

# ***IELTS Writing Compact***

## ***GRAPH REVIEW (Academic Task 1)***

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## Unit 1

### Diachronic Graphs

In these graphs we deal with variables which increase, decrease, fluctuate or stay constant over a period of time. As a result we need vocabulary which shows change.

Verbs and nouns show the direction of change.  
Adjectives and adverbs show the degree of change.

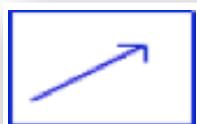
Compare these sentences:

The number of tourists increased by 500,000.

The number of tourists increased dramatically by 500,000.

The second sentence gives us more information about the degree of change (i.e. dramatically). Using adjectives and adverbs is like using colors. If you only employ verbs and nouns in your report it is as if you used only black and white in your painting. Adjectives and adverbs are like colors which give your composition vitality and vibrance.

#### List one: Verbs



rise

go up

improve

pick up

climb

increase



decline

go down

drop

fall (back)

decrease

reduce



oscillate

be erratic

vacillate

be unpredictable

fluctuate

reach a plateau



stay constant

stay static

level off/out

maintain the same level

plateau (v)

stabilize

hold steady

boom

leap

rocket

shoot (up)

soar

surge

plunge

slump

dive

plummet

go into a nosedive

#### How to use “by” and “to”:

In IELTS writing task 1, you might need to use verbs like increase, decrease, rise and fall. These verbs can be followed by the words 'by' and 'to', but what's the difference?

Let us use these figures:

Company profit in 2005 = £20,000

Company profit in 2010 = £25,000

Now compare these sentences:

- Company profit rose **to** £25,000 in 2010.
- Company profit rose **by** £5,000 between 2005 and 2010.

It's easy: 'to' is used before the new figure, and 'by' is used to show the change. It's the same when you are talking about a fall.

### List two: Nouns

When describing changes I prefer to avoid words like *soar*, *rocket* and *plummet* because they are too "sensationalist" - they exaggerate too much, and are more journalistic than academic in style. So be careful about them and use them with care

rise	decline	oscillation	stability
growth	reduction	vacillation	leveling out/off
increase	decrease	fluctuation	plateau
improvement	drop		
surge	fall		
upsurge	downturn		
boom	dive		
leap			
jump			

Try to show a good command of English grammar by using both noun and verb forms.

- London saw **a significant increase** in the cost of homes. (noun)
- The cost of homes in London **increased significantly**. (verb)
  
- There was **a rise** in house prices between 1990 and 1995. (noun)
- House prices **rose** between 1990 and 1995. (verb)
  
- There was **a 7% fall** in the average house price in Tokyo. (noun)
- The average Tokyo house price **fell** by 7%. (verb)

### List three: Adjectives

a high degree of change	a medium degree of change	a low degree of change
dramatic	moderate	slow
steep	steady	slight
sharp	progressive	insignificant
significant	constant	negligible
marked		gradual
exponential		marginal
remarkable		minimal

a high degree of change	a medium degree of change	a low degree of change
sudden		
radical		

**Exercise 1.1.1**

Complete sentences 1-10 with a word from the box below. Make any necessary changes.

surge	breakdown	fluctuate	remain steady	trend
decline	plummet	downward	show	noticeable

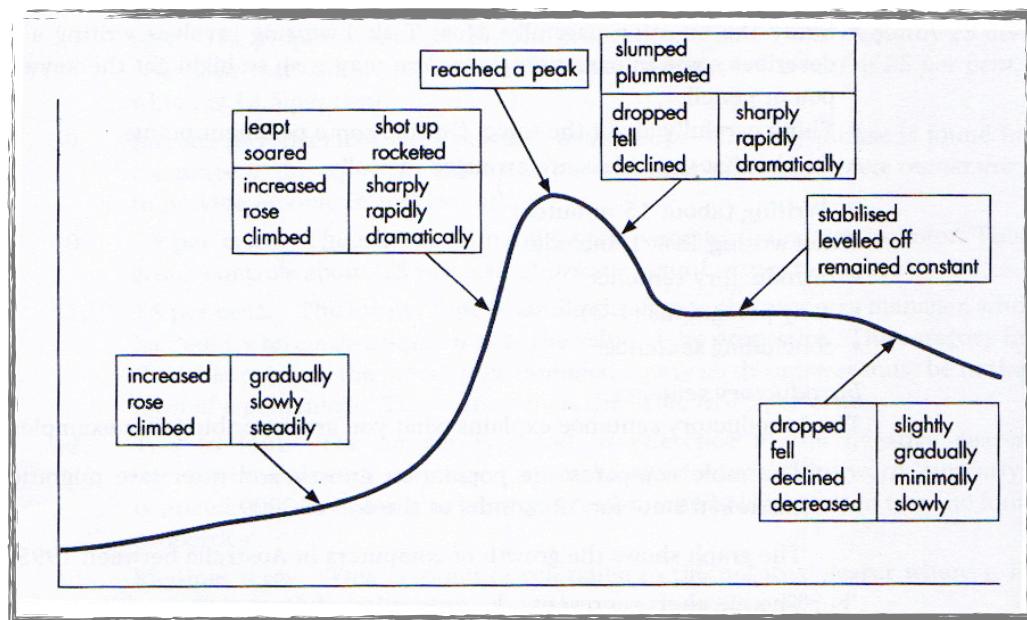
- 1 The most ..... feature of the chart was the sharp fall in theater attendances.
- 2 The graph ..... the increase in the market share of Modern TEC compared to the other two sites.
- 3 Shopper numbers ..... over most of the year , but the last three months were less erratic.
- 4 There was a ..... in visitors to the site during the holiday period with numbers almost doubling.
- 5 The amount of energy used ..... throughout the first nine months and then it began to increase.
- 6 Sales ..... in September, hitting a low for the year.
- 7 There was a gradual ..... in profits over last year.
- 8 The trend for two of the sites was upward, with the other being clearly .....
- 9 There was very little difference between ..... in sales for all five companies, with the exception of Iran Khodro.
- 10 The chart provides a ..... of the number of passenger miles travelled according to different modes of transportation.

**List four: Adverbs**

a high degree of change	a medium degree of change	a low degree of change
dramatically	moderately	slowly
steeply	steadily	slightly
sharply	progressively	insignificantly
significantly	constantly	negligibly
markedly		gradually

a high degree of change	a medium degree of change	a low degree of change
exponentially		marginally
remarkably		minimally
suddenly		
radically		

Look at the following picture and check the vocabulary used:



### Exercise 1.1.2

Underline the two adverbs that have a similar meaning.

- 1 Sales figures dropped **sharply/suddenly/gradually** in April 2007.
- 2 The amount of time spent on leisure activities was **exactly/approximately/roughly** 20%.
- 3 Membership rose **steeply/slightly/significantly** during the summer month.
- 4 The number of accidents fell **rapidly/steadily/progressively** during 2009.
- 5 The percentage was **relatively/comparatively/marginally** higher in the following year.
- 6 The figure in 1997 was **vastly/somewhat/rather** lower to the 1996 figure.

How to change adjective+noun structures to verb+ adverbs:

You can change the form of the words by using an adjective+noun combination instead of a verb+adverb

- There is/was/has been + a/an+ (adverb) + adjective + noun

The number of attendees rose dramatically.  
There was a dramatic rise in the number of attendees.

- There are/were/have been + (adverb) + adjective + noun

The prices fluctuated wildly during the last few months.  
There were wild fluctuations during the last few months.



### Exercise 1.1.3

Rewrite the following sentences by changing the verb in *italics* into a noun.

