ...and I'm the right person to choose my foods. probably not the best person to choose my diet.

Assessor: I'd like you to talk about your evenings now,

Pragnesh. (**Yeah**) How do you usually spend your evenings?

297

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Sample Interview

Speaker

Original Version

A better response would be...

Pragnesh: *Er...most of time when I er return from...from*

...most of the time after I get back..from

work...er I spend my evenings er with family

work...er I spend my evenings with family.

er...I'd prefer to go out for walking...er but

Actually, I'd prefer to go out for walks, but

unfortunately it's not possible all the time...er but unfortunately it's not always possible...but

whenever time permit I would prefer to go out for whenever time permits I enjoy going out for

the walking with family and... er that's what I

walks with my family and ...there's a lovely

like...er we have got lovely er...garden near our

garden near our house so that's where we like

pl...our house so that's where I want to go.

to go.

Assessor: Are you ever tired in the evening?

Pragnesh: *Ah...yes...a few days It depends how busy you are Ah...yes...on some days. It depends how busy I*

at work and that's the reason I said earlier cause am at work and as I said earlier even though

it's not possible all the time but when I'm not tired it's not possible all the time, when I'm not tired

I would go for walking and things, yeah

I really enjoy walking, and things like that

Assessor: Do you sometimes eat late in the evening?

Pragnesh: *Er I would say quite often...er I'm a late-night*

Er I would say quite often...er I'm a late-night

*person so I like to finish...tidy off my...all... most of
person so I like to finish off ... any work I need
the things doing late night...and even
to complete, late at night...and in my culture
as...er...eating...like...er... culturally we have our
we tend to have our dinner quite late most of
er dinner er most of time...quite late as well, yeah the time, anyway*

Assessor: Mm..Thank you.

Pragnesh Speaking Interview Transcript, Part 2

Speaker

Original Version

A better response would be...

Assessor: Now I'm going to give you a topic and I'd like you
to talk about it for one to two minutes. Before you
talk there will be one minute to think about what
you are going to say, and to make notes. Is that OK?

Pragnesh: *Er yeah sure*

Er Yes, that's fine

Assessor: So here's a pencil and a paper for making notes and
here's your topic. Er could you talk about an
occasion when someone gave you money

Pragnesh: *OK*

(preparation time begins)

Assessor: All right. Remember, you have two minutes for

your talk, so don't worry if I stop you. I'll let you know when the two minutes is up. So could you start talking now, please?

298

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Sample Interview

Speaker

Original Version

A better response would be...

Pragnesh:

Yeah, sure. Er...well...er... I er remember the

Yes certainly. Well, I remember the occasion

occasion when I er received some money from

when I received some money from my dad on

my dad on er my birthday when I was in Year 10 my birthday, when I was in Year 10. I

er I remember it very well 'cause that was the

remember it very well because that was the

time when I wanted the money very badly er I

time when I wanted the money very badly. I'll

was grew up in an area like in a time when er

explain why. I grew up during the time when

video games are quite new and I was...er like we video games were quite new. We were one of

were one of the middle class families so I didn't

the middle class families so I didn't use to get a

use to get a lot of pocket money and I didn't
lot of pocket money and I couldn't manage to
manage to get one of those video games from my save up enough to buy one of those video
saving from my pocket money er...
games.

One of my very close friend got a video game as
However, one of my very close friends was
a gift on his birthday and I was.. I used to be
given a video game as a gift on his birthday
very jealous with that and I desperately wanted
and I was.. er I used to be very jealous of him,
to buy one of those video games ...erm...er ...and and desperately wanted to buy one of those
unfortunately I was short of money so I couldn't video games for myself. Unfortunately I was
er afford that...er but luckily my birthday came
short of money so I couldn't afford it...but
up and I er received a handsome money from
luckily my birthday came along and I received
my dad.

a handsome sum of money from my dad.

That was the time when I liked it a lot and I
At that time I liked getting money a lot and
straightaway bought my video game from that
straightaway I bought my video game.
and yeah so er well those days like er...before

Perhaps I should say that before that birthday that birthday most of the time I used to get gifts most of the time I used to get gifts on my on my birthday and er I was not having a choice birthday and so I had no choice of what to buy to what to buy from that so I was forced to use and was forced to make use of the gifts I was what I was given as a gift but when I received given, but, when I received money on that money I got the choice to er decide where I can occasion, for the first time I could choose spend my money and luckily I had enough where to spend my money...in fact, luckily I money so that I managed to give a er party for had more than enough money so I even my friends from the money spared after buying managed to throw a party for my friends from the video game...yeah the money left over after buying the video game.

Assessor:

Thank you. Do people often give you money?

Pragnesh:

Er...not now er but as a kid I used to get er

Er...not now, but as a kid I used to be given

money quite often er traditionally like when

money quite often...traditionally when there

there was some ok like festival comes in er we

was some sort of festival we used to go to our

*used to go to our parents and grandparents and parents and grandparents and we used to
we used to get either money or gift as a like their receive either money or gifts from them with
best wishes.*

their best wishes.

Assessor:

Thank you. I'll take the paper and pencil back

now (*Yeah*)

299

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Sample Interview

Pragnesh Speaking Interview Transcript, Part 3

Speaker

Original Version

A better response would be...

Assessor: So you've been talking about some money that

someone gave you and I'd like to discuss with

you a few more questions related to this topic

(*Sure*) So, first of all let's consider money as a

gift.. erm When do people often give money to

others in your culture?

Pragnesh: *Er on like quite of... quite often during the*

Er well, quite often money is given during the

festival season when we go to elderly people oh

festival season when we go to visit the older

erm our parents and grandparents they offer generations, like parents and grandparents, money or gift as a best wishes. Er...and then er and they offer money or gifts...and then also on on birthdays or when you achieve something in birthdays, as I told you earlier or when you your studies or erm your exams...yeah achieve something in your studies, or pass your exams

Assessor: Do you think giving a present is better than giving money, though?

Pragnesh: *er..it depends. Er the answer is yes and no er as er. I think it depends. Probably the answer is a kid er mostly they don't have a rough a gross both yes and no. Most kids don't have a clear idea about what they should be spending money idea about what they should be spending on so quite often there is a risk involved that er money on so quite often there is a risk involved kids can be spoiled by giving them money er but that kids can be spoiled if they are given money, er and at the same time er if they receive a gift but at the same time if they receive a gift as a as a present then they don't have the choice as*

present then they don't have any choice so it's a

well...so er it's a difficult one to answer on.

difficult one to answer definitively.

Assessor: Well do you think parents give money to

children more often now than in the past?

Pragnesh: *er... with my best knowledge er 'yes' is the*

er.. To the best of my knowledge, I think 'yes' is

answer 'cause these days kids are more

the answer because these days kids are more

particular about what they want and quite often particular about what they want and quite

they get annoyed when they don't get the gift

often they get annoyed when they don't get the

what they want so erm at the same time parents gift they want. At the same time parents these

are they are quite busy with work and

days are quite busy at work and everything, so

everything so they try to avoid spending time on they try to avoid wasting time trying to get the

getting the right gift rather they would give

perfect gift and would rather give money to

money to the kids I don't know whether that's a

their kids. I can't decide whether that's a right

right or wrong thing.

or a wrong thing, though.

Assessor: Thank you, Pragnesh. Let's talk now about

money and personal values. Er..why do you

think so many people these days want to be rich?

300

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Sample Interview

Speaker

Original Version

A better response would be...

Pragnesh: *er well these days the gap is er increasing quite*

er Well these days it's true the gap between rich

a lot between rich and poor people and er with

and poor people is increasing noticeably. But,

globalisation or more often or more so with the with globalisation and with the spread of

audio visual medias people know what rich

audiovisual media people now know how rich

people can do and that's why they want to

people live and that's why they want to acquire

achieve all those things that they don't have in

all those things that they don't yet have in their

their life er...so...er now even the poor and

own lives. Nowadays even the poor and middle

middle class people can see the lifestyle of

class people can see the lifestyles of celebrities

celebrities and more rich people and they want

and other rich people and so they want to

*to get all those things for they don't have in
surround themselves with all the material goods
their life so they er spend er...money's very
they don't have in their lives and this is why
important for them.*

*money has become increasingly important to
them.*

Assessor: What about you, could you live a simple life in
the future and live without money?

Pragnesh: *I would love to, but the honest answer is no I
I would love to, but the honest answer is no. I
would rather have er more money and decide
would rather have more money and then decide
where I can spend them.
what to spend it on.*

Assessor: Finally, let's talk a little about money in the
world. Erm what is your explanation for why
the wealth gap between rich and poor people is
becoming wider in many societies?

Pragnesh: *Er well er a difficult question for me to answer
Er well that's a difficult question for me to
I've never given er thought to that er but. er I
answer as I've never really given it much
guess like er er with current economical policies thought, but I think that the current economic*

er where er they are trying to er get more policies, which are trying to build more equality equalisation in the society but the risk involved in society, also involve some risks. For instance, in this that in developed countries like Australia in developed countries like Australia and and Canada say they give lots of social er Canada many less well-off people receive social money like er social service money to the poor security or social services and quite often this people and quite often they encourage people encourages them not to work, for the simple not to do work cause if er people can get easy reason that if people can get easy money without money without working what is currently working, and this is something that is currently happening in quite a few developed countries happening in quite a few developed countries, that's one of the major risk involved in that then that's one of the major risks involved. There lately quite a few stories are coming up where have been quite a few stories lately of people people declare themself disabled just because declaring themselves to be disabled just to make they can get easy money so er with the policies

*themselves eligible to receive easy government
government is doing right thing by er getting
money, so, although by adopting these policies
the poor er trying to improve the quality of life
governments are doing the right thing by trying
in poor people but at the same time there is a
to improve the quality of life of poor people, at
risk involved where er there is a group of
the same time there is a risk involved whenever
people who want to take advantage of that.
there are groups of people who want to take
advantage of that.*

Assessor: Thank you Pragnesh That is the end of the
interview.

Pragnesh: *Thank you.*

301

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Sample Interview

Analysis of Pragnesh's Sample IELTS Interview

**This evaluation is not an official IELTS score; it is a formal evaluation and an impression score
prepared by a**

highly experienced teacher, based on the publicly available IELTS assessment guidelines.

**The teacher has tried to analyse the student's strong and weak parts and this will give you a
better**

understanding of how to perform better in the IELTS Speaking Test.

Fluency and Coherence

Pragnesh is typical of many speakers of English from the Indian subcontinent – he is very fluent, and has no

difficulty at all in understanding all the questions put to him. His answers all make sense and are appropriate

responses, though his answers are not always enriched in terms of content, and his ideas not always well linked.

His way of speaking, however, displays one or two features meriting separate consideration.

Firstly, he has a constant verbal tic (a sort of repetitive speaking habit) in the form of **the sound ‘er’ which he**

uses all the time (and he **repetitively overuses the word ‘yeah’ also**, though to a lesser extent). This

represents a form of hesitation, but because he speaks so quickly and easily, it seems difficult to classify it as

part of a major mental struggle to communicate in English. Nevertheless it is a negative aspect.

The **speed of his speech**, while showing fluency on the one hand, is also a slight problem, in the sense that he

sometimes **swallows words** before they have been uttered clearly or fully. This puts an occasional, slight level

of strain on the listener and occasionally weakens the overall coherence of his responses.

Finally, Pragnesh tends to **repeat the same information** in slightly paraphrased form, rather than trying to

develop and enrich the ideas he presents. This reduces the overall quality of coherence in his ideas and

possibly also reduces the quality of the connection with the assessor, and the assessor’s level of interest in the

ideas being expressed.

It is these factors that would need to be weighed up when assigning him a score in this area.

Lexical Resource

Pragnesh has an effective functional vocabulary, meaning that he has no difficulty talking on any subject or in

any situation. However, his **range of vocabulary is sometimes limited and repetitive**, and he **tends not to enrich**

his speech with less common (more advanced) vocabulary choices which might add more colour, texture,

interest and precision. This is related also to his **limited ability to develop ideas**. Occasionally, however, he

comes out with something impressive (examples: ‘core component’; ‘whenever time permit’; ‘short of money’;

‘declare themselves disabled’; ‘easy money’; ‘major risks involved’; ‘take advantage of that’; quality of life’).

In terms of the final score for this criterion, the only occasional use of less common (more advanced) expressions

may not be quite enough to outweigh the overall effect of his generally limited range and repetitive use of

vocabulary.

302

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Sample Interview

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Again, Pragnesh is fairly typical of many Indian speakers of English in the sense that he has developed a variety

of spoken English that in some ways is not quite standard to, say a British or Australian native speaker of English,

since **he makes little grammatical errors constantly (for instance tense errors, word form errors)**, but they are

errors which don’t impede successful communication or comprehension. At the same time, and, again like many

speakers of English from India, he uses English grammar in a somewhat limited way, which means he **doesn't**

display a very wide range of grammatical options or range of constructions, which in turn tends to make **his**

grammatical formulations a little repetitive. It is these factors that would be limiting his ability to be assigned a

really high score.

Pronunciation

This is often a troublesome area of language for Indian speakers of English, as once again they have long

experience of speaking English but are exposed to varieties of spoken English that may not be standard and often

difficult for native speakers of English in the US, Australia or Britain, for example, to follow. Pragnesh's great

strength in terms of pronunciation is his use of intonation. He maintains the listener's interest by frequent

changes of tone, and this makes him sound engaging, interesting, and natural. Sometimes Indian speakers are

much more monotone with unusual stress patterns that cause the listener to lose the sense of what is being said.

Pragnesh is also easy to understand most of the time, except when he swallows the occasional word by speaking

too fast. His stress patterns and 'chunking' of phrases are generally effective and aid the listener's comprehension.

On balance, then, he is effective in terms of pronunciation, but **might be penalised for the negative impacts of**

speed of speech on ease of understanding.

SUMMARY

In terms of IELTS, it is likely that Pragnesh would score quite well for Fluency and Coherence and quite well for

Pronunciation and possibly Vocabulary, but might struggle to be rewarded as highly for Grammar. He is a good

example of a candidate hovering overall around the **Band 7 level**. There are many IELTS candidates in a similar situation.

303

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Sample Interview

How could he gain a higher score?

There are one or two simple things that Pragnesh could do and are within his existing ability.

1. He could slow down a little – by relaxing (especially if nervousness makes him speak so fast), and by

practicing more under IELTS-like conditions to get more used to the ‘rhythm’ of the test.

He needs to be more aware of **achieving balance between speed of speech and content**. Based on this

interview it seems clear that in order not to fall silent or to seem limited during the interview, he prefers to

use repetition of individual expressions and repetition of ideas. This may not be the best balance. Sometimes

non-native speakers of English from India fall into the trap of ‘over-talking’ (often at high speed).

He needs to understand the usefulness and power of short pauses between ideas and ‘chunks’ of speech.

These pauses act to highlight the ideas being communicated and also give the listener time to follow and

evaluate them. In fact, **‘over-talking’ can sometimes lead to ‘under-meaning’** (not actually having many

different ideas to offer and using a limited language repertoire). This combination of **fast, non-stop (no**

pause) **speech and low content is very tiring to listen to** and may even reduce the perceived value of the

language displayed.

2. He should try consciously to insert more, **higher level or idiomatic expressions** into his answers (especially

in Part 3) to give the vocabulary score a chance of being lifted. He probably has more vocabulary at his

disposal, but has got into a ‘functional’ speaking habit (i.e. regarding communication of his ideas in simple

language as being enough). In an IELTS test he probably needs to focus on **DISPLAYING** appropriate

language, not just answering all questions as if they are everyday conversations. His strategy for this

language test encounter should be looking at every question as an opportunity to demonstrate (appropriately,

of course) the higher level expressions he knows. Again, more practice can achieve this. At the same time

Pragnesh needs to learn how to develop ideas in order to generate greater variety of expression. He could

record himself giving answers and then analyse the recording to assess the level of repetition and try to come

up with new ideas with which to develop his points and then re-record those sections in order to feel the

difference in quality and range of content.