- 1 The number of people owning mobile phones *rose dramatically* between 1990 and 1995.

There ..... the number of people owning mobile phones between 1990 and 1995.

- 2 Migration from rural regions to urban centers *has leveled out* over the last ten years.

Over the last ten years there ..... migration from rural regions to urban centers.

- 3 The amount of time spent on leisure activities *fell slightly* in 2008.

2008 saw ..... the amount of time spent on leisure activities.

- 4 Newspaper circulation during 1990s *fluctuated considerably*.

There ..... newspaper circulation during the 1990s.

- 5 The rate of application for the nursing profession *plateaued* between 2001 and 2007.

The rate of applications for the nursing profession ..... between 2001 and 2007.

## Unit 2

### Synchronic Graphs

Synchronic graphs are about comparisons. Here you have to use comparative and superlative adjectives frequently. Check your grammar references and review how such adjectives are made.

#### 1 How to make comparisons

**more + noun + than:** *More males than females chose the TV.*

**adjective+ -er+ than:** *The price of an apartment was lower in 1946 than 1999.*

**fewer +noun + than:** *Fewer females than males chose the TV.*

**more/less + adjectives+ than:** *The TV was more popular among males than females.*

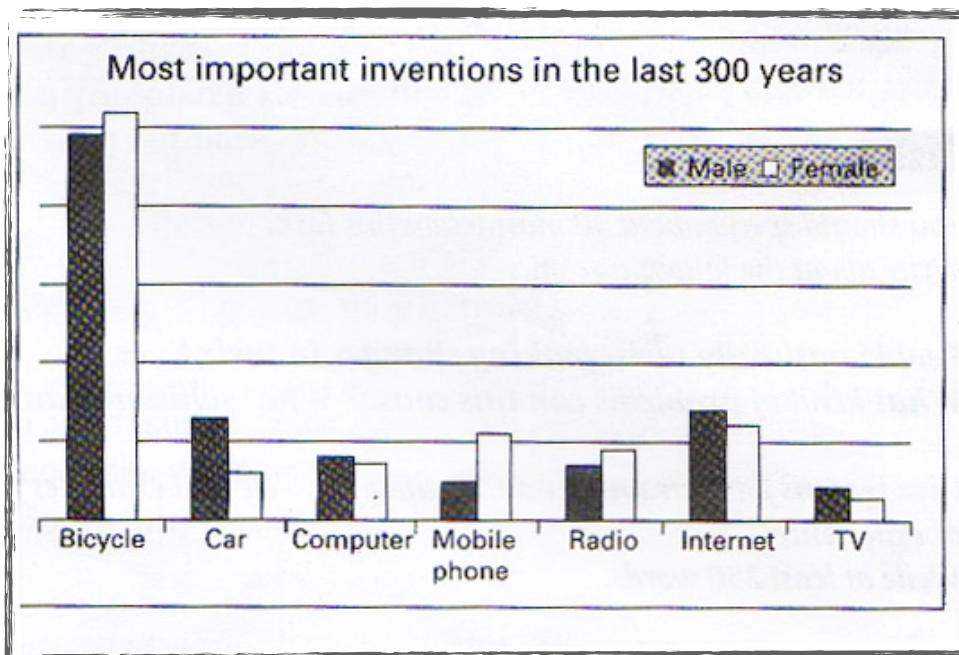
**the most/least + adjective:** *The most popular form of communication was the Internet.*

**the+ adjective+ -est:** *The fastest means of communication is emailing.*

**as many ..... as:** *As many females as males chose the computer.*

**not as many ..... as:** *Not as many males as females chose the radio*

Look at the following examples:



#### Exercise 1.2.1

##### True or False

- 1 More males than females chose the TV.
- 2 Fewer males than females chose the TV.
- 3 The TV was more popular among females than males.
- 4 The most popular form of communication was the mobile phone.

 **Exercise 1.2.2**
**Fill in the blanks.**

- a More females ..... males chose the bicycle.
- b The bicycle was more ..... than any other invention.
- c The car was ..... popular among females than males.
- d ..... invention among both genders was the TV.
- e ..... women than men voted for the mobile phone.
- f ..... invention among both genders was the bicycle.
- g ..... males than females picked the radio.
- h The computer was ..... for women than for men.
- i More people selected the bicycle ..... any other invention.
- j The TV was ..... popular than any other invention.

## 2 Adverbs in comparison

In order to make comparisons more accurate consider using adverbs to modify the words you use to compare items.

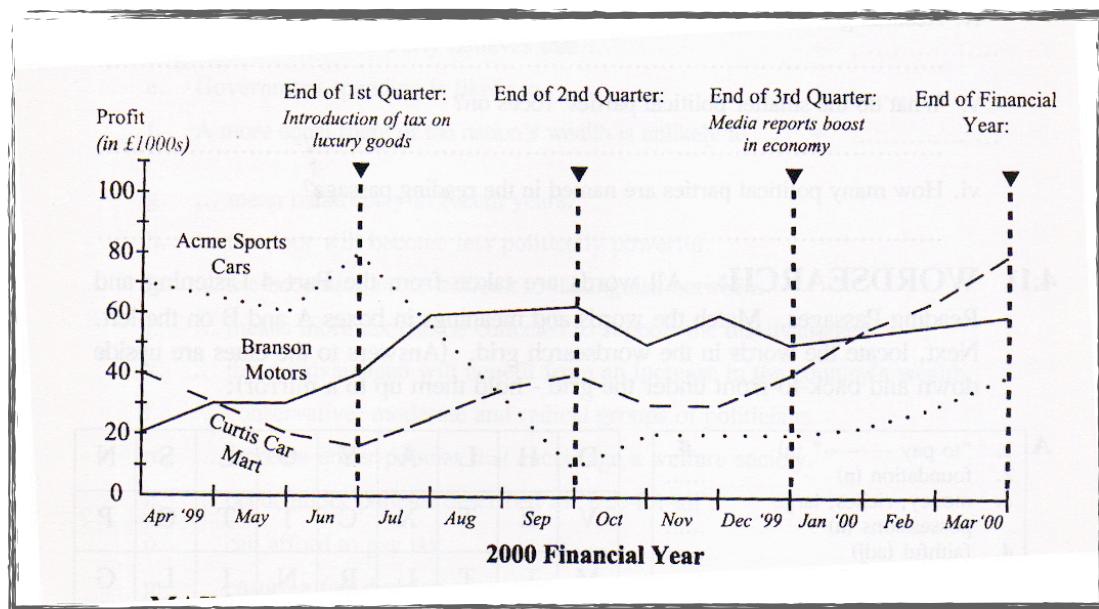
- ⌚slightly more/less ..... than .....
- ⌚considerably more/less ..... than .....
- ⌚many more ..... than .....
- ⌚substantially more/less
- ⌚significantly fewer + count nouns
- ⌚far fewer/more +count nouns
- ⌚much more/less + adjective
- ⌚nearly as many ..... as .....
- ⌚quite as many ..... as .....
- ⌚practically as many ..... as

 **Exercise 1.2.3**
**Look at the following examples and underline the adverbs to comparison.**

- 1 Slightly more women than men voted for the bicycle.
- 2 In the past, considerably more people lived in the countryside than towns.
- 3 Many more people can use a computer today than thirty years ago.
- 4 Substantially less time is now spent doing housework than before.
- 5 There are significantly fewer people now working in manufacturing than in the past.
- 6 Sports programs are watched by practically as many people now as in the past.
- 7 The exhibition about cinema attracted far fewer visitors than expected.
- 8 Illiteracy is much less common than in previous generations.
- 9 Nearly as many children as adults watch programs about ancient history.