3. He might try to move to a **slightly more formal style** in the latter parts of the test, where the questions can be more abstract, discussion questions. He would also benefit from more practice at **extending and developing**

slightly more complex ideas in Part 3 of the interview so that expression of ideas gives rise more naturally to

maturity and richness of language.

Going over typical Speaking topics and thinking about ideas to talk about during exam preparation is a good

idea. It may help with developing views and opinions on a wide range of subjects.

4. He should try to make fewer grammatical mistakes. It would probably not be as easy for Pragnesh to change

his grammatical patterns very quickly as many of them are by now probably ‘fossilized’ (‘stuck’) and represent the variety of English he has probably been using for a long time in a different cultural context.

But, nevertheless, he could get more control over his sentence patterns with practice.

304

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Top Score Vocabulary

TOP SCORE VOCABULARY FOR THE SPEAKING TEST

Using occasional, idiomatic or phrasal expressions in your IELTS interview can enrich vocabulary. However, they

need to be used **naturally and only occasionally**.

‘Sounding natural’ is really important when trying to achieve a higher score. It means being fluent and using

language in a way that makes the listener feel they are talking to someone who could belong to the same

language community.

Below is a list of expressions, each with a meaning and an example of possible use in the Speaking test. Asterisk

(*) shows **the most flexible, and perhaps frequently used expressions**.

Expression

Meaning

How to use in a Speaking test

*** a drop in the**

a very small amount

Assessor:

Do you give money to charity?

ocean

compared to the amount

You:

No I don't, mainly because I feel that my \$50

needed

donation would only be **a drop in the ocean.**

a lost soul

without direction or

Assessor:

Do you feel you belong in Australia

purpose

now?

You:

In some ways, yes, but deep down

I'm still a bit of **a lost soul.**

a real can of

uncovering a range of

Assessor:

Have you ever had to solve a tricky

worms

complex problems

problem at work?

You:

Yes, I once found out that someone at work had a criminal record and it was **a real can of worms** when I tried to sack him.

a straight talker

someone who talks

Assessor:

What can you tell me about your best friend?

directly and openly

You:

My best friend, Paul, is a really **straight talker**; he never just tries to say what I would like to hear.

all at sea

very confused

Assessor:

Do you adapt well in new situations?

You:

Yes, eventually, but I tend to be **all at sea** at first, until things settle down.

*** at the end of the** finally/in the end

Assessor:

Overall then, which is more important to you - love
day

or respect?

You:

At the end of the day, it all depends on your priorities at different times.

drop dead

very attractive

Assessor:

Do you know a person who is very attractive?

gorgeous

You: Yes, a friend of mine. She's a beauty; I mean she is

drop dead gorgeous.

full of beans

has a lot of energy

Assessor:

Is it true that children have more energy than adults?

You:

Oh yes, my son, for example, is always

full of beans.

305

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Top Score Vocabulary

life in the fast

to seek many colourful

Assessor: Do you enjoy taking risks?

lane

experiences in order to

You:

Well, you only live once, don't you, and I've

chase success or self-

always liked **life in the fast lane**.

improvement

life in the slow

life without any

Assessor: How do you feel about extreme sports?

lane

excitement or danger

You:

Well, some people go for them, but they're not for

me - I prefer **life in the slow lane**.

nothing to write

mediocre/not as good as

Assessor: Have you seen any new movies lately?

home about

expected

You:

Yes, I saw the new Spielberg movie, but it was

nothing to write home about.

*** over the top**

excessive

Assessor: Do you think a CEO can ruin a company?

You:

To blame one person for the collapse of the whole company seems to be a bit **over the top**.

quality time

time spent with someone *Assessor:* If you could change something about your life, without distractions what would it be?

You:

I would work less and instead spend more **quality time** with my children.

*** the bottom line**

the final outcome

Assessor: Children these days often argue that learning in a classroom should be replaced with online studies, do you agree?

You:

The methods may vary, but the **bottom line is** they still need to go to school.

*** the tip of the**

the visible part of

Assessor: Is there any corruption in your country?

iceberg

something but the main

You:

Yes, one of our government ministers was arrested

part is hidden

recently for stealing public money and I'm pretty

sure it's only **the tip of the iceberg**.

tough love

helping someone to

Assessor: Do you believe in strong discipline?

change their behavior by

You:

Well my dad was really strict, but I think his brand

treating them in a very

of **tough love** helped me to become more

severe way

responsible.

306

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Top Score Vocabulary

Expression

Meaning

How to use in a Speaking test

(verbal)

*** I fancy a**

I would like a (*something*) *Assessor*: Do you have a favourite café or restaurant?

(*something*)

You:

Definitely, there is a little cafe that I always go to
when I **fancy a** coffee, and also the cupcakes they
serve are heavenly.

*** to be a disaster**

to end very badly

Assessor: Are you good at building relationships?

You:

No, I'm afraid I'm not. My last relationship **was a**
(complete) disaster.

*** to be a joke**

to be ridiculous, or

Assessor: Do you think the government should do more to
ineffective
protect the environment?

You:

With all due respect to the government of my
country, their current attempts to protect the
environment **are a joke.**

to be a waste of

to be useless

Assessor: If you had a problem, would you ask your neighbour

space

for help?

You:

My neighbour **is a waste of space**; I wouldn't even bother.

to be an outsider

to be a stranger, new to

Assessor: Have you got many friends in the place where you something

live?

You:

I'm still a **bit of an outsider** in my town, even 10 years after moving there.

*** to be put out**

to be offended/annoyed

Assessor: How did you feel when you didn't get that job?

You:

I **was** a bit **put out** when they sent me the rejection letter.

*** to be up against** to experience difficulties *Assessor:* Have you ever been in a difficult situation? **it**

created by a situation or

You:

Yes, when I had to apply for my visa and saw all the

a group of people

paperwork involved, I realized that I **was** really **up**
against it.

to be up on

have good, up-to-date

Assessor: What are your interests?

(something)

knowledge of *(something)* *You:*

I like sports, especially football. I'm really **up on** the

Premier League in the UK; I know all the teams.

to bite the bullet

to take an unpleasant

Assessor: Have you ever had to make an unpleasant decision?

action or decision

You:

Yes, I once had to quit a well-paid job. It wasn't a

good career move but I just had to **bite the bullet.**

to come together

to happen in a

Assessor: How did you feel when you found a new job?

satisfactory way, without *You:*

Like my life was finally starting to **come together.**

problems

to do *(something)*

to make improvements

Assessor: What would you like to change about your house?

up

You:

Everything! The whole place needs **doing up**.

to drink like a fish to drink large amounts of *Assessor:* Do you think that drinking alcohol can be alcohol regularly

dangerous?

You:

Well, I suppose if you **drink like a fish**, you have to expect health problems.

307

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Top Score Vocabulary

to drive like a

to drive like an idiot

Assessor:

How do you feel about bad driving habits?

madman

You:

I wouldn't get in a car with a bad driver, such as my neighbour - he **drives like a madman**.

*** to drop in on**

to spontaneously visit

Assessor:

Do you ever visit your family without calling first?

(*someone*)

(*someone*) without

You:

Well, yes, I enjoy **dropping in on** my mother at the

arranging the visit in

weekend sometimes, to give her a nice surprise.

advance

to drop off

to fall asleep

Assessor:

Do you enjoy your course?

You:

Well, I'm usually so tired after my part-time job that

I often **drop off** in the middle of the lectures. I don't

snore, though!

to eat like a horse

to eat large amounts of

Assessor:

Do you teach your child about a healthy diet?

food

You: Well, I'm always telling him that if he keeps on

eating like a horse, and then just watching TV, he

may end up overweight.

to feel a bit of a fool to feel silly

Assessor:

How did you feel about making that kind of
mistake?

You:

I felt a bit of a fool, I suppose.

*** to find a way**

to manage to complete a

Assessor:

Is it important to be adaptable in life?
difficult task

You:

I believe so, and one of my friends is a good
example. He always tends **to find a way** to get what
he wants.

*** to fit in**

to be socially adaptable

Assessor:

Do you usually adapt well in new social situations?

You:

No, not always. I remember that I never seemed **to**
fit in at school, for example.

*** to get on**

to annoy (*someone*)

Assessor:

Do you always enjoy work?

(*someone's*) **nerves**

You:

To tell you the truth, my boss **gets on my nerves**
sometimes.

*** to get on top of**

to be in control of

Assessor:

Are you a good student?

You: I'm afraid not - but I'd like to be. I need to **get on top**
of all my subject material.

*** to get on well with** to understand someone

Assessor:

Do you have good relationships with people at
(*someone*)

well when you interact

work?

You:

My team is rather small, it's just my colleague Peter
and I, and luckily I **get on very well with him**.

*** to get** (*someone*)

to annoy (*someone*) or

Assessor:

How do you feel when you make mistakes in
down

make (*someone*) feel

English?

downcast

You:

It usually **gets me down** because I seem to make so
many.

*** to get together**

to meeting someone

Assessor:

Do you prefer to spend time with family or friends?

You:

Well, I enjoy **getting together** with friends – less
stressful, to be honest.

to give (someone) a

to reprimand

Assessor:

Have you ever had a problem with your supervisor

talking to

at work?

You:

Yes, as a matter of fact, not too long ago my boss

gave me a talking to about being late for work.

308

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Top Score Vocabulary

*** to go for it**

to try it

Assessor: Are you a focused person?

You:

I would say so. If I believe something is worth the effort, I really **go for it**.

*** to go on and on**

to talk excessively about

Assessor: Do you think education is important?

about

You:

Personally I don't, but my parents are always **going on and on about** the importance of education.

*** to go out of my**

to make an effort

Assessor: Do you think fairness is important?

way

You:

Personally, I do. **I go out of my way** to be fair with

everyone.

to go out on a

to say or do something

Assessor: Do others feel the same way as you do about this?

limb

very differently from

You:

Probably not, I tend to **go out on a limb** about most

most people

things.

to have a stroke of to have a lucky

Assessor: Have you ever been late submitting an assignment to

luck

happening

your teacher?

You:

Unfortunately yes, there was a time when I wasn't

able to finish my homework in time but I **had a stroke**

of luck because my teacher was suddenly ill with flu

for a week.

to jump up and

to be agitated or

Assessor: What did your parents think when you left your

down

annoyed

current job?

You:

Oh my dad **jumped up and down** for a while until I explained that I had been headhunted by a better company.

to land a ...

to achieve something,

Assessor: Have you changed jobs recently?

perhaps with a bit of

You:

No, personally I haven't, but my sister has just **landed** luck

a great job as a lawyer.

to live it up

to enjoy life while

Assessor: How do you feel about saving money?

spending a lot of money

You:

I just like to **live it up**, so with such an extravagant lifestyle I never save much.

to make a meal

to take longer than

Assessor: What do you find the most difficult thing about

out of (something)

necessary doing

supervising others?

something

You:

I suppose it sometimes seems difficult to get people to

do pretty simple things. For example, last week I

asked my secretary to write a short memo and she

made a real meal out of it.

to make (someone)

to make (someone) very

Assessor: Are there any forms of behaviour that you find

see red

angry

irritating?

You:

Well, yes, when people fail to take responsibility for

their mistakes it **makes me see red.**

*** to make up**

to come to a decision

Assessor: Are you good at making decisions?

(someone's) **mind**

which is unlikely to

You:

You bet I am! Once I've **made up my mind** to do

change

something, nothing stands in my way.

* **to make up with** to resolve differences

Assessor: Are you a forgiving person?

You:

I can be, especially with my girlfriend, every time she

wants to **make up with** me after an argument.

309

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Top Score Vocabulary

* **to overdo it**

to do too much

Assessor: How do you feel about dieting?

You:

Dieting can be helpful, but people shouldn't **overdo it**.

to play their

to make a real effort

Assessor: Have you ever been to a music festival in your

hearts out

country?

You:

Yes, and actually I really enjoyed the street musicians

the most because they were **playing their hearts out**.

to put it bluntly

to express an opinion in a *Assessor*: Do you think professionalism is important?

harsh form

You:

I think it is very important. I have no respect for

people who, **to put it bluntly**, are no good at what they do.

to put it

to express an opinion in a *Assessor*: Do you perform well at work?

diplomatically

gentle form

You:

Putting it diplomatically, I have much room for improvement.

to put (*someone's*)

to do everything possible *Assessor*: Did you try hard enough to get that contract?

life on the line

You:

I pretty much **put my life on the line** to get that deal to succeed.

* **to put** (*something*) to postpone something

Assessor: Have you ever had to change your vacation plans?

off

You:

Yes, unfortunately. On one occasion due to pressure at work I had to **put off** my vacation for a few weeks.

* **to run out of**

the time allocated has

Assessor: We've **run out of time**, so that is the end of the **time**

ended

Speaking test.

to run (*someone*)

to criticize (*someone*)

Assessor: What sort of relationship do you have with your

down

neighbour?

You:

My neighbour is a strange person.

I don't want to **run him down** but there are certain things about him I don't approve of.

to say it like it is

to speak honestly

Assessor: What do people at work think of you?

You

I think some people respect me because I tend to **say it like it is**; I never try to hide the truth.

* **to see the good**

to understand the

Assessor: How do you feel about working in the healthcare

side of

advantage of

industry?

You:

I can certainly **see the good side of** trying to help

people in need.

to set eyes on

to see for the first time

Assessor: How would you describe your recent holiday

(*something/someone*)

destination?

You:

Quite frankly, as soon as I **set eyes on** Antigua I knew

it was the place for me.

*** to take a good**

to give careful attention

Assessor: Are you worried about your weight?

look at

to

You:

Well, I think I certainly need to **take a good look at**

my diet.

*** to take it easy**

to relax

Assessor: Do you often feel stressed at work?

You:

No I don't. I try to **take it easy** as much as I can.

310

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Top Score Vocabulary

to take it on the

to accept consequences

Assessor: How well do you handle unpleasant surprises?

chin

stoically

You:

Well, I don't fall apart. When my manager told me I

was fired, it was a real shock, but I **took it on the**

chin.

*** to take it out on** to vent anger on

Assessor: What do you think is the secret to having a good

(someone)

(someone)

relationship in a family?

You:

Patience. Whenever I am frustrated, I try not **to take it**

out on my partner.

* **to take** (*someone*) to accept

Assessor: If your boss were to offer you a better paid position

up on (*something*)

but with additional responsibilities, how would you

react?

You:

I'd still probably **take him up on** that.

* **to talk behind**

to criticize a person, but

Assessor: Do you enjoy your job?

(*someone's*) **back**

only in a conversation

You:

The job is fine, but some of my co-workers are not,

with others.

especially those who **talk behind your back**.

* **to talk** (*someone*) to convince (*someone*) to

Assessor: How would you solve a dispute between yourself and

into doing

do something

a neighbour?

something

You:

I would try to **talk the neighbor into** coming over to my house for a cup of tea. Getting to know each other better would help.

to try to talk

to speak frankly and

Assessor: Do you think being honest is important?

straight

directly

You:

Yes I do. I try **to talk straight** and I expect everyone else to speak openly and directly.

to work oneself

to be overworked

Assessor: Do you think people work longer hours nowadays?

to death

You:

Yes, definitely. Take my sister for example - she almost **works herself to death**.

311

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

IELTS SPEAKING TEST PART 1 – QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

In this section you will find a collection of questions of the kind you may be asked in Part 1 of your IELTS

Speaking test. It is a good idea to go over as many as you can and answer them, or at least think of something to

say. Wherever appropriate, extend your responses for around 10-20 seconds.

The first questions you may be asked

Are you a student or do you work?

What job do you do?

What are the most interesting parts of your job? (Why?/Why not?)