**Exercise 1.2.4**

Now look at the following graph and answer the questions.



1. .... monthly profit began higher than that of .....
2. By the end of the financial year ..... monthly profit was three times what it was at the beginning of the year...
3. ... whereas the monthly profit of ..... had almost halved.
4. The worst quarter<sup>1</sup> for Acme Sports Cars was from ..... to .....
5. The best two months for Branson Motors were between ..... and .....
6. The profit situation for Branson Motors fluctuated between ..... and .....
7. The introduction of the luxury goods tax badly affected .....
8. The monthly profit of Acme Sports Cars peaked at .....

### 3 IELTS Grammar: 'highest' or 'the highest'

Most grammar books will tell you that you need "the" before a superlative like "highest" or "lowest", but this is not always true.

We use "the" when there is a noun after the adjective e.g. the highest number, the highest proportion.

When we put the noun before, we don't need "the" e.g. the number was highest, the proportion was highest.

So, compare these 2 sentences:

The UK had the highest rate of unemployment.

The unemployment rate was highest in the UK.

<sup>1</sup> A period of three months

## Unit 3

### How to Use ...

#### 1 How to use expressions of approximation

In order to show approximate numbers we can use the following expressions:

X is **just under** ....  
 X is **just over** ....  
 X is **well under** ....  
 X is **well over** ....  
 X is **approximately** ....  
 X is **roughly** ...  
 X is **about** ....

**Now put the expressions above in this table**

- (less)	+/- (about the same)	+ (more)

**What is the difference between *well over* and *just over*?**



#### Exercise 1.3.1

Rewrite the sentences replacing the exact numbers with approximate ones using **just/well over** and **just/well under**.

1 Last year we sold 90,083 mobile phones in Italy.

.....

2 14.8% of the people asked said they were unhappy with the new design.

.....

3 We will be spending € 1.98 m on this technology.

.....

4 Our laboratory says that the ideal temperature is 18.1°C.

.....

5 It will cost \$3.97 to produce this item.

.....

6 The new office is 389 m<sup>2</sup>.

.....

#### 2 How to talk about the highs and the lows

X reached an all time high of...(amount)... in/at/on ... (time) ...  
 X reached a peak at ... (amount) ... in /at/on ... (time) ...  
 X peaked at ... (amount) ... in /at/on ... (time) ...

e.g. Visitor numbers reached an all time high of 20,000 in the summer months.

e.g. Sales peaked at 2,000,000 dollars in the first half of the year.

X reached an all time low of ... (amount) ... in /at/on ... (time) ...  
 X bottomed out at ... (amount) ... in /at/on ... (time) ...  
 X hit a low of ... (amount) ... in /at/on ... (time) ...

e.g. The temperature bottomed out at minus three degrees on July 4.

**NB** The expression **X dipped at ... (amount) ... in ... (time) ...** means that the value of something has dropped down and then rose to its former position again.



### Exercise 1.3.2

Look at example 1.2.4 Try to make sentences about the highest and lowest profits.

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

## 3 How to use expressions of time

From January to July  
 In 1987/2000/2040  
 In the winter months  
 In the first quarter of the year (3 months)  
 In the first/second half of the year  
 In years to come  
 In the future

Expressions of time can come either at the beginning or the end of the sentence.

- ❖ **In 2000**, 40 percent of parents were able to afford extracurricular activities for their children.
- ❖ 40 percent of parents were able to afford extracurricular activities for their children **in 2000**.

**NB** we can use the verb “**see**” to talk about a particular year, month, etc.

- ❖ 2000 **saw** a drop in the number of visitors to the art museum.
- ❖ Britain **saw** a dramatic increase in CD sales in the 1980s.
- ❖ The 1980s **saw** a dramatic increase in CD sales in Britain.
- ❖ British shops **saw** CD sales increase dramatically in the 1980s.

### Using ‘in’ and ‘by’

Look at the following example first:

In 2002, the cost of an average house in the UK was around £130,000. By 2007, the average house price had risen to almost £190,000, but it fell back to just under £150,000 in 2008.

Notice the verbs used with "in" and "by":

- "In" is used with the past simple (was, fell).
- "by" is used with the past perfect (had risen) to give the idea that the increase had happened in the years leading up to 2007.
- To avoid worrying about "by + past perfect" you could write: "Between 2002 and 2007, the average house price rose to 190,000 pounds."

## 4 How to talk about the future

Sometimes the graph is in the future. It is time we learnt about using future tenses.

### 1. Future with 'Will'

Use future simple to make a future prediction or show you are thinking about future possibilities.

### 2. Future Continuous (Subject+will be+ ...ing)

Use future continuous to speak about an activity that will be happening at a precise point in time in the future.

### 3. Future Perfect (Subject+will have+pp)

Use future perfect to express something that will have been done up to a precise point in time in the future.

## 5 How to use expressions of the future

We can start our sentences using expressions that show we are predicting something. Let us first take a look at how such expressions are made first. There are some nouns and verbs we can use to make these expressions:

<b>nouns</b>	prediction	forecast	anticipation	projection
<b>verbs</b>	predict	forecast	anticipate	project

The following phrases can be used to introduce data in your report:

- 1 It is anticipated that ...
- 2 It is forecast that ...
- 3 It is projected that ...
- 4 The chart shows forecast that ...
- 5 The forecast for ... is that ...
- 6 .... is set to ....
- 7 The expectations are that ...
- 8 .... is likely to be ...

**Now let us take a look at how we can write about future and compare it to the past.**

**Past:**

Note:  
Remember that  
there is no plural ‘-s’ in million,  
thousand, etc:

e.g. 10 million  
people  
20 thousand dollars

but when “of” is  
added to phrase  
then it can have a  
plural ‘-s’:

e.g. hundreds of  
thousands of  
people

Be careful not to  
misinterpret the  
information or  
you will be  
severely  
penalized.  
Numbers should  
be represented  
correctly. Any  
carelessness in  
reporting exact  
figures will also  
be penalized.

In 1999, the proportion of people using the Internet in the USA was about 20%. The figures for Canada and Mexico were lower, at about 10% and 5% respectively. In 2005, Internet usage in both the USA and Canada rose to around 70% of the population, while the figure for Mexico reached just over 25%.

#### **Future:**

In 2015, the proportion of people using the Internet in the USA is expected to be about 20%. The figures for Canada and Mexico are likely to be lower, at about 10% and 5% respectively. In 2025, it is predicted that Internet usage in both the USA and Canada will rise to around 70% of the population, while the figure for Mexico should reach just over 25%.

#### **Exercise 1.3.3**

**Use appropriate words to fill in the blanks (will, predict, prediction).**

- 1 The number of solar-powered buildings ..... increase to 500 million in 2025.
- 2 It is ..... that the number of solar-powered buildings ..... increase in the future.
- 3 The ..... is that the number of buildings powered by solar energy ..... increase.
- 4 The number is ..... to increase to 500 million in 2025.

#### **Exercise 1.3.4**

**Complete sentences 1-8 with the correct forms of the verbs in brackets (present simple/future simple).**

- 1 It ..... predicted that in 2025, solar energy ..... (provide) energy for 500 million buildings worldwide.
- 2 In 2015, about 25 million buildings ..... (expect) to receive energy from wind power.
- 3 In 2025, much more energy to power buildings ..... (come) from solar energy compared to wind power.
- 4 In the future, solar energy ..... (forecast) to be a much greater source of energy than wind power.
- 5 In years to come, it ..... (projected) that wind power .....(be) a less important source of energy than solar energy.
- 6 In the future, wind power ..... (not expected) to be as great a source of power as solar energy.
- 7 Solar energy ..... (set) to assume greater importance as a source of energy in the future.
- 8 In 2015, it ..... (anticipate) that solar energy and wind power each ..... (provide) approximately the same amount of energy.

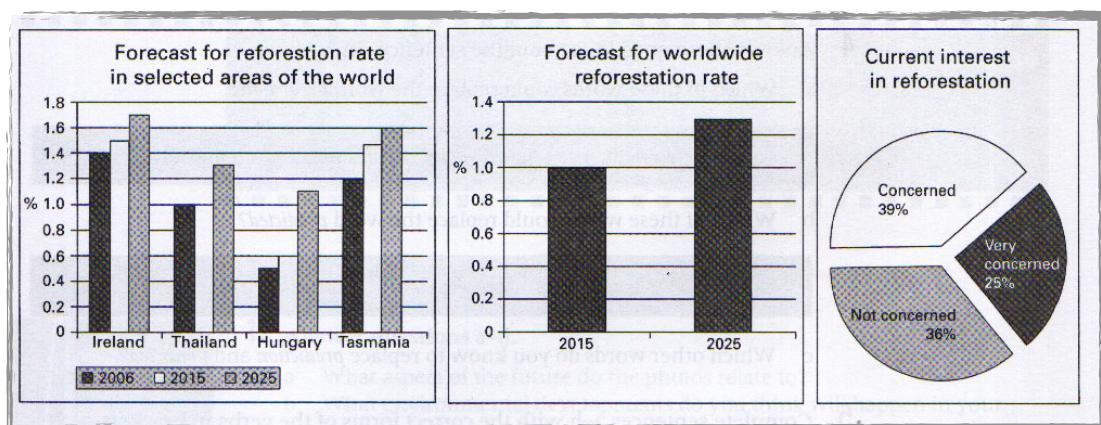
#### **Exercise 1.3.5**

**Complete sentences 1-5 with the correct form of the verbs in brackets (future with ‘will’, future progressive, future perfect).**

- 1 By 2020, it is expected that 20 million buildings ..... (use) wind power.
- 2 By 2025, very few people ..... (live) in the countryside.
- 3 In 2020, more bicycles ..... (sell).
- 4 By 2020, it is predicted that many animals ..... (become) extinct.
- 5 By the year 2015, it is anticipated that many natural habitats ..... (destroy).

 **Exercise 1.3.6**
**A** Look at the Charts then answer questions a-f.
**Note:**

Do not use abbreviations in your reports



- Which chart provides more general information?
- What trends can you see considering the reforestation process?
- Which region has the most striking figures?
- What tenses can we use to describe these charts?
- Which chart contains information which can be used for a conclusion?
- In general, are people concerned about reforestation or not?

**B** Now fill in the blanks using the correct data from the chart.
**Note:**

Pie charts are usually used in the conclusion paragraph

The charts show forecast for the annual reforestation rate in selected regions and worldwide, together with the current attitude towards concern for tree loss.

Generally, it is forecast that the reforestation rate in the four regions will grow until ......., though at varying rates. It is projected that Ireland will have the highest rate in 2025 at ..... percent followed closely by Tasmania. The forecast for both regions is the same at ..... in 2015. Hungary, by contrast, with the lowest projected rate throughout the period, will experience the greatest overall increase. It is anticipated that the figure will climb from ..... percent in

2006 to ..... percent and then rise more sharply to 1.1 percent.

It is also worth noting that the reforestation rate in Thailand is anticipated to be exactly in line with the worldwide average for both 2015 and ...., 1 percent and 1.3 percent respectively. Meanwhile Hungary will be below the international rates, while both Ireland and Tasmania will exceed them.

From the pie chart, it can be seen that there is some obvious concern about the need for planting trees ('concerned' ..... percent, and 'very concerned' ..... percent), while at the same time there is a sizable proportion of people who are not concerned.

**Note:**

the comma placed before respectively is optional.

**C Answer the following questions:**

1. What expression is used to start the report?
2. What word is used to link the two graphs in the introduction?
3. What words in the second paragraph mean 'increase'?
4. What is the difference between "percent" and "percentage"?
5. What is the difference between "percent" and "per cent"?
6. What does 'at varying rates' in paragraph 2 mean?
7. How the word 'respectively' is used in paragraph 3?
8. What does the transition 'meanwhile' in paragraph 3 suggest?

**What is what?**

look at the following signs which you may come across in section 1. See if you can say what they stand for.

sign	stands for ...	sign	stands for ...
m	.....	\$	.....
000s	.....	%	.....
bn	.....	€	.....
$m^2$	.....	£	.....
$m^3$	.....	₵	.....

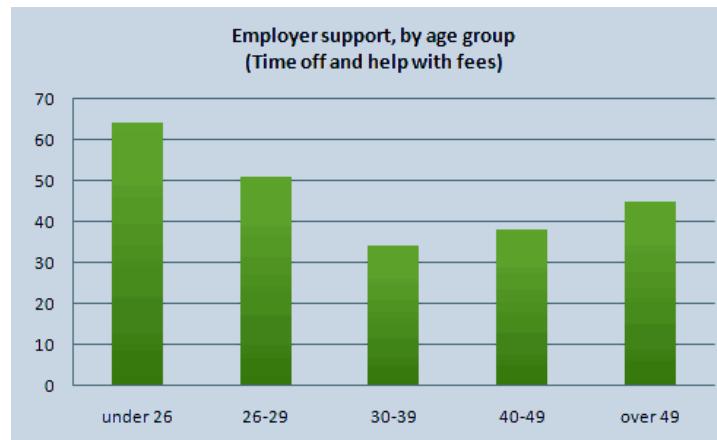
**6 How to talk about age groups**

Often the graphs employ age groups to break down a total amount. Here we can use the following expressions:

- 1 age group/profile/bracket/range  
*half of 20-30 age profile expressed their dissatisfaction.*
- 2 the younger/older/youngest/oldest age group/profile/range/bracket  
*The younger age group are significantly more involved in various societies.*
- 3 People aged ....  
*People aged 40 or more are more willing to invest in stable industries.*
- 4 ....-.... year-olds  
*20-30 year-olds pay more attention to their physical appearance.*

### Exercise 1.3.7

This chart is about how much support employees receive for pursuing their education at different ages. Write four sentences about this chart using the four different styles introduced above.



## 7 How to talk about numbers and statistics

### 1. Using numbers, fractions, or percentages:

Look at the following table that shows the price of X in different years.

year	1990	1995
value	\$1200	\$1800

- The price of X went up by 600, from \$1200 to \$1800. (numbers)
- The price of X went up by half, from \$1200 to \$1800. (fractions)
- The price of X went up 50%, from \$1200 to \$1800. (percentages)

### 2. Using 'double', 'treble', '-fold', and times:

Compare how each word/phrase is used in the following examples:

#### 'double' (verb)

The number of unemployed people doubled between 2005 and 2009.

'twice as...as/compared to', 'three times as...as/compared to'

There were twice as many unemployed people in 2009 as in 2005.

Twice as many people were unemployed in 2009 compared to 2005.