How long are you hoping to stay in this job?

What's your dream job?

Where do you work?

Is your job sometimes boring? (Why?/Why not?)

Do you like your boss (your company)?

Would you recommend this job to others? (Why?/Why not?)

Is this kind of job popular in your country?

What course are you studying?

Which subject in your course do you enjoy most? (Why?)

What would you like to change on your course?

What will you do after you finish your course?

How long have you been on your course?

Which parts of your course have been the most difficult for you? (Why?/Why not?)

Have you made new friends on your course? (Why not?)

Would you recommend this course to others? (Why?/Why not?)

Other Part 1 topics

Let's talk about television now.

How often do you watch television?

What kind of programs do you enjoy watching?

Is television too powerful, do you think? (Why?/Why not?)

In what ways is watching television bad for you?

Let's move on to talk about going on holiday/vacation now. Is that OK?

Where do people usually go for holidays/vacations in your country?

Where did you last go for a holiday/vacation?

Would you like longer holidays/vacations? (Why?/Why not?)

Is going on holiday/vacation sometimes stressful? (In what ways?)

I'd like to talk about getting up in the morning now.

What time do you usually get up in the morning?

Do you use an alarm clock? (When?/Why not?)

Do you like getting up early or not? (Why?/Why not?)

What do you usually eat for breakfast? (Why?)

312

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

Now let's discuss the weather.

What's the weather like in your country at this time of year?

Do you like rainy days? (Why?/Why not?)

Do you ever sunbathe on sunny days? (Why?/Why not?)

Is the weather changing in your country? (How?)

Let's discuss storms now

Do you often have storms in your country?

Are you ever frightened of storms?

When was the last time you experienced a storm? (Where?)

Are storms dangerous?

I'd like to talk about supermarkets

Are there many supermarkets where you live? (Why not?)

What do you like about supermarkets?

Are supermarkets too powerful, do you think? (Why?)

Are traditional markets more interesting than supermarkets? (Why?/Why not?)

Let's talk about roads and traffic now.

Are roads busy where you live in your country? (Why?/Why not?)

Is it ever dangerous to cross roads where you live? (Why?/Why not?)

Are most drivers good drivers in your country? (Why?/Why not?)

How can traffic on the roads be reduced?

Let's talk about learning to drive

Have you ever learnt to drive? (Why?/Why not?)

Is learning to drive expensive in your country? (Why?/Why not?)

What is the lowest age a person should be able to drive? (Why?)

Is the driving test difficult in your country? (Why?/Why not?)

Let's talk about eating in restaurants now

How often do you eat out in a restaurant?

What is your favourite kind of restaurant? (Why?)

What kinds of restaurant are popular in your country?

Do you think restaurant food is too expensive? (Why?/Why not?)

I'd like to move on to talk about clothes now

Do you have many clothes in your wardrobe? (Why?/Why not?)

Which clothes in your wardrobe are your favourites? (Why?)

What do you do with your old clothes?

Are all new clothes cheap in your country?

Let's talk about sport now

Which sports are popular in your country?

Which sports have you tried? (When?)

Which sports are the most expensive to learn in your country? (Why?)

How often do you watch sport on television? (Why?/Why not?)

313

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

I'd like to discuss friends now

Do you have many friends or just a few?

Who is your best friend? (Why?)

Do you make friends easily? (Why?/Why not?)

Do you still have any friends from your elementary school? (Why not?)

I'd like to talk about using the phone now.

Do you enjoy talking on the phone? (Why?/Why not?)

Are you comfortable using the phone on a train or bus?

Have you ever lost a phone, or found a phone? (When?)

Are phones dangerous for children to have? (Why?/Why not?)

Let's move on to talk about eating meat now

How often do you eat meat? (Why?/Why not?)

Which kinds of meat are popular in your country?

Is eating meat good for you?

Will more people stop eating meat in the future? (Why?/Why not?)

Let's talk about walking now

How often do you go for a walk? (Why?/Why not?)

Where do you like to walk?

Have you ever walked a long distance? (Why?/Why not?)

Is walking better for your health than running?

Let's talk about cycling

When did you first try to ride a bicycle? (Why not?)

How safe is cycling in your country? (Why?/Why not?)

Is cycling popular in your country? (Why?/Why not?)

Would you enjoy a cycling holiday? (Why?/Why not?)

Let's talk about music

Is music from America popular in your country? (Why?/Why not?)

When do you like listening to music?

Can you play a musical instrument? (Why not?/Which one?)

Which musical instrument would you like to learn to play? (Why?)

Let's talk about plane travel

Are you frightened of flying? (Why?/Why not?)

Is airline food good, do you think? (Why?/Why not?)

What can you do on very long flights?

Is flying bad for your health? (Why not?/In what ways?)

Now let's talk about reading magazines

What kinds of magazine do you read?

Where do you most often read magazines?

Are magazines expensive in your country?

Which do you prefer - reading magazines or reading books? (Why?)

314

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

Let's talk about learning a language

How many languages have you tried to learn? (Which ones?)

Do you learn languages for work or for pleasure?

Is your own language difficult to learn, do you think? (Why?/Why not?)

Which language would you like to learn? (Why?)

Let's move on to talk about animals

Do you like animals? (Why?/Why not?)

Which is the most common wild animal in your country?

Have you ever seen one? (Where?)

Are any wild animals in your country dangerous?

Let's talk about noise

Is it noisy where you live?

Is noise a bad thing?

Do you like noise better than silence? (Why?)

When are **you** noisy?

I'd like to talk about cooking now

Who is the best cook in your family? (Why?)

What do you find difficult about cooking?

What meals can you cook best?

Why are cooking programs so popular on TV?

Let's talk about neighbours

Do your neighbours live close to you?

How often do you speak to your neighbours?

Do your neighbours ever help you? (How?)

Are you a good neighbour?

Let's talk about flowers now

Do you ever give flowers as a present? (When?)

Are there many flower shops in your country? (Where?)

Which colours of flower do you like best? (Why?)

Have you ever received flowers from someone? (Who?/Why not?)

Now, let's talk about colour

What colours do you often choose for your clothes? (Why?)

What is the best colour for a car? (Why?)

Are there some colours which are really popular in your country? (Which ones?)

Is there a colour that you don't like? (Why?)

315

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

IELTS SPEAKING TEST PARTS 2 AND 3 – QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

In this section you will find a collection of task cards and questions, similar to those your assessor may ask you in

an IELTS test. Try talking on the task card topics (Part 2 of the interview) and answering the questions following

each task card (Part 3 of the interview), as if you were in a real exam. Remember the time limits (one to two

minutes per Part 2 task card talk and four minutes minimum for answering questions in Part 3).

Note: questions in Part 3 are ranked by approximate difficulty. When practicing, choose at least one question

from each group. If you need a higher score in IELTS Speaking, select more B and C questions. Remember to

practice building and developing your responses so that they are neither too basic nor too short.

d

Describe a house you really like. You should say:

Car

where it is

k

1

as

what it looks like

T

who it belongs to

t 2 ar

and say why you like it so much

P

Rounding off question: When are you planning to visit this house?

Tell me about the types of houses that are typical in your country.

A

s

Why are newer houses better than older houses?

n

easy

Will apartments be the main form of accommodation in the future?

tioes

u

How easy is it for young people to buy their own house in your country?

B

Q

Are the benefits of home ownership greater than those of renting?

harder

t 3

Is owning a home a common dream in your society?

arP

What can governments do to help poor people to find accommodation?

C

Is it possible to design and build really cheap houses?

hardest How could slums best be improved in large cities?

d

Describe a person who you think is special. You should say:

Car

who the person is

k

2

as

how you know the person

T

what is special about the person

t 2 ar

and say why the person is so special to you

P

Rounding off question: Do other people think this person is special?

Can you talk about a special person from the history of your country?

A

What statues in your home town or city celebrate the lives of special people?

easy

s

n

Who is the most special person alive in the world today?

tio

Are most celebrities really special, or just well known?

esu

B

Is a person special because of what they do, or because of the kind of person they are?

Q

harder

Is it easier to be special in today's world of social networking on the Internet than it was in

t 3 ar

past times?

P

What special goals does your government have for the future of your country?

C

How does your school system help students with special needs (disabled, deaf, for example)?

hardest Is it better for children with special talents to go to special schools, or not?

316

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Describe the best day of your life. You should say:

Car

when it was

3

k

who was with you

asT

what happened on that day

t 2

and say why it was the best day of your life

arP

Rounding off question: Are most days good days for you?

Tell me about the best day in the year to be at home with family in your country.

A

s

Do you think you've already had your best days or are they still to come?

n

easy

Are the best days of your life similar to those of your parents, do you think?

tioes

Are too many happy occasions in life becoming over-commercialised?

u

B

Q

How could every day become the best day of your life?

harder

t 3

How important is it to accept that life sometimes brings unhappiness?

arP

Should all governments have a Ministry of Happiness?

C

Is it a basic human right to expect one's life to keep getting better?

hardest

Are the best days of the Earth's life in the past, or in the future?

d

Describe a place that you enjoy visiting. You should say:

Car

where the place is

4

k

how often you go there

asT

what you do when you are there

t 2

and say why you like it so much

arP

Rounding off question: When will you go there again?

Describe some really popular places in your country.

A

s

Is it getting more expensive to visit popular places or are they mainly free?

n

easy

What kind of different places do younger and older people like to go to?

tioes

What makes a place a popular destination for visitors?

u

B

Q

If a place becomes popular does it usually get spoilt?

harder

t 3

How important is it for you to learn something new when you visit places?

arP

Is the global tourist industry likely to grow or contract in the current economic climate?

C

How does visiting places overseas contribute to better cross-cultural understanding?

hardest Will people enjoy visiting other planets at some point in the future?

317

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Describe a singer, artist or actor you truly admire. You should say:

Car

who the person is

k

5

what they look like

asT

what they have achieved professionally

t 2

and say why you admire them so much

arP

Rounding off question: Is this person still popular?

Describe someone in your country who everyone seems to like.

A

s

Is it easier to admire a singer or an artist, do you think?

easy

n

Who most deserves your admiration — a famous person or a friend?

tioes

How do the mass media build up the reputations of singers and actors?

u

B

Q

Is admiration a deep feeling or do most people just admire people who are popular?

harder

t 3

Do you admire the same people as your parents do?

arP

How do schools help young people to understand the qualities that deserve admiration?

C

Who most shapes your personal values – your school or your family?

hardest How might admiration change in the future? Will we admire different sorts of people?

d

Describe the most unusual person in your family (not yourself!). You should say:

Car

who the person is

6

k

where they live

asT

what things they have done in their life

t 2

and say why you think they are unusual

arP

Rounding off question: Do people in your family think you are a little unusual?

What kinds of students were considered unusual when you were at school?

A

Are you unusual in any way, or are you totally ordinary?

easy

s

Is it easy or difficult to be a little unusual in your culture?

n

tio

Is being unusual helpful if you want to enter a career involving creativity?

B

es

u

If a person is unusual should they always be allowed just to be themselves?

harder

Q

How important is it for everyone to be tolerant of unusual people?

t 3 ar

Has globalisation created too much conformity through mass consumption of similar

P

products?

C

Is a society that has too much conformity reducing its level of innovation?

hardest Will the stronger societies in the future be those which strive for greater conformity or those

which encourage individual difference?

318

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Describe a time when you lost something important. You should say:

Car

what you lost

k

how you lost it

7

asT

what happened afterwards

t 2

and say how you felt and why

arP

Rounding off question: Do you often lose things?

Tell me about something that you found once.

A

s

Do people in your country usually keep things that they find?

n

easy

Are young people more careless with their things than their parents were?

tioes

u

Why are many parents losing the battle to control their children's behaviour?

Q

B

To what extent are school students losing respect for their teachers?

t 3

harder

ar

What social values are slowly being lost in your society?

P

Has your government lost its vision of a great future for your country?

C

Is a globalised world causing the loss of national identity?

hardest What should the world never lose?

d

Describe an occasion when you had to wait a long time. You should say:

arC

where you were

k

what happened

8

asT

how long you had to wait

t 2

and say why you think it was such a long wait

arP

Rounding off question: Do you get angry when you have to wait for a long time?

Where do you see queues most often in your country?

A

How acceptable is it to keep people waiting in your culture?

s

easy

n

Are older people usually more impatient than younger people?

tioes

u

What goods or services involve long waiting times? (eg passports, flights, restaurants)

Q

B

What is the best way to deal with a customer who has been waiting for a long time?

t 3

harder

ar

Have many modern businesses been able to reduce waiting times for customers?

P

Is it reasonable for the world's population to wait longer for real action on climate change?

C

Will it be necessary to wait for ever for world peace or is it coming soon?

hardest How likely is it that the world will end?

319

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Describe a dream holiday you would like to take. You should say:

Car

where you would go

k

who you would go with

9

asT

what you would do there

t 2

and say why you think it would be so special

arP

Rounding off question: Would this holiday be expensive, do you think?

Talk about some popular holiday destinations in your country.

A

s

Do people in your country usually take long vacations or short ones?

n

easy

How expensive is it for people to travel abroad from your country?

tioes

What are the benefits of travelling on a group tour?

u

B

Q

Are adventure holidays likely to become more popular?

harder

t 3

How dangerous is it to plan your own travel and travel alone these days?

arP

How beneficial is tourism in your country?

C

How could governments attract more tourists from overseas?

hardest Do you believe you will see outer space tourism in your lifetime?

d

Describe the friend you have known for the longest time. You should say:

Car

when you first met

10

k

what you like about your friend

asT

how often you see your friend

t 2

and say why this person is still your friend

arP

Rounding off question: Where is your friend now?

Describe where people usually meet their main friends in your society.

A

s

Is it important to have both men and women friends?

n

easy

Are friends usually from the same economic background?

tioes

u

How has the Internet changed the ways in which people meet their friends?

B

Q

Is making friends on the Internet dangerous?

harder

t 3

ar

Is social networking on the Internet a good way to maintain friendships?

P

Are friendships more superficial now than in the past?

C

How possible is it to be a true friend of someone who comes from a different culture?

hardest What could governments do to prevent the problem of loneliness among the elderly?

320

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Describe something you have kept from your childhood. You should say:

Car

what it is

11

k

when you first had it

asT

where you keep it now

t 2

and say why you have kept it

arP

Rounding off question: Would you ever give this _____ to someone?

Describe the sorts of toys that children have these days in your society.

A

How do people usually sell used things in your culture?

s

easy

n

Do your parents still have things from their childhood?

tioes

How popular is recycling in your country?

u

B

Q

What things does your local government recycle?

harder

t 3

How could people be encouraged to recycle more often?

arP

How important is it for every nation to preserve things from its ancient history?

C

How could children be helped to be more interested in ancient history?

hardest Will a nation's history be of less interest to future generations?

d

Describe an interesting film you saw recently. You should say:

Car

what kind of film it was

k

12

what the story was about

asT

who was in the film

t 2

and say why you think it was interesting

arP

Rounding off question: Do you go to the movies very often?

Describe the kinds of film that are popular in your country.

A

Are films from other countries more popular than local films?

easy

s

n

n

How popular is cinema-going among young people?

tio

es

es

Is it a good idea for the study of films to replace the study of literature in schools?

u

B

Q

Is watching the film version of a book better than reading the book itself?

harder

3

t

How important is it to make film versions of a nation's important stories?

arP

Is national censorship of films necessary, or should people be free to choose what to watch?

C

Do governments have a responsibility to provide money for the nation's film industry?

hardest As more people in wealthy countries have 'home theatres' is the future of the cinema in doubt?

321

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Talk about a favourite toy from your childhood. You should say:

Car

what your favourite toy was

k

who gave it to you

13

asT

when you got that toy

t 2

and say why it was important to you

arP

Rounding off question: Where is the toy now?

Describe traditional toys that are still popular in your country.

A

s

Do you agree that many children are given too many toys?

n

easy

Did your parents have many toys when they were young?

tioes

u

How important is it for toys to be educational?

B

Q

Do you agree that the best toys are the ones you make yourself?

3 t

harder

ar

Which are more helpful to a child's development — toys or games?

P

Do you agree that violent computer games should be banned?

C

Will simple toys still exist in the future or will all toys become virtual?

hardest How important to successful socialisation are the toys a child has?

d

Describe a really nice restaurant you have been to. You should say:

Car

where it is

k

14

what kind of food they serve

asT

what you had to eat there

t 2

and say why you think it is so nice

arP

Rounding off question: Do your friends like this restaurant?

Describe the kinds of restaurant that are popular in your country.

A

Is it getting more expensive to eat in a good quality restaurant?

easy

s

n

How common is it for people to leave tips in restaurants in your country?

tio

es

How easy is it to get casual work in restaurants in your country?

u

B

Q

Is being a restaurant waiter an easy job, do you think?

harder

t 3

Are restaurants becoming more aware of the need to serve healthy, organic food?

arP

Are international fast food restaurants damaging appreciation of a country's traditional food?

C

How useful is it to know about different types of food from other countries?

hardest Is it likely that local speciality foods will not survive in a globalised future?

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Talk about some recent changes in your hometown. You should say:

Car

what the changes are

k

15

who wanted the changes

asT

which people they are affecting

t 2

and say how you feel about the changes

arP

Rounding off question: Is your town changing too fast, do you think?

Describe some of the new buildings in your home town or city.

A

To what extent is your town or city preserving its history?

s

easy

n

How serious are the social problems in your town or city?

ties

Is change in cities and towns generally positive or not?

u

B

Q

What social principles should govern changes in towns or cities?

harder

t 3

What part should citizens take in choosing changes to their town or city?

arP

Who benefits most when cities or towns change rapidly?

C

How could international organizations have more influence on global changes?

hardest Is the world changing for the better overall?

d

Talk about how you spent last weekend. You should say:

Car

where you spent the weekend

k

16

who you spent the weekend with

as T

what you did

t 2

and say why you liked/disliked spending your weekend in this way

arP

Rounding off question: Do you go away at weekends sometimes?

Describe a typical weekend for most people in your country.

A

Is the weekend in your country very different from weekdays?

easy

sn

How important is it to have some time to rest at the weekend.

tio

es

Why are many people's lives becoming busier?

u

B

Q

Are people in danger of suffering from high levels of stress by trying to do too much?

harder

t 3

How likely is it that stress levels will increase in the future?

arP

Should governments try to impose legal limits on the number of hours worked each week?

C

Is having at least one free day per week an international human right?

hardest Which is more likely — the disappearance of the weekend, or the disappearance of retirement?

323

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Talk about an older person that you know. You should say:

Car

who the person is

k

17

how you know them

asT

what you like about the person

t 2

and explain why this person is important to you

arP

Rounding off question: When did you last see _____?

Describe how most old people are cared for in your country.

A

Are the elderly still respected in your society?

s

easy

n

To what extent are the elderly in danger of becoming the forgotten age group?

tioes

u

What is the most appropriate age for retirement in your society?

Q

B

Is it better to retire early or work for as long as you can?

t 3

harder

ar

Will most people be able to afford to retire in the future?

P

What measures could your government take to support the elderly more effectively?

C

Do you think governments should provide pensions for all old people?

hardest Should governments make families legally responsible for total care of their older members?

d

Talk about a message you received. You should say:

Car

what was in the message

k

18

who sent it

asT

how the message was delivered to you

t 2

and what happened after you received the message

arP

Rounding off question: Do you send many text messages?

Describe how most people send messages to each other in your society.

A

Are most text messages really necessary?

easy

sn

When are handwritten messages still used?

tio

At what age should children start to learn to write?

esu

B

Could schools teach handwriting more effectively?

Q

harder

t 3

Is it still important to be able to write by hand neatly?

arP

Is the Internet providing too much written information but too little understanding of our

C

world?

hardest Do you agree or disagree that an 'open encyclopaedia' like Wikipedia is a good idea?

What kinds of information will be most important in the future?

324

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Talk about your favourite book. You should say:

Car

what its title is

k

19

what it's about

asT

when you read it

t 2

and say why it is your favourite book

arP

Rounding off question: Do you read very often?

Talk about the types of bookshops that you have in your country.

A

s

Do you read as many books as your parents?

n

easy

How important is reading in your life?

tioes

u

Why are electronic books starting to become more popular?

Q

B

Do you agree that electronic books are not as satisfying to read as conventional books?

t 3

harder

ar

Will electronic books totally replace standard books in the future?

P

Is it important to stop books from being illegally copied and sold in other countries?

C

Do you agree that all books should be available free on the Internet?

hardest Is writing and publishing your own books (self-publishing) a positive thing to do?

d

Talk about a way you like to relax. You should say:

Car

how you like to relax

k

20

where you go to relax

asT

who goes with you

t 2

and say why this is how you like to relax

arP

Rounding off question: Do you get enough time to relax?

What do people usually do to relax in your country?

A

Is relaxation considered essential in your culture, or a kind of laziness?

s

easy

n

Are you better at relaxing than your parents are?

ties

Do you agree that companies should encourage their employees to relax?

u

B

Q

How could companies reduce the stress levels of their workers?

harder

t 3

Which is the more effective worker – a relaxed worker or a focused worker?

arP

Does the medical profession have an effective way of treating anxiety?

C

Will the increasing pace of life prevent effective relaxation in the future?

hardest What could schools do to teach children effective relaxation techniques?

325

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Talk about something that you made yourself. You should say:

Car

what it is

k

21

when you made it

asT

how you made it

t 2

and say why you made this particular item

arP

Rounding off question: Do you make things very often?

Talk about things that children in your society often make at school?

A

Do families in your society still teach children how to make things?

s

easy

n

Do older people usually know how to make more things than younger people do?

tioes

u

How important is it for schools to encourage creativity?

Q

B

Are children born creative or do they learn how to be creative?

t 3

harder

ar

How can parents help their children to develop their creativity?

P

Do you agree that many countries are no longer manufacturing as many innovative things?

C

How important is it for a country to have a strong manufacturing sector?

hardest How will manufacturing change in the future, do you think?

d

Talk about a school you went to as a child. You should say:

Car

what school it was

k

22

as

where the school was located

T

what you remember about the school

t 2 ar

and say what you enjoyed about your school days there

P

Rounding off question: Would you send your child to the same school?

Describe the different types of school most children attend in your society.

A

Are children staying at school longer now than in your parents' time?

easy

s

How expensive is it to attend a government school?

n

tio

Do you agree that single sex schools are more effective than mixed sex schools?

esu

B

Is home education better for a child than attending a large government school?

Q

harder

t 3

How important is the teacher for successful learning?

arP

What is a suitable class size for effective learning at elementary school?

C

Will teachers be unnecessary in the future if computers can offer more and more, self-learning

hardest

materials?

Is the main function of a school to educate, or to train students to conform?

326

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Talk about an advertisement you have heard or seen recently. You should say:

Car

what the advertisement was for

k

where you saw or heard it

23

asT

what products or services were in the advertisement

t 2

and say why you remember the advertisement

arP

Rounding off question: Do advertisements annoy you?

Describe the kinds of products that are advertised on TV in your country.

A

Do you agree that advertisements in your country are often interesting?

s

easy

n

Is TV advertising more effective than magazine advertising in your culture?

tio

es

Should children be used in advertisements to sell things?

uQ

B

Do you agree that advertising has a powerful influence on children?

t 3

harder

Is it acceptable to try to sell adult clothes or make up to children when they are still very

arP

young?

How important is it to develop international standards to control unfair advertising?

C

To what extent is advertising an invasion of personal privacy?

hardest How will advertising change in the future, do you think?

d

Talk about an enjoyable event that you attended. You should say:

Car

what kind of event it was

k

24

when and where you attended it

asT

what you did at the event

t 2

and say why you enjoyed the event

arP

Rounding off question: Do you go to important events very often?

What are the major events each year in your city or town?

A

Do you enjoy attending music or other big events?

s

easy

n

Are there more events now than when your parents were your age?

tioes

u

Should citizens be free to demonstrate in public any time?

Q

B

Do you agree that protesting in the street is an important human right?

t 3

harder

ar

To what extent are people losing interest in street protests?

P

Is it a good idea for governments to try organising more national events each year?

C

Do you agree that national events help people to feel they belong to their country?

hardest In the future will most national events be replaced by international events?

327

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Speaking Test Sample Questions

d

Talk about a garden that you like. You should say:

Car

where it is

25

k

how often you go there

asT

with whom you go

t 2

and say why you like this garden

arP

Rounding off question: Did you like gardens when you were a child?

Describe the nicest parks in your town or city

A

Is gardening a popular leisure activity in your culture?

s

easy

n

Do you agree that gardens are important?

tioes

u

What is the best climate for a healthy garden?

B

Q

Will there be enough water for people and for gardens in the future?

harder

t 3

ar

Do you agree or disagree that the best gardens are wild, not planned?

P

Should governments turn city parks into land for new houses?

C

How can young people be taught to be interested in gardening?

hardest Do you agree or disagree that gardens should be organic and free of chemicals?

d

Talk about your favourite shop. You should say:

Car

what shop it is

26

k

what it sells

asT

how you came to know about this shop

t 2

and say why you like this shop

arP

Rounding off question: What was the last thing you bought from this shop?

Talk about some shops in your town or city that you don't like.

A

How often did you help your mother with the shopping when you were younger?

easy

ns

Why do many men in families not like shopping?

tio

es

Do you agree that shops no longer offer much personal service?

u

Q

B

How important is it for a shop assistant to be friendly?

t 3

harder

Which is better — a supermarket that sells everything or a little corner shop with a lovely

arP

owner?

How could governments encourage internet shopping, in order to save energy?

C

Will internet shopping replace department stores eventually?

hardest Do you agree that internet shopping could lead to shopping addiction?

328

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS

TEST

329



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

FULL IELTS PRACTICE TEST – GENERAL TRAINING

LISTENING TEST

Test Instructions

Listen to the recording straight through, **ONCE** only (total audio time: 30 min).

Answer the questions while listening to each section. At the end of the test you will have another ten minutes to transfer your answers to the Answer sheet (page 337).

Before starting the test, **download and print the Listening and Reading questions** from this webpage: <http://www.ielts-blog.com/isf-downloads/>

SECTION 1

Questions 1-10

Questions 1-5

Complete the Seafront Backpacker hostel enquiry form.

Write **NO MORE THAN 2 WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

Guest Form

Guest's Current Address: *Seaview Hotel* **EXAMPLE** *15 Esplanade, Dune Beach*

Family Name of guest **1** _____ First Name **2** _____

Phone No. **3** _____

No of nights required **4** _____

Cost per night: Dormitory **A**: \$18 **B**: \$15 Weekly Cost (7 nights) **5** \$ _____

330

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Questions 6-10

Choose the correct letter **A**, **B** or **C**.

6 Each bathroom at the hostel has...

A no shower but hot water all the time

B a shower, and hot water sometimes

C a shower and hot water all the time

7 Which facilities are free?

A Breakfast and car parking

B Breakfast and internet

C Towels and bike parking

8 She recommends the road from Dune Beach to Selby because...

A it's near the hotel

B it's not busy

C it's safer for cycling

9 The hostel is located:

A in a retirement home on the beach

B up a hill on the sea front

C along a right turn off Beach Road

10 Which animal is known to be a problem to the caller?

A fox

B dog

C cat

331

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

SECTION 2

Questions 11-20

Complete the notes below.

Use **ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

Name of

Positive

Negative

Overall Assessment

machine

(+) features

(-) features

Coffee

can brew 4+ cups of

no auto grinder

good value for money

Supreme

mild/strong coffee

but **14** _____

performance

water filtration

13 _____ watt

system **11** _____

electrical system

the taste

overflow protection/

drip stop

parts easy to

12 _____

11

Café

combines a

machine is

flexible and

Delight

15 _____ coffee

16 _____ and

17 _____

maker with an espresso

large

machine

steam nozzle +

frothing attachment

Coffeetime

can make different

19 _____ and too bulky but uses

Automatic

18 _____

large

current **20** _____

well

has electronic disc

to calculate water needs

automatically

auto clean/descale

332

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

SECTION 3

Questions 21-30

Question 21

Choose **TWO** correct letters from **A, B, C** or **D**.

21 Which TWO are purposes of the Student Support Service?

A to improve students' independence

B to carry out some of the study for the students

C to encourage students to make judgments

D to help students to build relationships

Questions 22 - 26

Answers the questions below about Wilson's study problems.

Write **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

What is Wilson's main problem?

22 _____

What part of an assignment is often not clear to him?

23 _____

With which aspect of his essay problems will the special session help?

24 _____

What is one of Wilson's other problems with essay writing?

25 _____

With whom can Wilson talk about the drafts of his essays?

26 _____

333

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Questions 27-30

Complete the Report on Grace's problems.

Write **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

REPORT

Grace has difficulty keeping up with 27 _____ on her Nursing Course.

She says that lecturers speak too quickly and are not always 28 _____.

She thinks that the recording of lectures 29 _____ time.

Grace is not sleeping well; seems worried about her family.

I suggested that she should talk to a counsellor from a different cultural 30 _____.

I offered to help her to make the appointment.

334

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

SECTION 4

Questions 31-40

Choose the correct letter **A**, **B** or **C** according to what the lecturer says:

31 Management research now understands that...

- A** organisations need a structure
- B** feelings affect relationships significantly
- C** workplace relationships can only be effective with rules

32 Emotional intelligence is...

- A** an aspect of IQ
- B** a range of abilities linked to feelings
- C** an important management task

33 Empathy essentially involves...

- A** imagining another's feelings
- B** understanding certain conditions
- C** feeling natural enough

34 Managing other people's feelings is helpful to...

- A** self motivation
- B** popularity of the organisation
- C** leadership skills

35 In a happy workplace, people are...

- A** intelligent and technically competent
- B** cooperative and respectful
- C** aware of the importance of quality

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Complete the sentences below.

Write **ONE WORD ONLY** from the lecture for each answer.

A manager with a healthy self image will probably be a **36** _____ influence in workplaces.

Our perceived self is our inner **37** _____ of ourselves.

Our desired self focuses on what is **38** _____ within ourselves.

Our presented selves require us to behave according to what is **39** _____ by others.

The three aspects of the self are not performed individually, but **40** _____.

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Practice Listening Test Answer Sheet

1

21

2

22

3

23

4

24

5
25
6
26
7
27
8
28
9
29
10
30
11
31
12
32
13
33
14
34
15
35
16
36

17
37
18
38
19
39
20
40
337

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

READING TEST

Test Instructions

You have **ONE HOUR** to answer 40 questions in three sections. You must transfer your answers to the Answer sheet (page 350) during this time. Allow approximately 20 minutes for each section.

SECTION 1

Questions 1-14

Read the information below and answer **Questions 1-7**

Water-wise rebates

This government scheme encourages homeowners to use water more

wisely. You can now receive generous rebates if you buy any of these

water-saving products for your home:

Water-efficient showerhead

Everyone takes showers, but some showerheads are much better at regulating the flow of water, and this can build up considerable water savings. If you purchase a low-flow showerhead with a rating of 3 stars or more, you can claim up to **\$30**

Dual-flush toilet

Dual-flush toilets enable you to make considerable savings in water use.