#### 'twofold', 'threefold' (adjective or adverb)

There was a twofold increase in the number of unemployed people between 2005 and 2009. (adjective with the noun 'increase')

The number of unemployed people increased twofold between 2005 and 2009. (adverb with the verb 'increase')

#### Now look at some more examples here:

1992	1994	1996	1998
500	1000	3000	12000

- The figure doubled between 1992 and 1994.
- The figure trebled between 1994 and 1996.
- The figure quadrupled from 1996 to 1998.
- There was a twofold increase between 1992 and 1994.
- The number went up sixfold between 1992 and 1996.
- The number in 1996 was six times more than the 1992 figure.
- The figure in 1998 was four times the 1996 figure.

#### 3. Using Fractions:

1992	1994	1996	1998
1000	800	400	100

- Between 1992 and 1994, the figure fell by one-fifth.
- Between 1994 and 1996, the figure went down by a half.
- The figure in 1998 was one-tenth the 1992 total.

Now let us take a brief look at how fractions are formed.

singular	plural
a half	two halves
one-third	two-thirds
a quarter	two quarters
one-fifth	two-fifths
one-sixth	two-sixths

#### 4. Using adjectives to modify numbers:

adjective	usage	example
hefty/staggering/	use for big numbers	a hefty 90 percent of ...
massive		a massive 85 percent of ...
modest	use for percentages between 15 and 40%	a modest 20 percent of ...
mere/tiny	use for small numbers	a mere 10 percent of ... a tiny 10 percent of ...
overwhelming	use with the word “majority”	an overwhelming majority of ...
small/tiny	use with the word “minority”	a small minority of ...

## IELTS Grammar: number, amount, proportion, figure

**number:**

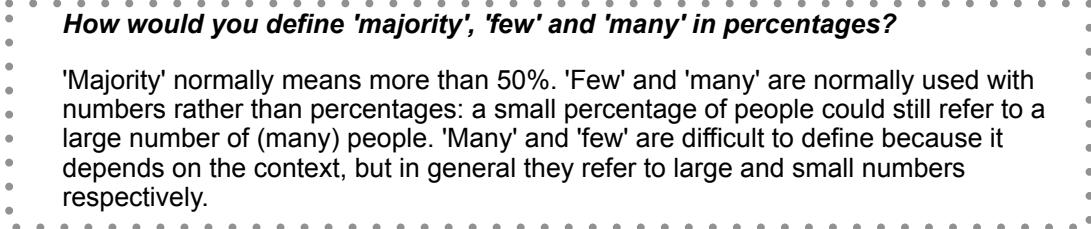
- Use "the number of + plural noun" e.g. the number of visitors.
  - Do not use it to describe percentages or uncountable nouns e.g. money.

## amount:

- Use "the amount of + uncountable noun" e.g. the amount of money.
  - Do not use it with countable nouns e.g. the amount of person/people.

**proportion:**

- Only use this to describe percentages (not numbers).
  - Use "the proportion of + plural noun" e.g. the proportion of people.



## figure:

- Use "the figure for + plural noun" e.g. the figure for visitors to the UK.
  - Use it with uncountable nouns e.g. the figure for unemployment.
  - Use it with countries e.g. the figure for Canada.
  - Use it with percentages e.g. the figure (for...) rose to 10%.



### Exercise 1.3.8

**Rewrite the sentences, replacing the phrases in *italics* with an alternative expression.**

- ❖ We see from the chart that *23 percent* of the students failed to finish their university degree.
  - ❖ In 1990, *nine out of ten* engineering students were male, but by 2000 this figure had fallen to *exactly three quarters*.
  - ❖ in 1960, *34 percent* of science graduates went into the teaching profession but in 1970, the figure was just *ten percent*.

- ❖ *Exactly one half* of the student population were members of the union in 2001, but five years later the figure was *64 percent*.
- ❖ *Ninety-two percent* of people surveyed felt that mixed schools were not preferable.

## 8 How to use prefabricated forms

The following expressions are worth being memorized. They help you improve your report.

- 1 It is evident that ...
- 2 It is noticeable that ...
- 3 We can see from the data that ...
- 4 From the pie chart it can be seen that ...
- 5 It is worth noting that ...
- 6 The pattern is a complete reverse when it comes to ...
- 7 For ... the pattern is reversed.
- 8 ... clearly appeals more to ...
- 9 on a weekly/monthly/... basis
- 10 During the same period, ...
- 11 ... at a slower/faster pace
- 12 to show in percentage terms ...

## 9 word family for 'compare'

Let's look at the word family for 'compare'. Remember that we are looking at usage, not meaning (I'm sure you know the meaning of these words). **To compare to** is to point out or imply resemblances between objects regarded as essentially of a different order **to compare with** is mainly to point out differences between objects regarded as essentially of the same order.

Thus, life has been compared **to** a pilgrimage, **to** a drama, **to** a battle; Congress may be compared **with** the British Parliament. Paris has been compared **to** ancient Athens; it may be compared **with** modern London.

- The graph compares the number of males and females...
- 10% of males were unemployed, compared to only 8% of females.
- The unemployment rate was high in 2008 compared with previous years.
- The unemployment rate was high in 2008 in comparison with...
- By/in comparison, the unemployment rate in 2008 increased to...
- Figures for the USA were comparable with/to those for the UK.
- The figure for females was comparatively low, at only 8%.

You have probably noticed that this word family is really useful for writing task 1.

## 10 How to use 'proportion':

A proportion is concerned with the relationship among the parts that make up a whole. Like a ratio, it can compare one part to another part in terms of number. It can also compare parts in terms of importance, size, degree, or other factors.

*the largest **proportion** of undergraduates is made up of women.*

The two adjectives( proportional and proportionate) and their adverbs are interchangeable.

*An enormous TV took up a **disproportionally** large area of the room.*

*Each roommate had a proportionate amount of space in the closet.*

**Note:**

Remember, however, that you should paraphrase the words and phrases in the question. Copying the exact words and phrases from the question onto the answer sheet results in a huge penalty.

Also you can use the two expressions *in proportion* and *out of proportion*.

## Unit 4

### How to write reports on graphs

#### single graphs

introduction	Here you should state what the graph shows.
short body paragraph	State the most important piece of information here (summary/overview*)
main body paragraphs	Here you need to make comparisons and state the important features of the graph.(usually 2 paragraphs)

\* include all the details which are relevant. Remember that this paragraph can be written as our conclusion too. It is a personal choice where to put it.

#### double graphs

introduction	Write one sentence, but introduce each chart separately e.g. "The first bar chart shows..., and the second chart illustrates.."
short body paragraph	Write 2 sentences. If the information in the charts is not connected, find one main point or general trend for each chart. If the charts are connected, try to make comparisons.
main body paragraphs	If the 2 charts are completely different (e.g. a graph and a table), write a separate paragraph about each.  If the charts are the same, and show the same information (e.g. 2 pie charts), do not describe them separately; the examiner will want to see comparisons. In this case, you could write one paragraph describing all of the information, but it is still more preferable to write 2 paragraphs because it makes the essay look more organized.

This is just one possible model to do this task. In this book other varieties are also explored in examples and exercises. Please pay attention those layouts as well.

#### How to write a good introduction:

Writing a good introduction is a no-brainer. There are various methods to write an introduction. The simplest and by far the most effective though is this:

single graphs:

The bar graph/pie chart/ line graph/table provides information about ...(+ what + where+ when)...

double graphs:

The bar graph/pie chart/ line graph/table provides information about ...(+ what + where+ when)..., while the line/bar/pie chart indicates ..... (+ what+ where+ when)

The bar graph/pie chart/ line graph/table provides information about ...(+ what + where+ when)..., with the line/bar/pie chart indicating ..... (+ what+ where+ when)

## Changing the question prompt

In order to change the prompt one or all the following methods can be used:

### 1 Use derivatives of a word:

**contribute (v): contribution (n)**

Young people **contributed** to the plan significantly:  
The **contribution** of young people to the plan was significant.