If you replace your current single flush system with a dual-flush toilet suite with a star rating of 3 stars or more, you are eligible for a rebate of **\$150**

338

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Water-efficient garden goods

Certain types of mulch or soil improver products help to improve the water retention qualities of your soil and this reduces the amount of watering that you need to do on hot, dry summer days. If you buy water efficient garden goods, you are eligible for a rebate of up to **\$200**

Rainwater tanks

Rainwater tanks help you to build up a secondary store of water for your garden, or even for your home in an emergency. If you buy and fit a plumbed-in rainwater tank (connected to your house) of a minimum of 3000 litres capacity you are eligible for rebates of between **\$200** and **\$1000**

For full terms and conditions and how to apply, phone 1800 888 900

Questions 1-7

Answer the questions below using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from

the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 1-7 on your answer sheet.

1

Who is offering the water-wise rebates?

2

What are water-wise shower heads better at controlling?

3

How much cash can you receive for having a dual-flush suite fitted?

4

With what aspect of water efficiency do some kinds of garden goods help the soil?

5

What type of rainwater tank is eligible for a rebate?

6

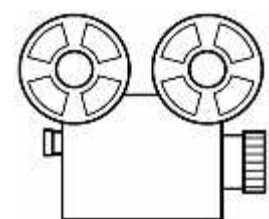
What is the minimum capacity of a water tank needed to claim the rebate?

7

If you phone the number given you will receive details of how to make a claim,
a complete explanation of what is being offered, and what else?

339

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontrack.com



The City Film Festival

presents a wonderful feast of movie magic!

A

A comedy in which a policeman, desperate to impress his inspector of police, helps a thief to steal a police car, and then chases the thief in the London rush hour using only his bicycle.

B

A slightly dark movie. A lonely university professor slowly goes crazy because he can't get the robot in his laboratory to talk, only to sing! Murder is in the air.....but who is the victim?

C

If you like Indian style music you'll like this new film set in India with plenty of beautiful colour and local atmosphere. Boy meets girl, they fall in love, but there are always problems....this time it's his wish to help a poor servant girl.

D

Plenty of fun in this movie about students who persuade their unusual professor to become the singer in their pop group, only to find that he loses his voice just before their big, live concert.

E

A non-stop action film about an escaped prisoner who has to catch the real criminal before the police recapture the prisoner and put him back in prison for life.

F

An Indian girl in Paris falls in love with her piano teacher but then finds out that he is very sick. They write a piano concerto together, and a miracle becomes possible.

G

In this film about family life, twins who were so happy together as children, start to hate each other as adults. But why?

H

A sad movie about a loving family that moves to start a new life in Canada, but can't seem to be happy there because each member of the family sees the new life so differently.

340

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Questions 8-14

The list of films has 8 descriptions **A-H**. Choose the correct title for each film from the list of titles below.

Write the correct number, **i-viii**, in boxes 8-14 on your answer sheet.

List of film titles

i

Who made the happy smiles of childhood into enemies?

ii

The many voices of our lost happiness

iii

Two-wheeled hunter!

iv

Singing madness

v

Music of love

vi

Indian love triangle

vii

Sing Professor Cool!

viii

Two to chase – only one truth to find

EXAMPLE

ANSWER

FILM A

___iii___

8

FILM B

9

FILM C

10 FILM D

11 FILM E

12 FILM F

13 FILM G

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

SECTION 2

Questions 15-27

Read the information below and answer **Questions 15-20**

Grangers Store - Employment application form

Position: *Customer service*

Applicant information

Name: *Rosa Cabrera*

Address: *1/16 Digby Street, Huntsdown, HU2 3DW*

Phone: *0730 2145 9835*

Age (if under 21): *20*

Referral? *Central Internet Employment Service*

Educational background

High School

School name/address: *Coughton High School, East Street, Grandville GR2 5TN*

Did you graduate? *Yes*

Qualification: *Year 11 Certificate*

College

School name/address: *Broughton College of Vocational Education, City Street, Garburgh*

Did you graduate? *Not yet*

Qualification: *Diploma in Retail Service Skills, partly completed*

Applicant availability

What days and hours are you available for work?

Monday to Wednesday (09:00-18:00)

How many hours per week can you work? *25*

If hired, would you have transportation? *Yes, I have a car*

342

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Please answer these questions

Why are you applying to work here?

I use your store and am always impressed by the quality of service.

What has been your greatest accomplishment?

I won a regional swimming championship while at school.

Why do customers shop at this store?

Because it offers quality products at an affordable price, with high service standards.

What is customer service?

It means using a range of interpersonal skills to provide customers with reliable and truthful information, make them feel valued and offer any after-sales support.

A customer complains that the coffee tastes terrible, what would you do?

I would ask the customer to explain why, listen, then apologise and ask if the customer would

like another cup of coffee, or an alternative beverage.

What would you do if your replacement didn't arrive after your shift finished?

I would check with my supervisor and work late until a replacement could be found.

A co-worker is rude to customers, what would you do?

I would talk to my co-worker and find out if something is troubling her at work or in their home life. If not, I would suggest that they ask about additional training in customer service.

Questions 15-20

Complete each sentence. Use **ONE WORD** from the text for each answer.

15 Rosa has only _____ finished her customer service qualification.

16 Rosa's weekly _____ for work is limited to 3 days and 25 hours.

17 Her greatest non-work achievement was to win a _____ competition.

18 Supporting customers and being truthful are examples of Rosa's view of the meaning of customer _____.

19 If a customer complains about the coffee but doesn't want another one, offering an _____ drink is a good option.

20 If a co-worker is not being effective Rosa thinks it might be due to something going wrong at _____ or in the workplace.

343

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



Environmental Awareness Centre

Staff Induction Policy

Induction is the process of introducing a new employee to their new job and workplace. A good induction process is beneficial both to the new employee and the organisation. It helps new employees understand expectations, identify training needs, and assimilate into the new work environment. It boosts confidence and enables employees to work effectively.

Stages of Induction

Before starting work

Induction begins when the new employee has been offered and has accepted the post. A start date is then agreed. Before starting their job the new employee should be told the following:

The time and place to arrive on their first day.

Transport arrangements such as public transport, parking facilities etc.

Who will meet them.

Who their line manager will be.

Understanding the work environment

The new employee needs information about practical issues such as:

Where they will be working

Company building(s)

Lunch and coffee breaks

Time recording procedure

Introduction to line manager and colleagues

During the first week, the new employee should be introduced to the phone and computer systems, email, alarms, opening up and closing procedures. All new employees undertake specific training in health and safety, and equal opportunities.

344

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Job Instruction

This stage involves induction into the requirements of the new role. The job description is explored with the line manager, work tasks prioritized, and targets set. Any immediate training needs will be identified. Meetings will be arranged for the new employee to meet key staff.

The Organisation

Induction involves providing information about the organisational structure, its aims and objectives. Responsibility for designing the induction lies with the line manager. An induction should be employee-centred, flexible and interesting, with employee input to the plan. The line manager and new employee should meet on a regular basis during induction

to assess how they are settling in, to evaluate progress, and identify any required actions.

Evaluation

It is important to evaluate the induction process to inform the induction plans for future employees. This should include both the employee and relevant staff.

345

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Questions 21-27

Do the following statements agree with the information in the text?

In boxes 21-27 on your answer sheet, write

TRUE

if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE

if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN

if there is no information on this

21 Induction helps employees to fit into and accept their new workplace.

22 Before the new person starts, the company should tell them how to get to and from work.

23 Most new workers need to be given general training in health and safety issues.

24 New workers will discuss their job in detail with a senior person above them.

25 The new employee will meet security personnel.

26 New workers should have a chance to help with induction design.

27 Assessing the usefulness of induction should involve staff connected to the new



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

SECTION 3

Questions 28-40

Gender differences in human

attraction

Section A

‘Boy meets girl’ is an age-old ritual in the human species, but scientists have for many years been trying to uncover the basis of human attraction. In simple terms, what is it that draws a man or woman to be attracted to someone of the opposite sex?

Section B

One of the most basic elements of attraction is the degree of symmetry that is perceived in the other person. Scientists have been scanning faces and bodies into computers for many years to determine symmetry ratios. Both men and women tend to rate symmetrical members of the opposite sex as more attractive and in better health than their less symmetrical counterparts. It has also been found that men with higher degrees of symmetry tend to have more partners than men of lower symmetry. Women, however, are more complex in terms of partner choice; besides symmetry, the behaviour of a potential partner who is competing for their attention is important for them.

Section C

There are gender differences in other aspects of attraction as well. Men tend to be more interested in women who are youthful and physically attractive, even if what men find physically attractive varies from culture to culture. For example, some cultures value female fatness when courting women. Studies of the socioecological factors that determine attitudes toward fatness in women suggest that important factors include food security, type of climate, the degree of value placed on female work, and the relative social dominance of women. Countries like the USA have become obsessed with a slim physique. Women have come to associate curvaceousness with incompetence. More classically "feminine" bodied women may have been considered less professional than men; consequently, those women now exhibit eating disorders. In other words, these eating disorders are not simply instances of psychopathology in women, but rather a manifestation of a societal bias against women. This bias has decreased enough to encourage women to strive in education and different professions, but has not decreased enough to eliminate the supposed association between femininity and incompetence.

347

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Section D

Several factors seem to underpin the thin standard of bodily attractiveness for women in countries like the USA. The first is that women wishing to appear professional and intelligent believe they must be thin due to society's demands. Also, women who feel that their fathers do not consider them to be intelligent seem to have a tendency to want a slimmer body than those women who do not carry such feelings of parental disapproval. The derivation of most eating

disorders is this slim body ideal. It seems that women change their ideals (towards being thinner) before men change their ideal of a woman's shape, and it further appears that the women's changes are greater in magnitude. This implies that women may determine the standard. This slim standard is associated with occupational success; however, it is not consistent with men's preferences. Relative to men, women are more cognitively and behaviourally invested in their appearance. This is a natural result due to the high importance men place on physical attractiveness of their mate. If women start to focus as much as men do on the physical features of their mates, then men may also become subject to this preoccupation with body and appearance. The recent increase in the number and sales of male cosmetic products may be an early hint that this is already happening.

Section E

Men's ideal for their own physique tends to be 'bigger equals better'. There is evidence to show that more men want to gain weight rather than lose weight. The use of steroids and excessive weight lifting can accomplish this goal of a larger body. Women, however, tend to find men of average size to be the most attractive. Women seem to prefer men with moderately broad shoulders who are of medium height and have a chest slightly larger than average, but not as large and powerful as a traditional body builder's chest.

Section F

Facial features that portray dominance are commonly thought of as being more attractive to women. These features include thick eyebrows, small eyes, thin lips and a square jaw. But, contrary to the "dominance" features, research seems to suggest that women are in fact most attracted by an optimal combination of 'neoteneous', mature, and expressive facial features, in addition to grooming attributes. Neoteneous features include large eyes, a small nose and full lips. A mature face is defined as having prominent cheek bones and a large chin.

Section G

It is evident that a clear gender gap exists with respect to physical attractiveness preferences. Women desire average size men, while wanting a smaller, thinner physique for themselves. Men, on the other hand, want larger than average bodies for themselves and prefer their female mates to be a bit larger than women would actually like to be. With these differences in preferences, it is no wonder that finding one's ideal mate can be so difficult!

348

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Questions 28-34

The text has 7 sections A-G. Which section mentions the following?

Write the correct letter, **A-G**, in boxes 28-34 on your answer sheet.

- 28** Both women and men are attracted by evenness of body and facial features.
- 29** The relationship between being liked by a parent and the desire for an attractive body.
- 30** Different cultures produce significantly different social perceptions of body shape.
- 31** Women and men have differing views of a male's ideal size.
- 32** Attitudes to a woman's size and weight can be linked to the weather.
- 33** Typical beliefs about female preferences in male faces are not supported by evidence.
- 34** Women and men apparently want different features in themselves from those that are most desired by the opposite sex.

Questions 35-40

Do the following statements reflect the opinion of the writer?

In the boxes 35-40 on your answer sheet write

YES

if the statement reflects the opinion of the writer

NO

if the statement contradicts the opinion of the writer

NOT GIVEN

if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

35 Women are interested in what men do as well as in balanced facial and body features.

36 There is universal agreement about male perceptions of female attractiveness.

37 Women who aren't thin are less intelligent than men who are overweight.

38 It's possible that men may become as concerned with their bodies as women appear to be.

39 Women prefer a man's face to show maturity rather than dominance.

40 Stated perceptions of physical attraction show the clear influence of a generation gap.

349

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

Practice Reading Test Answer Sheet

1

21

2

22

3

23

4

24
5
25
6
26
7
27
8
28
9
29
10
30
11
31
12
32
13
33
14
34
15
35
16

36
17
37
18
38
19
39
20
40
350

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

WRITING TEST

TASK 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

You have decided to leave your job and need to inform your company about your decision.

Write a letter to your manager. In the letter,

explain why you are leaving

express your thanks for what you learned at the company

suggest the sort of person who could replace you

Write at least 150 words.

You do **NOT** need to write any addresses.

Begin your letter as follows:

Dear,

TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

In many countries people dream of owning their own home instead of paying rent.

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of home ownership.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

351

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General IELTS Full Practice Test

SPEAKING TEST

Now listen to the recording of Practice Interview 2 (Questions)

Listen to the recording and practice answering as if you were in a real IELTS interview (total audio time: 11 min).

1. Listen to the **Introduction** and **Part 1** and respond to each question.

2. After the **introduction to Part 2**, **pause** the recording for one minute to make notes on the task for your short talk. (* The task card is below)

3. After the one minute, **start** the recording again. After you hear, ‘Could you start talking now, please’, **pause** the recording again and start talking for a minimum of one and a maximum of two minutes.

4. **Start** the recording again after two minutes maximum, listen to and answer the rounding off question. Then just **continue** as the interview moves into **Part 3**.

Remember, Part 3 should last for a minimum of four minutes, so just pause the recording if the next question starts before you have finished answering the previous one.

Here is the Task Card for Part 2 of the Interview.

Talk about your favourite movie star.

You should say:

who your favourite movie star is

what kinds of movies they have appeared in

what sort of person you think they are in real life

and say why you like this movie star so much

352

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

ANSWERS &

TRANSCRIPTS

353



IELTS Success Formula :: General Listening Fitness Answers

Listening Fitness Activities – Answer Sheet

Fitness Activity 1

Fitness Activity 6

1. A

1. 533 East 67th St

2. A

2. 93014269

3. V

Fitness Activity 7

4. V

1. Thursday(s)

5. C

2. 8 / eight

6. C

3. ATSTIX

Fitness Activity 2

Fitness Activity 8

1. C

1. B/bookshop

2. B

2. morning(s)

3. A

3. M/music

Fitness Activity 3

4. B/beauty

1. admission

5. Thursday

2. select

Fitness Activity 9

3. middle

1. adopted

4. design

2. habit

5. distributed

3. efficiency

Fitness Activity 4

Fitness Activity 10

1. jams

1. how long

2. inefficiency (built-in)

2. (brief) notes

3. (the) left

3. eye contact

4. (It) improved / an improvement

4. speaking slowly

Fitness Activity 5

5. P/project

1. 372

2. 11:30

Total: 40 answers

3. bag

4. Singapore

Note:

1. ‘/’ means alternative answer

2. ‘()’ means optional part of the answer

354

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Reading Fitness Answers

Reading Fitness Activities – Answer Sheet

Fitness Activity 1

Fitness Activity 8

1. vi

1. I

2. iii

2. A

3. viii

3. P

4. vii

Fitness Activity 9

5. i

1. FALSE

Fitness Activity 2

2. TRUE

1. A

3. TRUE

2. C

4. NOT GIVEN

3. D

5. TRUE

Fitness Activity 3

6. TRUE

1. electricity

7. TRUE

2. moved

8. FALSE

3. flood

Fitness Activity 10

4. science

1. D

5. consumer

2. G

Fitness Activity 4

3. B

1. C

4. H

2. B

Fitness Activity 11

3. D

1. devastated

4. A

2. support

Fitness Activity 5

3. solution

1. YES

4. 150,000ML/water

2. YES

Fitness Activity 12

3. NOT GIVEN

1. retail

4. NO

2. 45K

Fitness Activity 6

3. sales

1. C

4. next week

2. B

5. Microsoft Word/Excel

3. E

Fitness Activity 13

4. E

1. stability

5. D

2. evaporator

Fitness Activity 7

3. particles

1. \$2.5 billion

4. pale tan

2. flooding/flooding in Gympie

5. vitamin D

3. higher gates/floodgates/higher floodgates

4. water crisis

Note:

1. The actual IELTS Reading test has only 40 questions numbered 1-40.

2. ‘/’ means alternative answer.

355

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Fitness Answers

Writing Task 1 Fitness Activities – Answer Sheet

Letter Type 1 (informal)

e

thg

1. c

in

ter

n

let

2. a

lanP

3. a

4. Present continuous (progressive) - How is it going? /

Present perfect - I've just booked /

Future continuous - I'll be studying /

1

g

h

Present simple – I'm ... excited

itin

rap

ag

5. c

Wr

ar

d

P

6. b

7. a) look after

b) As you know

c) a bit

2

d) apartment

g h

e) while

itin

rap

f) with

ag

Wr

arP

8. ‘it’ instead of ‘that’

‘haven’t’ instead of ‘hadn’t’

‘bedrooms and a balcony’/’bedrooms and balconies’ instead of ‘bedroom and balcony’

9. 5 (looking after the cat is really one task - i.e. feeding it and letting it out)

10. Line 1 ‘have to’

Line 2 ‘require’

Line 3 ‘require’

3

g

h

Line 4 ‘have to’

itin

rap

11. b

ag

Wr

arP

12. ‘pretty’ instead of ‘quite’

‘loads of’ instead of ‘many’

‘pick up’ instead of ‘collect’

‘thing’ instead of ‘task’

13. 1 b

e

2 a

th

g

g

’s

in

ter

d

14. a

itin

let

nE

c

Wr

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Fitness Answers

Letter Type 2 (formal)

e

thg

in

ter

1. a

n

let

lanP

2. b

3. b

4. b

1

g

h

5. a) support

itin

rap

ag

b) undertake

Wr

arP

c) amplify

6. b

7. a

d

2

8. c

g

h

d

itin

rap

ag

9. b

Wr

arP

e

g

10. writer uses 'possess' instead of 'have'

'carry out' instead of 'do'

'renovate' instead of 'do up'

'experienced at' instead of 'good at'

'proficient' instead of 'good'

3

g

h

11. 1. useful

itin

rap

ag

2. experienced

Wr

arP

3. proficient

12. 1. For instance

2. also

3. Furthermore

13. I am available this month on Friday 12th in the morning at 10 o'clock, but in

4

g

h

April I'll be overseas. I think I last saw you in 2011.

itin

rap

ag

14. Because he wants to indicate that he is available regularly, not just for those

Wr

ar

days in one week only.

P

15. b

g

's

g

ter

in

itin

let

dn

16. c

Wr

e

E

th

357

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 1 Fitness Answers

e

Letter Type 3 (semi-formal)

thg

in

ter

n

let

1. a

lan

c

P

2. b

1

3. a

g

h

itin

rap

ag

4. ‘I’m sorry to be’ / ‘you may not realise’ / ‘Unfortunately,’

Wr

arP

5. b

6. really / properly / recently / effectively

a

7. ‘soundly’ could replace ‘properly’

2

g

h

‘extremely’ could replace ‘really’

itin

rap

‘lately’ could replace ‘recently’

ag

Wr

ar

‘fully’ could replace ‘effectively’

P

8. a

9. 1 I would like to suggest that you keep your dog inside the house

2 Please keep your dog inside the house

3 You must keep your dog in the house

3

4 Keep your dog inside the house, OK!

g h

10. b

itin

rap

ag

d

Wr

arP

11. (Example) Eat fewer biscuits so that you don't put on weight.

(Example) You should study hard so that you pass your exams.

e

12. a

th

g

g

's

in

ter

d

13. b

itin

let

nE

c

Wr

358

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Fitness Answers

Writing Task 2 Fitness Activities – Answer Sheet

Task Type 1: Indicate and support your level of agreement

r uoy

1. a (but it is often the case that a writer is not 100% in agreement with a statement)

g er

2. c

in

sw

n

3. b (but 4 possible if short of time)

an

lan

4. c

P

5. a (time pressure encourages brevity)

6. c

7. a, d

n

8. a) Shopping is likely to grow in popularity.

ctiou

b) Shopping is not likely to die out.

d

c) Overspending is likely to cause problems.

tro

d) It is highly unlikely that shopping will ever bring happiness.

Ine

9. people (consumers); selfish (self-centred); careless (less disciplined)

thg

10. a) Shopping makes consumers selfish.

itin

b) Shopping makes consumers dangerous.

Wr

c) Shopping makes consumers spend unwisely.

d) Shopping makes consumers ill-disciplined.

11. c

g

y

1a

itin

d

12. a) ...enable them to pay their bills

Bo

ar

Wr

P

b) ...are available to help...

13. c

14. Examples: a)...higher education is important

b)...travelling has become so popular

yd 2 h

c)...people work so hard

Bo

d) Love (*You need to believe this!*)

g

rap

tin

15. show (depict); wish (desire); look (appearance); shoppers (consumers);

i

agar

feeling good (wellbeing); not good enough (inadequate); goods (products); social

Wr

P

good (community welfare)

16. a, b

17. a), b) Your choice!

y

c) more d) more

d

3 h

18. d

Bog rap

19. c

ag

itin

ar

20. b

Wr

P

21. a) + b) – c) + d) –

22. a

e

n

23. all too tempting; ever-busier working lives

th

a) all too / far too all too / far too

g

sio

clu

b) ever-growing c) ever-busier

itin

d) never-ending

Wr

Con

24. b, c, e

359

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Fitness Answers

Task Type 2: Present a two-sided Discussion

g er

1. c

in

sw

n

2. b

lan

r an

3. b

P

uoy

4. a

5. b

6. a

7. a) economic uncertainties

e

n

th

b) pure romance is under challenge

g ctiau

8. a) problem

d

itin

tro

b) issue

Wr

In

c) topic

d) problems / issues

9. b, d, e

10. a) + iii)

b) + iv)

h

c) + ii)

g rap

d) + i)

ag

itin

ar

1

11. Your choice, so answers will vary

P

Wr

yd

12. a) often seem

Bo

b) often seem

c) often seem to struggle

d) often seems to know

13. Your choices, so answers will vary

h

14. a) wedding cake

g rapag

b) marriage ceremony

itin

ar

2

c) marriage partner

P

Wr

y

d) job opportunity

d

Bo

15. a (1), c (2), d (3), b (4)

16. a, c

g

h

17. a) commitment / infatuation

y

rap

b) reputation / proximity

itin

d

3

Bo

ag

c) nutrition / taste

Wr

arP

18. Your choices, so answers will vary

e

n

thg sio

19. a, d, f

clu

itin

Wr

Con

360

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Fitness Answers

er

Task Type 3: Discuss Advantages & Disadvantages

gin sw

n

1. b

lan

r An

P

uo

2. c

y

e

n

th

3. a) pros and cons

g

ctiou

b) prolonging work past

d

itin

tro

Wr

In

4. c

1h

5. 1. benefits

g

rapg

2. enables

a

itin

ar

3. seems

Wr

Py

4. provides

d

5. individuals

Bo

6. Disadvantages: c (or b also seems possible)

Supporting examples: a

2 h

7. 1. On the other hand

g

2. a full time job

rap

ag

3. the workforce

itin

ar

8. a) demanding

Wr

P yd

b) remaining

Bo

c) undertake

d) prevent

e n

thg sio

9. b

clu

itin

Wr

Con

361

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Writing Task 2 Fitness Answers

Task Type 4: Explain & Offer Solutions or Consequences

gin swer

1. b

n

n

lan

r A

2. c

P

uoy

3. Your choices, so answers will vary

e

n

th

4. a) reasons for this phenomenon

g

ctiou

b) the key to making family life better

d

itin

tro

Wr

In

5. a) First of all / In the first place

b) Lastly / Finally

c) All in all / Taken together

y

d) So / Consequently

d

1h

e) In the same way / Similarly

Bog rap

f) Thereby / thus

itin

ag

g) Putting it another way / In other words

ar

Wr

P

h) The result of this is / As a result

i) Such that / so...that

j) This can lead to a situation in which / This can mean that

6. a) Line 1: big change

y

d

2

b) Line 3: biggest social task

h

Bo

c) Line 4: good value

g

rap

d) Line 5: good time

itin

agar

e) Line 5: big role

Wr

P

7. a) harder and longer work

e

n

b) less family time

thg sio

clu

itin

8. Your conclusion, so answer will vary

Wr

Con

362

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Speaking Fitness Answers

Speaking Fitness Activities – Answer Sheet

Part 1 Q

Answer

Explanation

1

b

a) is too short, and even sounds a little rude

c) is still too abrupt and too general

2

c

a) 'place' here means the house, not the suburb

b) not sufficiently relevant as it introduces the 'landlord'

3

b

a) too repetitive

c) too much hesitation

4

a

b) not polite enough

c) asks for an explanation, which assessor can't give

5

b

a) and c) have grammatical problems and lack linking expressions – they are therefore unclear

6

*'I have **loads** of friends... ..some from right back when I was at school, from various jobs I've had, and there are*

*the friends I play **sport** with. I've always been a **friendly** sort of person so I find it easy to **get** on with people when I **meet** them. But, I suppose I'd say I only have one or two **true** friends – friends I completely trust, I*

mean.'

7

a

b) and c) don't have the higher level vocabulary and idioms that a) has (**to catch up with** my old friends , **bump into** my new friends , **hang out** together).

8

c

9

b

10

a

b) and c) use only simpler links: 'and / but / because / so' ;

a) uses a wider range: 'even though / however / because / as'

11

c

a) talks more about roads;

b) talks about roads and cars (not traffic)

12

b

b) is too direct because it has imperatives, which often seem impolite ('Think about it')

and also uses the short, direct forms which can sound abrupt and opinionated ('They can't. It's not possible'). a) and c) use less direct language which sounds more polite.

13

b

Unlike b), responses a) and c) don't show the wider range of strategies for managing

hesitation and for retaining a sense of fluency.

14 *

1) I'm sorry, • I didn't catch that. • Could you repeat it, • please?

2) Yes • it's great. • There are plenty of parks, • with tennis courts • and many native plants • flowers • and trees.

3) As I said just before • I'm a bit shy • but I make friends quite easily • maybe because I'm a good listener • and I like asking questions • and showing interest in people.

15 *

a) It's **NOR**mal to have a **lot** of **FAM**ily **around** you.

b) ...so the inc**RE**asing levels of **TRA**ffic are **very** **NO**ticeable.

c) It's **probably** un**LIK**ely that **CAR** accidents can be s**TO**pped comp**LE**Tely.

d) ...I'm a **good** **L**istener and I **like** asking **QUE**stions and **showing** **IN**terest in **people**.

16 *

REALLY LOVE EC BEAUT

a) I my family, esp ially my grandmother; she's such a iful woman.

REALLY EAS SUPER

b) I make friends ily; in fact I get excited when I meet new people.

TERR TO

c) I'm a ible driver. I get tally nervous in heavy traffic, and when I get out of the car I feel like

TO WRECK! SO

a tal I'm annoyed with myself about it!

* **Note:** slight variations are possible.

363

IELTS Success Formula :: General Speaking Fitness Answers

Part 2 Q

Answer

Explanation

1

Various

Not Applicable

2 1)

a), d)

Not Applicable

2 2)

e), g)

Not Applicable

2 3)

b), c), h), i), j) Not Applicable

2 4)

k), f)

Not Applicable

3

b)

(a) is too abrupt and has no introductory sentence;

(c) is rather repetitive and suggests the speaker lacks ‘true’ fluency and flexibility;

(b) has a short introduction and establishes some expectation in the listener.

4

a), b)

(a) is unable to use linking words to make his talk smoother and more connected;

(b) is uncertain of correct grammar and creates too much hesitation through self correction.

5

b)

(a) has poor grammar and wanders away from a focused answer by starting to talk about himself rather than his brother;

(c) also drifts away from the question by focusing on what his brother did rather than why his brother's life interests him

6

c)

(a) and (b) are very short and direct statements, which often sound a little impolite;

in (c) the use of 'I think', and '..for now, anyway' helps to soften the ending and makes it sound more polite by extending it a little;

7

c)

(a) and (b) are too repetitive (lack richness) and thus less interesting

Part 2 Complete Talk

Interviewer: *Could you start now, please?*

Candidate:

All right. Well, I suppose all lives are fascinating in some ways, but I'd like to talk briefly about my brother, Pierre. His life has been really extraordinary, at least in my opinion. Let me explain.

My brother,

Pierre, in fact he's my older brother, as there's five years' difference in our ages, was born in Paris, actually very

close to the centre of Paris, where our parents had a very popular, local bakery. Although he was born deaf,

Pierre was brilliant at school, especially at mathematics and Art. He also loved the outdoor life and always liked

water. As a teenager, I think he was about 14, he went on a course and learned how to sail. He took to sailing

like a duck to water, I suppose you could say. After finishing school, he sailed solo to New Zealand in a small

sailing boat. This seemed amazing... and really adventurous to me, his little brother, especially as I was a bit of

a stay-at-home geek, ...at that time, anyway. Now, where was I? Oh yes. In New Zealand, he met a beautiful,

Maori girl, actually she's not deaf, and eventually they got married. He went to Art School over there and is now

a well-recognised artist. I've seen some of his work...it's pretty good. He paints landscapes mainly, or to be more

precise, I should say, seascapes. I suppose my brother has always seemed especially interesting to me because

he was born deaf and as children this created distance between us. As a younger brother I wanted to look up to

him, but it was not easy as his disability made him seem so different, so self-contained and unique. But he

inspired me because he has many talents, and never let his deafness stop him from taking risks, or from seeking

adventure. In some ways, he is still a mystery to me, always intriguing, almost a bit mythical. Er... I think that's

all I have to say on this topic, ...for now, anyway.

Interviewer: Thank you. Do you see your brother very often?

Candidate:

Not as often as I'd like. He came over to Paris last year for our parents' 30th wedding anniversary but flights are a bit too expensive for us to get together regularly.

364

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Speaking Fitness Answers

Part 3 Q**Answer****Explanation**

1

b

(b) is probably the most effective response as it provides two good examples of exciting activities and then develops one of those activities (boar hunting) in an interesting way.

(a) offers plenty of examples but they are not really relevant to the idea of 'exciting'. Also this response loses its focus by starting to talk about money and personal interests.

(c) starts well by questioning the meaning of 'excitement' but then just talks about personal things, and loses relevance.

NOTE: Responses (a) and (c) might negatively affect final score on 'fluency and coherence' because examiners usually can sense if a candidate is 'filling' time with 'easy to use' language rather than having enough richness, flexibility and control.

2

c

(c) seems the most natural, as the candidate is genuinely reflecting on his/her own reasons and then suggesting that caution is not unusual. The candidate doesn't seem to feel any

sense of shame in admitting a sort of lack of courage, which is a personal style of response quite common among adults in western-style cultures.

(a) is also an honest response but seems abrupt because it has no 'lead-in' expressions such as 'I like to think that I'm...' in response (c). The examiner might consider this response a little too direct and unsubtle.

(b) This response contradicts the questioner, but contradicting in response to a question is fine. However, again, this response is also a little too direct and fails to give any reasons, in response to the 'why' in the question. So it's not really a very relevant answer either.

3

c

c) is the response which has the greatest variety of sentence connecting expressions (because / even though / however / who are...) Although this response sounds a little more formal than the others as a result, it is displaying flexibility of grammar more effectively than the other responses .