### 2 Convert active sentences into passive ones and vice versa:

Children used the books more eagerly when they were illustrated.  
The books were used more eagerly (by children) when they were illustrated.

**NB** Try to avoid replacing too many active verbs with passive verbs; active verbs are preferable because they are stronger than passive verbs.

### 3 Use synonyms and antonyms:

The graph provides information on the number of cars *bought* per head of population in China.

The graph provides information on the number of cars *purchased* per head of population in China.

**NB** It is not a good idea to use synonyms for concept words, technical terms, or proper nouns (words that begin with capital letters, such as names)

### 4 Using how much, how many and how+...

Look at the following examples to see how such phrases can help you in paraphrasing the question and can be used in place of prompt instructions:

- The bar graph shows the number of students who visited the museum in the past month.

The bar graph shows **how many** (countable noun) students visited the museum in the past month.

- The pie charts show the amount of water used for domestic purposes.  
The pie charts show **how much** water was used for domestic purposes.

- The table shows different devices which were used to access the Internet by university students in a dormitory over the last year.

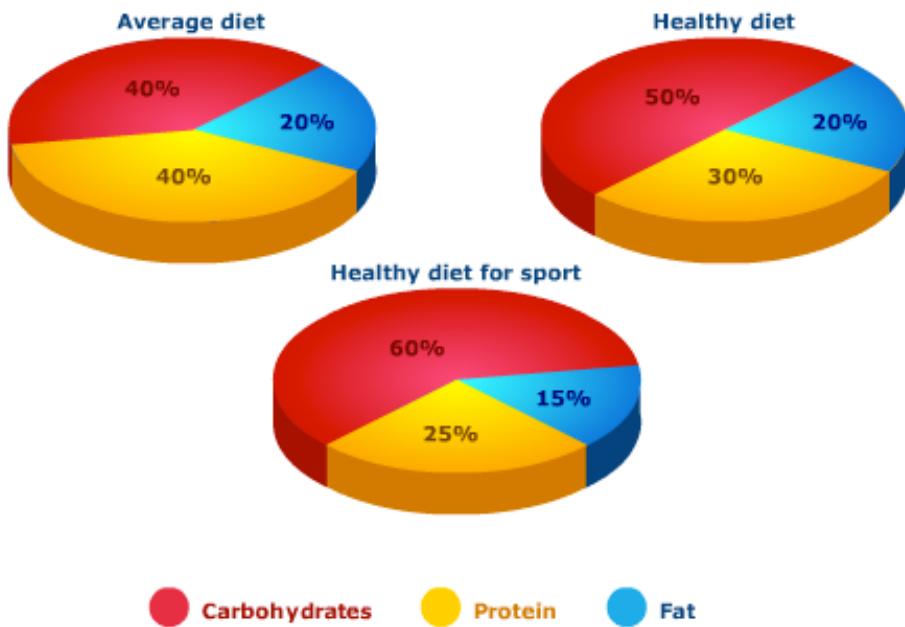
The table shows **how** the Internet was accessed by university students in a dormitory over the last year.

### Substitutes of “show”

In order to avoid repetition, you may want to replace “show” with verbs such as *present*, *provide*, *compare*, *indicate*, or *illustrate*.

#### Example 1

Look at the following graph and the introduction written for it.

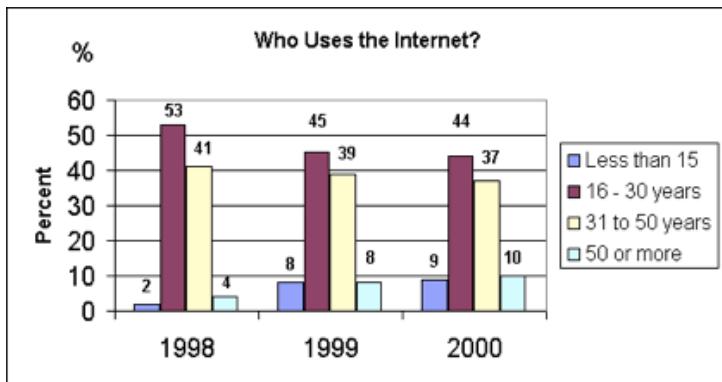


*Introduction:*

*The pie charts compare the proportion of carbohydrates, protein and fat in three different diets (what), namely an average diet, a healthy diet, and a healthy diet for sport.*

**My suggestion:** Don't try to 'show off' in your introduction. Just use 'show', 'compare' or 'illustrate'; don't use words like 'depict'.

### Example 2



*Introduction:*

The bar graph provides information about the distribution of internet users in four different age brackets (**what**) in Thailand (**where**) over three consecutive years (1998-2000) (**when**).

**Tip:**  
"The figure for / figures for" is a great phrase that not many people use (e.g. the graph shows figures for unemployment in three countries).

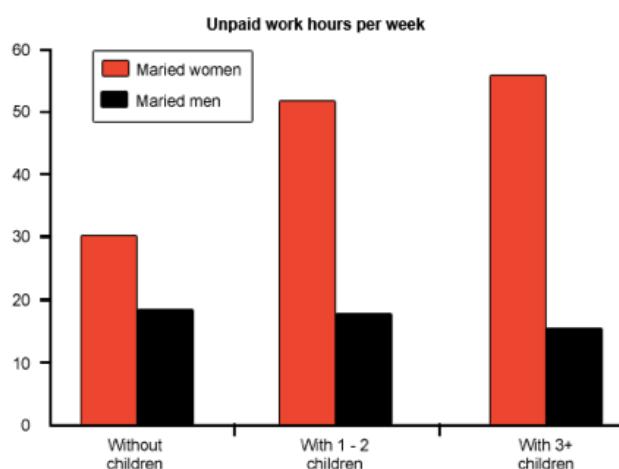
### Example 3

Indicators	Canada	Japan	Peru	Zaire
Annual income per person (in \$US)	11100	15760	160	130
Life expectancy at birth	76	78	51	47
Daily calorie supply per person	3326	2846	1927	1749
Adult literacy rate (%)	99	99	68	34

*Introduction:*

A glance at four indicators of economic and social conditions in four countries, Canada, Japan, Peru and Zaire (**where**), in 1994 (**when**) reflects the great differences that exist between wealthier and poorer nations (**what**).

### Example 4



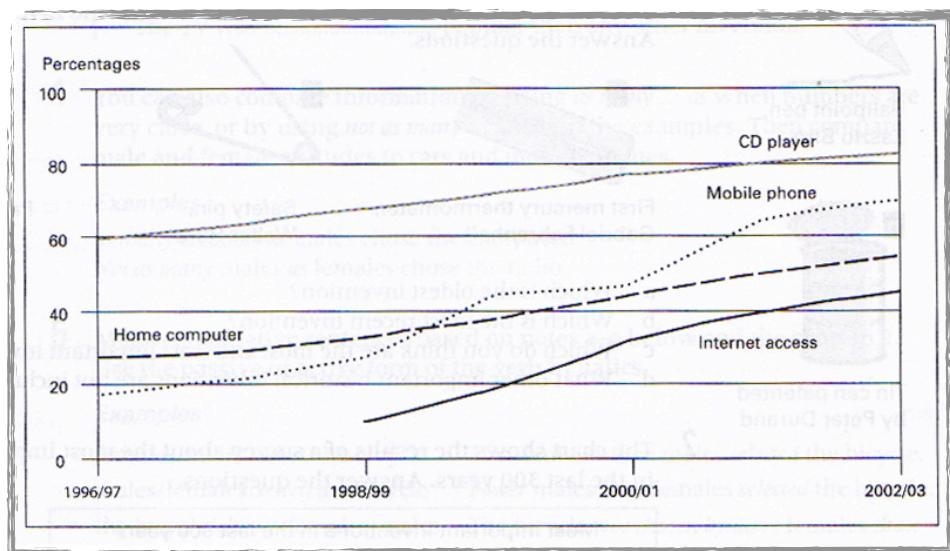
*Introduction:*

The double bar chart provides information about how many unpaid work hours (**what**) men and women in different categories (**where**) spend in a week (**when**). These categories are based on how many children they have.

**Exercise 1.4**

**Write a good introduction paragraph for this graph.**

**The graph below shows in percentage terms the changing patterns of domestic access to modern technology in homes in the UK.**

**How to use percentages**

Let's look at a few ways to write a sentence that describes a percentage.

Family type	Proportion of people living in poverty
single aged person	6%
aged couple	4%

You could either put the percentage at the beginning of the sentence (example 1), or put it at the end of the sentence (example 2):

1. 6% of single aged people were living in poverty.
2. The level of poverty among single aged people stood at 6%.

You could also add a comparison:

1. 6% of single aged people were living in poverty, **compared to** only 4% of aged couples.
2. The level of poverty among single aged people stood at 6%, **whereas** the figure for aged couples was only 4%.

Which sentence do you think is clearer? Also, why have "people" and "couples" are used in these sentences when the table says "person" and "couple"?

Some prefer to include the overview in their introduction. Still another possibility is to bring the overview in the conclusion. It in fact does not matter where it is placed as far as it is included in your report.

## Paraphrasing

The easiest way to start your Task 1 essay is by paraphrasing the question. Paraphrasing means writing something in a different way (using your own words).

***Here are some simple changes you can make:***

- graph = line/bar graph
- chart = line/bar chart
- diagram = figure
- shows = illustrates (or 'compares' if the graph is comparing)
- proportion = percentage
- information = data (data is plural and requires a plural verb)
- the number of = the figure for
- the proportion of = the figure for
- people in the USA = Americans
- from 1999 to 2009 = between 1999 and 2009
- from 1999 to 2009 = over a period of 10 years
- how to produce = the process of producing
- in three countries = in the UK, France and Spain (i.e. name the countries)

## Unit 5

### How to write good body paragraphs:

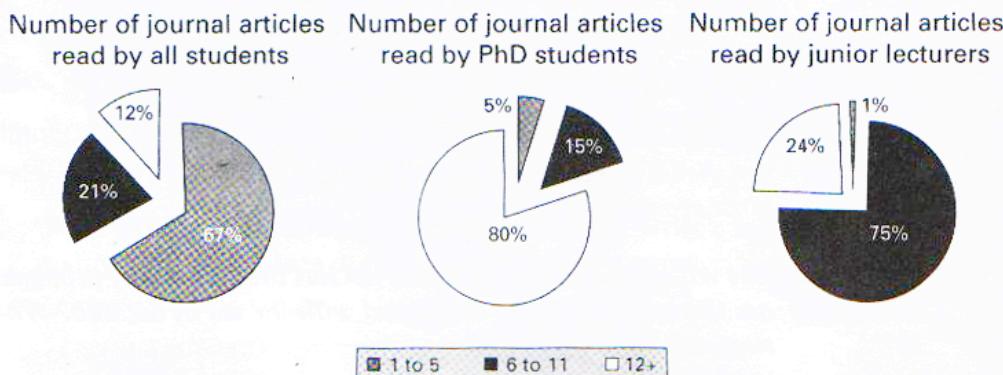
The key to writing a good body paragraph is to find relevant information. Keep the following hints in mind when looking for such information:

- No variable should be left out. You must include all the variables.
- Instead of giving each piece of information separately (which makes your report dull) categorize them into packages to eliminate unnecessary repetition.
- There is usually a trend or an overall statement that needs to be clearly stated. This is called the **overview**. Failing to state the overview clearly results in a huge penalty.

### Synthesizing

When we have information which can be packaged together to produce more holistic sentences packed with information we call it synthesis. It is effective to produce longer sentences. Below you can find several examples of how it is done.

*The pie charts below illustrate the number of journal articles read per week by all students, PhD students, and junior lecturers at an Australian university.*



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

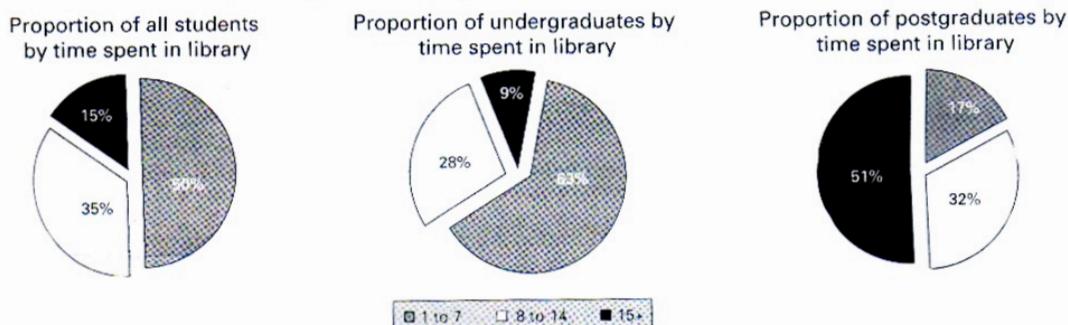
1. Only five percent of PhD level students read between one and five articles, whereas the average for all students in this category is a hefty 67 percent.
2. Most read six or more articles per week (99 percent), but out of this total 24 percent read twelve or more, which is almost a third of the corresponding figure for PhD level students. (the last pie chart)

**Note:**  
 Don't worry about the repetition of "incidents and injuries" in this essay. There are no perfect synonyms for these words, although we managed to use "problems" and "such events" later in the essay. The most important thing is to describe the data clearly and make some good comparisons.

### Exercise 1.5.1

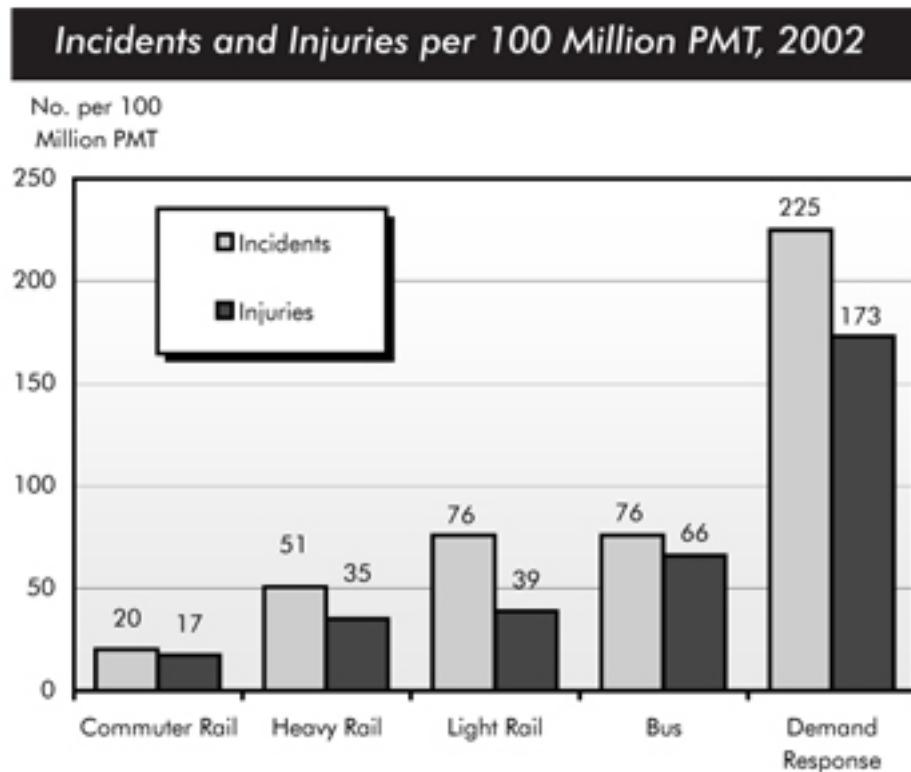
Now try to do the same thing for the figure below.