(a) and (b) sound natural and have good vocabulary but display less variety of clause connection.

4

a

(a) has the richest use of vocabulary (a whole host of reasons, / generally speaking / the pressure of building a career / struggle to find permanent / a succession of temporary positions / feel financially secure / face the responsibility / depend on both partners / potential to earn / is put off)

(b) and (c) are good, relevant answers but are a little more repetitive in terms of vocabulary use - the word 'jobs' for example is over-used.

5

b

(b) is the most competent at linking ideas in a varied way (Even though... / more
than / in terms of... / While... / Compared to... / For example,.. / whereas... / because...
/so from that point of view...).

(a) and (c) are good answers but rely a little too much on simple linkers such as ‘but’ or
‘and’ or ‘so’ to link ideas.

365

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com



IELTS Success Formula :: General Full IELTS Practice Test Answers

IELTS Full Practice Test Answer Sheet (General Training)

Q#

Listening test

Reading test

1

Wong

(the) government

2

Jacqui

flow / flow of water / water flow

3

014830579

\$150 / 150

4

7

water retention / water retention qualities

5

\$90

plumbed-in (tank) / connected (tank)

6

C

3000 litres

7

B

(the) conditions

8

C

iv

9

B

vi

10

C

vii

11

improves

viii

12

replace

v

13

750

i

14

limited

ii

15

regular

partly

16

bulky

availability

17

convenient

swimming

18

drinks

service

19

pricey / pricy

alternative

20

technology

home

21

A, D (*both needed*)

T

22

writing

T

23

title / titles

F

24

planning

T

25

structuring / structure / disorganised / disorganized NG

26

tutor

F

27

lectures / lecturer

T

28

clear

B

29

wastes

D

30

background

C

31

B

E

32

B

C

33

A

F

34

C

G

35

B

Y

36

positive

N

37

view

NG

38

missing

Y

39

expected

Y

40

interact / together

NG

Note:

‘/’ means alternative answer, ‘()’ means optional part of the answer

366

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com •
www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Listening Fitness Audio Transcript

Listening Fitness Activities - Transcripts

Listening Fitness Activity 1 (Page 21)

Chris:

...We've all just met so perhaps we should start by an introduction with a bit of background from each of us.

Anna:

OK. I'm Anna. I finished three years of a Languages degree in Sweden, where I come from. This year I decided to study overseas to get to know a different part of the world.

I'm also a big fan of European cinema, especially French and Italian.

Those are the languages I majored in along with English. To me, film is a great way to learn about the rest of the world. I was in the film club at my university so when I saw the notice asking for volunteers, I thought it would be a good way to meet people and get involved in something I really enjoy.

Veronica:

Thanks, Anna. My name is Veronica and I come from Italy. I'm doing graduate studies in English Literature. I went to some of the films in the festival last year and enjoyed them. I especially liked the video interviews. That was when I decided to get involved. I used to do film reviews for our student newspaper back home

Chris:

Hi I'm Chris from Scotland and I'm in 4th year Journalism. Cinema is my hobby. Last year I joined the organizing committee, just like you have now, and somehow, this year I've ended up in charge. I'm actually able to use my coordinating work on the festival towards a credit for one of my courses. I have to write up a report on the festival with recommendations so that's an extra motivation for me. So I hope this is going to be a good experience for us all.

Listening Fitness Activity 2 (Page 22)

Mark:

... Any other trends that you thought were significant?

Evelyn:

Well what's really interesting is what the article called 'mobile meals'. In other words more and more Canadians are eating meals away from home, but NOT just eating more junk food.

They are projecting a 40% increase in snack food sales over the next three years and the growth is coming from healthy snacks – you know the ones that have less cholesterol and fat, such as muesli bars, health food bars and those types of products. Apparently in the food marketing jargon they are called “nutritious portable foods” which means healthy snacks!

The other major trend is that young people are doing more of the food shopping these days so marketing has to be aimed more at them, as well as more conventionally at the mother.

367

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Listening Fitness Audio Transcript

Listening Fitness Activity 3 (Page 23)

Veronica:

... Where does the funding come from? What kind of budget do we have?

Chris:

The festival is subsidised by the student council. We generate money through advertising and through admission charges. We'll go over the budget in detail a little later. But we've got lots of work to do in the meantime.

Anna:

I guess we have to start pretty soon.

Chris:

Well, I think by the first of March at the latest, we need to select all the films. Then we have to find some advertisers to sponsor the event - that shouldn't be too hard. We'll just start with last year's list. Our deadline for that should be the middle of March. By the end of March we need to design the program. Then we can get posters made up and distributed in April.

Veronica:

Like you said, we need some clever promotion - something to generate interest and get people talking. We have 4 months to get ready. It should be enough time.

Listening Fitness Activity 4 (Page 24)

Typewriters in 1873 jammed or got stuck if the keys next to each other were hit in quick succession. To solve this

problem, in 1878, the QWERTY keyboard was developed, spacing frequent letters away from each other, and

therefore reducing the number of jams. It was not specifically designed to slow down typists, as is generally

believed, but the keyboard did create a built-in inefficiency for typists. The most common keys are scattered all

over the keyboard rows, many on the left side. Right-handed people have to use their left hand, which is the

weaker hand. Typewriter technology improved, doing away with the original rationale for the QWERTY

distribution, but the keyboard remained. In spite of its inefficiency, it is the keyboard we all use today.

Listening Fitness Activity 5 (Page 25)

Agent:

Ok, who's next, please?

Jenny Lee:

I think I am.

Agent:

How can I help you?

Jenny Lee:

I just came in on flight 372 from Singapore at 11:30 and my luggage hasn't arrived. I've been waiting at the baggage claim for about a half an hour now and everything seems to have come off the plane. The conveyor belt has stopped and all the passengers have gone. So I came here to find out what has happened to my bag.

Agent:

Can I see your ticket please?

Jenny Lee:

Here it is.

Agent:

So you came from Hong Kong today and changed planes in Singapore, right?

Jenny Lee:

Yes, the connection in Singapore was a tight one. The plane got in late and I had to rush to get to the next flight.

Agent:

That's the problem right there. There wasn't enough time to get your bags onto the connecting flight.

368

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Listening Fitness Audio Transcript

Listening Fitness Activity 6 (Page 26)

Agent:

Now, I need you to fill in these forms. Your name?

Jenny Lee:

Jenny Lee

Agent:

Address?

Jenny Lee:

I guess you want my address here. I'm staying with relatives. Just a minute, I'll have to look it up. It looks like 583, no its 533 East 67th St. in Riverside.

Agent:

Do you have the phone number there?

Jenny Lee:

Yes I do. It's um 93014269.

Agent:

So you came in on Qantas Flight... *(fades)*

Listening Fitness Activity 7 (Page 27)

Thank you for calling ATS Advanced Ticketing System, the call system for all your entertainment needs. Our

automated telephone service is designed to answer your questions quickly and easily. The ATS office in the

Regency Theatre is open Monday to Thursdays from 10am-5 pm and on Friday and Saturday till 8 pm.

For online bookings and detailed program listings check our website at www.atstix.com.

That's spelled A-T-S-T-I-X. Please listen to the choices available. You may press your choice as soon as you hear

it to get more information.

Listening Fitness Activity 8 (Page 28)

Henry:

Look there's the notice that Professor Jones told us he'd be putting up confirming the details of our work experience placements.

Jo:

But I thought that was already arranged.

Henry:

No, he said he'd have to check with the companies that the days we preferred were OK for them – let's see if any have changed. Theresa's not here today, but her name's first – it says the Uni Bookshop, Friday mornings, starting on the 23rd March, so nothing's changed. I'll let her know.

Jo:

What about Manuel? He's not here either. Is he still going to the music store in the High St?

Henry:

If it's Mainly Music, yes he's still down for that, on Friday afternoons, starting on the 9th.

Jo:

Um.. the day's different – it's changed from Tuesday mornings, but that's OK, I'll tell him. He'll really enjoy listening to music all day!

Henry:

Now where's my name...Henry...here it is...I 'm going to The Beauty Shop, and I said I preferred Thursday afternoons...oh good, that seems OK and my start date hasn't changed either. Jo, what day did you opt for? *(fades)*

IELTS Success Formula :: General Listening Fitness Audio Transcript

Listening Fitness Activity 9 (Page 28)

The superiority of the Dvorak keyboard was clearly established. However, it has never been adopted as the

keyboard of choice. Why? First of all, bad luck and bad timing on the part of the Dvorak team. First there was the

Depression, not a good time for introducing change. But the main factor that worked against the Dvorak system

was habit. People were used to the QWERTY keyboard. Computers today could easily switch the arrangement of

letters to the Dvorak layout, but it seems that because of habit, the QWERTY layout remains dominant. People felt

comfortable with the keyboard they learned on so it was the established patterns of hundreds of millions of

typists, manufacturers, typing teachers and typewriter salespeople that have crushed all moves toward keyboard

efficiency for over 70 years. It looks like QWERTY keyboard may be with us for a long time yet.

Listening Fitness Activity 10 (Page 29)

Probably the most important part of public speaking is what you do beforehand, by which I mean preparation.

This includes practical details such as knowing precisely what your topic is and exactly how long you are

expected to talk for. You should also plan the content thoroughly. A good strategy is to write out the content as

you intend to say it and then make brief notes, preferably on small cards, which you use to talk from. This way

you sound more natural, you incorporate pauses while you look at

your notes and you can then look at your audience while you are speaking. Never read your speech without

looking at the audience. Eye contact is a very important part of communicating with an audience; so deliberately

move your head and look around at your audience. Pauses are important as most people when they are nervous

tend to rush through their speech. Practise speaking slowly, this gives you more time to pronounce your words

correctly. It's always easier for your audience to listen to

someone whose speaking is clear and calmly paced so that they can understand the ideas being explained. And

the bigger the group the more slowly you should speak. Remember to project your voice, speaking clearly to the

person furthest away from you.

370

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Speaking Practice Interview 1 Audio Transcript

Practice Interview 1 (Questions Only) Transcript

Hello, my name is Sally Robinson, could you tell me your full name, please?

OK. And what shall I call you?

Can I see your identification, please?

Thank you. Now in Part 1 of the interview, I'm going to ask you some questions about yourself. Let's talk

about where you live:

Where is your home town or city?

In what ways is it a nice place in which to live?

Are any parts of your home town dangerous at night?

What changes would most improve your home town?

Let's go on to talk about walking now.

How far do you walk each day?

Where do you go for a walk if you want to relax?

What do you enjoy about walking?

How could everyone be encouraged to walk more?

Let's move on to talk about photos now?

How often do you take photos?

What kinds of photo do you most like taking?

Do you have any really special or favourite photos?

Why do you think photos may become less important in the future?

371

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Speaking Practice Interview 1 Audio Transcript

Thank you. Now I'm going to give you a topic and I want you to talk about it for one to two minutes. Before

you talk there will be one minute to think about what you are going to say, and to make notes. Is that OK?

Here's a pencil and paper for making notes and here's your topic. Could you talk about a time when you were

a child and got into trouble?

Talk about a time when you were a child and got into trouble.

You should say:

how old you were

what you did that got you into trouble

what happened afterwards

and say why you still remember this occasion so clearly

OK? Remember you have two minutes for your talk, so don't worry if I stop you. I'll let you know when the

two minutes is up. Could you start talking now, please?

Thank you.

Were you a naughty child?

Thank you. I'll take the task card and paper and pencil back now.

You've been talking about a time when you were a child and got into trouble and I'd like to discuss with you a

few more questions related to the same topic. So let's consider first of all... children's behaviour.

Tell me what usually happens to a child in your country when they are naughty.

That was an interesting answer, erm... to what extent do you think parents today are generally kinder to their

children than parents were in the past?

Thank you. OK Let's move on to discuss the effects of parenting. To what extent do you think it is acceptable

to slap children who are naughty?

So, do you think children who are slapped lose respect for their parents?

Mm being a parent is complicated isn't it. OK. Finally let's move on to consider punishment in society. Is

capital punishment ever justified in your opinion?

You have obviously realised the complexity of that question, but thinking ahead, do you think punishments

in society will get harsher or softer in the future?

**I suppose we'll have to wait and see if your view of the future turns out to be right, won't we?
Thank you.**

That is the end of the interview.

372

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Full IELTS Practice Test Audio Transcript

IELTS Practice Listening Test Transcript

IELTS Success Formula by Stephen Slater and Simone Braverman. Practice Listening Test.

The copyright to these recordings belongs to the authors.

You will hear a number of recordings and must answer questions on what you hear. You will have some time to

read the questions and instructions and to check your work. You will hear each recording once only.

The test is in four sections. At the end of the test you will have ten minutes to transfer your answers to an answer

sheet.

Please now turn to Section 1.

SECTION 1

You will hear a telephone conversation between a receptionist at a backpacker hostel, and a tourist. First you

have some time to look at questions 1 to 5.

You will see that there is an example which has been done for you. The part of the conversation relating only to

the example will be played first now.

(sound of telephone ringing)

Receptionist: Good morning, Seafront Backpacker Hostel, Bayview Heights.

Customer: Oh, hi. I'm a student and I'm looking for some low-priced accommodation on the beach.

Receptionist: Well, our prices are pretty good, and we have plenty of students staying here. But

usually we ask

you some basic questions for our guest enquiry form first. Is that OK?

Customer: Yes, that's fine.

R: Let's start with your current address. Where are you staying at the moment?

C: I'm staying at the Seaview Hotel, 15, The Esplanade...along the coast, at Dune Beach...

R: Mmm...that's a nice place.

C: Yeah it's great, but it's a bit too expensive for me.

The first part of the address is called 'Seaview Hotel', so this has been written on the form. Now the full test will begin.

Answer the questions as you listen because you will not hear the recording a second time. Listen carefully and

answer questions 1 to 5.

(sound of telephone ringing)

Receptionist: Good morning, Seafront Backpacker Hostel, Bayview Heights.

Customer: Oh, hi. I'm a student and I'm looking for some low-priced accommodation on the beach.

Receptionist: Well, our prices are pretty good, and we have plenty of students staying here. But usually we ask

you some basic questions for our guest enquiry form first. Is that OK?

Customer: Yes, that's fine.

R: Let's start with your current address. Where are you staying at the moment?

C: I'm staying at the Seaview Hotel, 15, The Esplanade...along the coast, at Dune Beach...

R: Mmm...that's a nice place.

C: Yeah it's great, but it's a bit too expensive for me.

R: Yes, so I've heard. And can I ask you your full name please?

C: It's Jacqui Wong.

R: Can you spell that for me, please?

IELTS Success Formula :: General Full IELTS Practice Test Audio Transcript

C: Ok.... My family name is Wong , that's W-O-N-G

R: uhuh, and your given name?

C: My given name is Jacqui but I spell it in an unusual way, J-A-C-Q-U-I

R: Ok,got it....And do you have a mobile phone number?

C: Yes, it's 014...830... 579.

R: Sorry did you say 579 for the last three numbers?

C: That's right.

R: How many nights would you like to stay with us here at the Hostel?

C: Well that depends on the cost. How much is it for one night?

R: In our larger, 12-bed dormitory B, it's only \$15 per night,

C: That sounds much better value than the Seaview Hotel. ...Look, I know it's short notice... but do you have a

vacancy for me for 7 nights, starting from tonight?

R: Well, luckily for you, I think we do. One of our guests had to leave early this morning because her father is

sick,so I think we can fit you in. By the way, the cost goes down to \$90 if you stay for a full week of 7 nights.

C: Really? That's great...and a big relief. My money's running a bit low.

Before you hear the rest of the same conversation you have some time to look at questions 6 to 10.

Now listen and answer questions 6 to 10

C: I'd like to know what facilities you have at your Hostel?

R: Well I suppose our accommodation is a bit simpler than at the Seaview Hotel. We have 2 large dormitories, 3

bathrooms....each with a shower and constant hot water;er...we also supply towels, at a small cost; erm...

there is free use of the internet, and a TV lounge. There is a small parking charge for cars, but ... there's no charge

for bikes.

C: Sounds fine.

R: Oh yes...and we offer you a simple breakfast, continental-style, free.

C: That's great...a lot of backpacker hostels don't offer that. By the way, how do I get to your backpacker hostel

from here at Dune Beach?

R: Are you in a car?

C: No, I'm on my bicycle.

R: Well, your best bet is to take the road from Dune Beach to Selby. You take a small road off to the right, very

near to your hotel on the Esplanade. It's a narrow road, but quiet. I always advise guests on bikes to use it as it's

definitely much safer for cycling.

C: OK. Where do I go from Selby?

R: In Selby, just by the Church, you'll see a sign to Bay View Heights. It will probably take you about another

thirty minutes.

C: Is your hostel easy to find?

R: Yes it's on the sea front, it's located right at the very end of Beach Road... up a hill ...next to a Retirement

Home. The views of the ocean are really great.

C: Sounds lovely. Is there somewhere safe at your hostel I can keep my bike?

R: Yes...absolutely no problem. You can store it in our hostel garage at night.

C: That's a relief. Oh, I forgot to ask if you have any animals at your hostel?

R: That's an unusual question. Well the manager has a small dog. Other than that, we get the occasional fox in the

garden, usually at night. Why do you ask?

374

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Full IELTS Practice Test Audio Transcript

C: Well, dogs are not a problem but I'm allergic to cat fur ...it makes my skin go red and I come out in a

rash...Not sure about foxes.

R: Mmm...sounds painful. But don't worry, no cats or foxes indoors here!

That is the end of section 1. You now have half a minute to check your answers.

Now turn to Section 2.

SECTION 2

You will hear a presenter of a radio program for consumers, discussing different coffee machines. First you have

some time to look at questions 11 to 17.

Now listen carefully and answer questions 11 to 17.

Hello there listeners, and welcome to your weekly consumer program, Best Buys. Today we're looking at 3

excellent coffee machines at different prices. We'll look at the pluses and minuses and then give our overall

assessment for each machine. So let's get started....

Our first stylish, coffee maker is the simplest one. It's called the 'Coffee Supreme'. OK..., positive points first.

Well,...with this machine, you can brew more than four cups of coffee, either mild or strong. Also, it has a water

filtration system with a cartridge and this improves the taste of the coffee. It also has overflow protection and a

drip-stop function.... and all parts are easy to replace. But,...on the negative side, it doesn't have an automatic

coffee grinder. Also, the Coffee Supreme has only a small 750 watt electrical system.So now the verdict. Our

overall assessment for this attractive, little machine is that it is good value, but has a rather limited performance.

The next machine is a step up in price but has more options. It's called **Café Delight**. On the plus side, this

machine combines a regular coffee maker with an espresso machine. It has a steam nozzle and a frothing

attachment for making either cappuccinos or café lattes. Also you can make coffee in two ways – either into a cup

or into the 40 ounce glass container which sits on its own warming plate. The downside is that the machine is

bulky, because it's about 40 cm wide and 30cm high. But...as a lot of our people seem to like either drip coffee or

the stronger Espresso style, on balance, our overall evaluation is that it's both flexible and convenient.

Before you hear the rest of the program you have some time to look at questions 18 to 20.

Now listen and answer questions 18 to 20.

The third coffee machine is the most expensive... but it's really hi-tech. It's called **Coffeetime automatic**. This

machine is good because it can make different drinks—...not just coffee, but hot chocolate and tea. It uses an

electronic 'disc' which automatically calculates water volume, brewing time and temperature for either coffee,

tea, chocolate or milk. You can even make different drinks, one after another. Another plus is that

there is an

automatic cleaning and descaling system, and an automatic coffee grinder.But, on the negative side it's rather

pricey and rather large, maybe too large for some small kitchens. In fact if I wanted it in my kitchen I would have

to build a bigger kitchen. So our overall assessment is that it's bulky but makes good use of up-to-date technology.

Overall then, I suppose with coffee machines you get what you pay for. But perhaps simplicity is important. So

good luck out there when you go shopping and remember...(fades)

That is the end of section 2. You now have half a minute to check your answers.

Now turn to Section 3.

375

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontrack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Full IELTS Practice Test Audio Transcript

SECTION 3

You will hear a conversation between John Grey, a study support adviser, and two students, Wilson and Grace,

who have study problems.

First you have some time to look at questions 21 to 26.

Now listen carefully and answer questions 21 to 26.

J: Thanks for coming along, Grace and Wilson. My name's John Grey and I'm one of the Study Support

advisers.... As you are new students and have asked to discuss what we can do to help you with your study

problems, I'd like first to outline the purposes and approach to Learning Support here at Broadway University.

Then I'll ask each of you to describe the sort of issues you have and then say what we might offer you. Is that OK?

G: Yes.

W: That's fine.

J: OK Let's start then. Well, basically our purpose at Student Support is to help students to become more

independent. We do this by showing them effective strategies they can use, not by doing the studying for them.

Another purpose is to help students to understand some of the cultural differences between their own culture and

the cultural context here in this country. In that sense we are encouraging students to make comparisons but not

to make judgements about them. I suppose a final purpose is to help students to build relationships inside our

culture by encouraging them to relate openly to us.

But that's enough from me. Perhaps, Wilson, you could talk about the sort of study problems you are having and

I'll suggest some options.

W: Well my main problems at the moment seem to be connected with writing rather than lectures or seminars.

J: OK...Could you say a little more about what your problems with writing are exactly?

W: Well, I find I can't understand the assignment titles... they're often unclear to me,...I mean the central ideas...

or what is sort of ...underneath the title words. Then usually I can't find enough readings or make a good enough

plan.

J: Well.... we have a special session that looks at essay planning in each academic area. You're in Business aren't

you, so maybe you could come to the Business essay session.

W: That would be great.

J: Anything else about your writing?

W: I find that the structuring of the essays I write is a real difficulty for me. My essays are always very disorganised.

J: Well, on Tuesdays during each semester we have essay writing sessions and you can make an appointment with a tutor to discuss your essay draft. Would that be helpful?

W: Yes, it sounds good.

Before you hear the rest of the conversation, you have some time to look at questions 27 to 30.

Now listen and answer questions 27 to 30.

J: What about you, Grace?

G: Well my problems are a bit different. I'm having great difficulty following the lectures in my Nursing Course.

...The lecturers seem to come from different countries and they talk really fast and are not always very clear. I

can't keep up.

...and I end up with very poor lecture notes.

J: Have you tried recording the lectures?

G: Yes, but I still can't understand them and it just wastes time.

376

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Full IELTS Practice Test Audio Transcript

J: Well, you might try talking to your course coordinator to see if some of the lecture notes are in Powerpoint form

or whether the lecturers have notes they can give you. Or you might ask one of the local students to let you look

at their notes and discuss the lecture with you.

G: I'd be a bit embarrassed to ask the lecturer.

J: Well, one of our Support staff can contact the lecturer for you, if you like, to start with.

G; Oh, OK, thank you.

J: Anything else that's a problem?

G: Well, this isn't really a study problem but I'm finding that I'm not sleeping well.

J: I'm sorry to hear that. Is there something you are worried about?

G: I'm worried about the course, there's too much information to deal with. ...Also, I had an email from my

parents recently saying that my grandmother is not well and I'm worried about her. I feel I should go back to be

with her.

J: It sounds as though you need to talk to someone who can listen in more detail to this situation. We have some

really good counsellors from different cultural backgrounds. I know you might not feel comfortable about this

but I could help you make a time today, if you like.

G: I'm not sure ...it's all rather new.

J: OK.... why don't you think about it...and come back to see me again this afternoon?

G; OK, thanks...I'm so sorry to be a problem to you.

J: You're not a problem at all, Grace,we're here to help.

That is the end of section 3. You now have half a minute to check your answers.

Now turn to Section 4.

SECTION 4

You will hear part of a lecture about effective management skills given by a business studies lecturer. First, you

have some time to look at questions 31 to 40.

Now listen carefully and answer questions 31 to 40.

Today, in my final talk on effective management skills, I want to discuss with you ideas connected with the place

of emotional intelligence in the workplace. In recent years, management researchers have realised that an

organisation is not just a place with a structure, with bosses and workers and rules, but is a place where feelings

can have a huge impact on the effectiveness of work and workplace relationships.

First of all, then what is emotional intelligence? Well, no doubt you all know about intelligence tests, IQ tests, and

the usual measurement of intelligence. Well it has been realised that there are other types of intelligence which

can be vital to the tasks of management. Emotional intelligence, or E.I. as it is sometimes called, is one of these.

Basically, then, E.I. involves a range of abilities connected to feelings. For example, it involves **self awareness**, or,

in other words, the ability to be aware of your own emotions as you experience them. Another dimension of E.I.

naturally enough is the ability to recognize other people's feelings, or at least to imagine what other people are

feeling under certain conditions. We sometimes call this ability **empathy**. Then there is the ability to **manage your**

own emotions, and to manage them in a positive and constructive way, thereby helping to motivate yourself.

Finally, E.I. involves the ability to **manage relationships**, which involves the positive management of other

people's emotions, and this last ability is part of being an effective leader, as well as being linked to being

personally popular, or, as we say in plain English... just knowing how to be 'good with people'.

IELTS Success Formula :: General Full IELTS Practice Test Audio Transcript

It doesn't take much of your or anyone's intelligence to realise how important all these qualities are to a happy

and open workplace—a workplace where people communicate openly, trust and respect one another, feel valued

and understood, and thus work well together, is more productive,and probably... more creative.

But quite a number of otherwise intelligent and technically competent managers are not emotionally intelligent,

and this means they need to learn these interpersonal skills in order to become more effective at their jobs.

So what underlies our emotional intelligence? What feeds into emotional intelligence and enables it to be developed?

Clearly a key part of being emotionally intelligent is our own view of ourselves, how we see ourselves, or as it is

sometimes called, our self-image. With a positive self image, which means, if we like ourselves, we are probably more

able to support other people in our relationships with them. So managers with good self images are more likely to be a

positive influence inside any organisation,

But self image is neither completely straightforward, nor simple.

Basically there seem to be three central aspects to how we see ourselves.

First, there is our **perceived self**, which basically means what we think we are like, ...our internal view of ourselves in

our mind's mirror, if you like. If we value ourselves and have high self esteem and self confidence, then other people

will feel this in us, and will feel a little of it in their relationship with us.

Then there is how we would like ourselves to be, which is sometimes called our **desired self**, and obviously refers to

the gap between what we perceive ourselves to be, and what we think is missing in ourselves, what improvements we

would like to make in ourselves, if you like. For example, many shy people would like to be more assertive. But,

obviously, if we have *too* much desire to change ourselves, it probably means we may not like ourselves enough the

way we are.

Finally there are **the ‘selves’ we present to others**, our public faces, if you like, or, as sociologists express it, our roles.

Roles involve expected forms of presentation of self, a bit like parts in a drama, or a play. For example, if you are a

manager, your staff will probably expect you to behave in a certain way because this is what they expect of you. For

example, you may be expected to give clear instructions and to make good decisions. Through the effective acting out

of their work roles, managers can partly control the impressions other workers have of them, either gaining face, if

these workers build a positive view of them, or, losing face if they behave in unusual ways...perhaps at the same time

losing their authority.

Of course these three aspects of self image interact. In other words, they operate together at the same time, not in

isolation. Research seems to suggest that there is a degree of stability in the main ways we communicate, or in our

styles of communication, if you like.

So, overall, then a good manager needs a good self image... and a good manager needs to be able to build and use

emotional intelligence. A successful modern organisation cannot ignore these psychological needs if it wants to succeed

(fades...).

That is the end of Section 4. You now have half a minute to check your answers.

That is the end of the IELTS Success Formula Practice Listening Test. You now have 10 minutes to transfer your

answers to the Listening Test Answer Sheet.

378

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Full IELTS Practice Test Audio Transcript

IELTS Practice Interview 2 (Questions Only) Transcript

Hello, my name is Ben Fulton. Could you tell me your full name, please?

OK, and what shall I call you?

That's fine, and can I see your identification, please?

Thank you. Now in Part 1 of the interview, I'm going to ask you some questions about yourself. Let's talk

about where you grew up.

Where were you born?

In what ways has your birthplace changed since then?

Where would be a good place in your country for children to grow up these days?

Where in your country would you most like to live in the future, and why?

Let's go on to talk about shoes now.

When did you last buy some shoes? (What kind were they?)

Do you buy shoes mainly for comfort or to be fashionable?

Tell me about your favourite pair of shoes.

Do you think shoes last as long as they used to?

Let's move on to talk about kitchens.

What do you enjoy doing most when you are in the kitchen?

Is the kitchen in your house usually tidy or untidy?

Do you prefer a kitchen with a gas cooker or with an electric cooker, and why?

What things are stuck to the front of the fridge in your kitchen?

379

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

IELTS Success Formula :: General Full IELTS Practice Test Audio Transcript

Thank you. Now, I'm going to give you a topic and I want you to talk about it for 1-2 minutes. Before you talk

there will be one minute to think about what you are going to say, and to make notes. Is that OK? Here's a

pencil and paper for making notes, and here's your topic. Could you talk about your favourite movie star?

Talk about your favourite movie star.

You should say:

who your favourite movie star is

what kinds of movies they have appeared in

what sort of person you think they are in real life

and say why you like this movie star so much

OK? Remember you have two minutes for your talk, so don't worry if I stop you. I'll let you know when the

two minutes is up. Could you start talking now, please?

Thank you.

Do you go to the movies very often?

Thank you. I'll take the task card and paper and pencil back now.

You've been talking about your favourite movie star and I'd like to discuss with you a few more questions

related to the same topic. So let's consider first of all... movies today.

Can you tell me about some movies that have been really popular recently?

Mm, some of those sound really good, erm... are movies today better than they were when your parents were

young, do you think?

Thank you....an interesting reply. OK Let's move on now to discuss fame and movie stars.

Is being famous a good thing or a bad thing, do you think?

I see, so, do you think you could handle being famous?

I suppose many people would feel the same as you do. Finally let's discuss movies and society.

In what ways do movies help you to understand your society better?

Ok, that's fine but aren't most movies really made for commercial success rather than to help you to

understand society better?

OK, thanks for your ideas, but we'll have to stop now as that is the end of the interview.

380

Copyright © S. Slater, S. Braverman • All rights reserved • Web: www.ielts-blog.com • www.ieltsontack.com

Document Outline

- [Cover Page](#)
- [Title Page](#)
- [Contents](#)
- [Listening Lesson](#)
- [Listening Fitness Activities](#)
- [Reading Lesson](#)
- [Reading Fitness Activities](#)
- [Writing Overview](#)
- [Writing Lesson Task 1](#)
- [Writing Fitness Activities Task 1](#)
- [Writing Lesson Task 2](#)
- [Writing Fitness Activities Task 1](#)
- [Writing Rated Samples Task 1](#)
- [Writing Rated Samples Task 2](#)
- [IELTS Writing Doctor](#)
- [Writing Doctor - IELTS Grammar Task 1](#)
- [Writing Doctor - IELTS Grammar Task 2](#)
- [Writing Doctor - Articles](#)
- [Writing Doctor - Prepositions](#)
- [Writing Doctor - Vocabulary Task 1](#)
- [Writing Doctor - Vocabulary Task 2](#)
- [Speaking Lesson](#)
- [Speaking Fitness Activities](#)
- [Speaking Rated Interview](#)
- [Speaking Top Score Vocabulary](#)
- [Speaking Questions For Practice](#)
- [Full IELTS Test](#)
- [Answers and Transcripts](#)