The pie charts below show the number of hours spent in a British university library by undergraduates, postgraduates, and the total student population.



Let us look at a full report on this graph:

The chart below shows numbers of incidents and injuries per 100 million passenger miles travelled (PMT) by transportation type in 2002.

**Tips**

It is not important whether you use American or British English when you write. However, you must keep your language consistent.

The bar chart compares the number of incidents and injuries for every 100 million passenger miles travelled on five different types of public transport in 2002.

It is clear that the most incidents and injuries took place on demand-response vehicles. By contrast, commuter rail services recorded by far the lowest figures.

A total of 225 incidents and 173 injuries, per 100 million passenger miles travelled, took place on demand-response transport services. These figures were nearly three times as high as those for the second highest category, bus services. There were 76 incidents and 66 people were injured on buses.

Rail services experienced fewer problems. The number of incidents on light rail trains equalled the figure recorded for buses, but there were significantly fewer injuries, at only 39. Heavy rail services saw lower numbers of such events than light rail services, but commuter rail passengers were even less likely to experience problems. In fact, only 20 incidents and 17 injuries occurred on commuter trains.

(165 words, band 9)

### Exercise 1.5.2

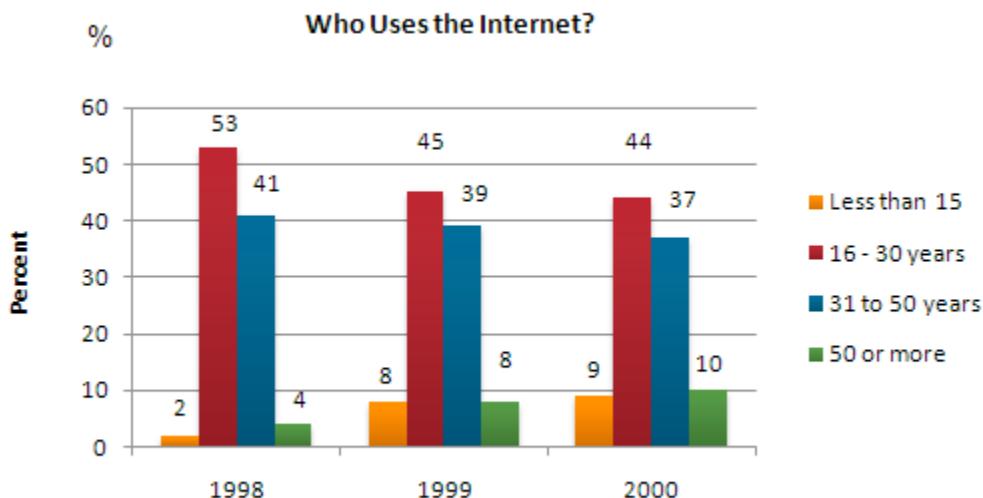
Now try to fill in the blanks using the information given in the box.

The graph shows Internet Usage in Taiwan by Age Group, 1998-2000.

1998	45%	30	1999
8%	half of	37%	2000

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

- You should write at least 150 words.
- You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.



***model answer:***

The graph shows changes in the age profile of Internet users in Taiwan between ..... and .....

The main users of the Internet in Taiwan were young adults between 16 and ..... years old. In 1998, they accounted for more than ..... all users. In 1999 the number dropped slightly to ....., but even in 2000 they were the biggest group.

The second biggest group of users was aged between 31 and 50. They made up 41% in 1998, falling slightly to ..... in 2000. When combined with the 16-30 age group, over 94% of users in 1998 were between 16 and 50. However, this number dropped steadily as more children and older users logged on. In ....., the number of children online quadrupled<sup>2</sup> from 2% to ....., and it continued to increase in 2000. There were similar increases for older users, rising from 4% in 1998 to 10% in 2000.

In summary, while adults between 16 and 50 represent the great majority of Internet users in Taiwan, their share was declining as more children and older users joined the web.

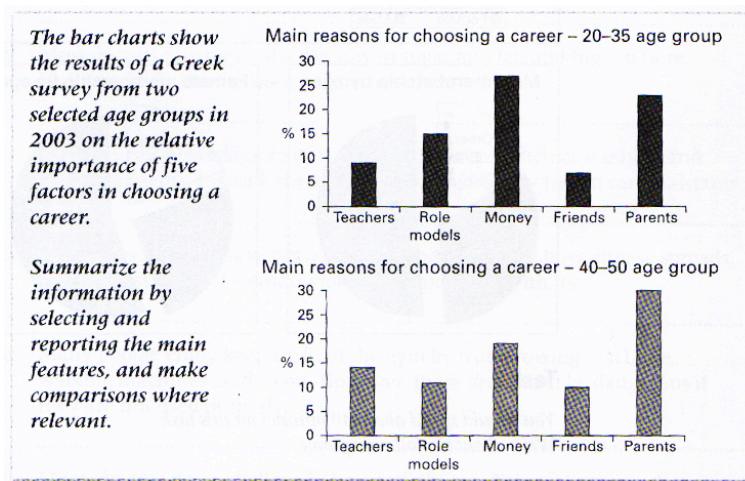


**Exercise 1.5.3**

Reorder the words in *italics* in the model text below.

---

<sup>2</sup> increased four times



The bar charts provide information from a Greek survey about reasons/the/for/main/career/a/choosing among two age groups.

It is clear that the two groups the/influenced/were/various/by/factors to different degrees, with the most influential factors which contributed to career choice for the 20-25 age group being money (approximately 27%) and then parents (23%). However, the factors the/age/were/for/reverse/group/the/40-50 with parents affecting them most at 30 percent.

Teachers/as/regards/role/and/models, the relative importance of each was again the other way around. Nine/fifteen/and/respectively/group/percent/for/younger/the, and fourteen and eleven per cent for the older.

similarity/only/the/the/two/groups/between/age was that friends had less influence over career choice for the older and younger groups factors/than/any/other, seven and ten percent respectively.

### Answer the following questions:

- 1 'It is clear that' is a stock phrase. What other substitute can you suggest for it?
- 2 What does 'the other way around' mean?
- 3 What does the word 'contribute' mean?
- 4 What about "as regards"? What other synonyms do you know for it?

### Repetition! Is it a crime?

Students often worry about repeating the same words in writing task 1. No! Repeating a key word or phrase a few times is not a problem; sometimes it is necessary to show that you are consistently talking about the same thing. If you try to use too much variety, there is a danger that you will confuse the reader or write something that does not mean what you want it to mean.

It's fine to either repeat the key words or make small changes. Look at these examples of small changes which can be made to the phrase **average weekly spending**:

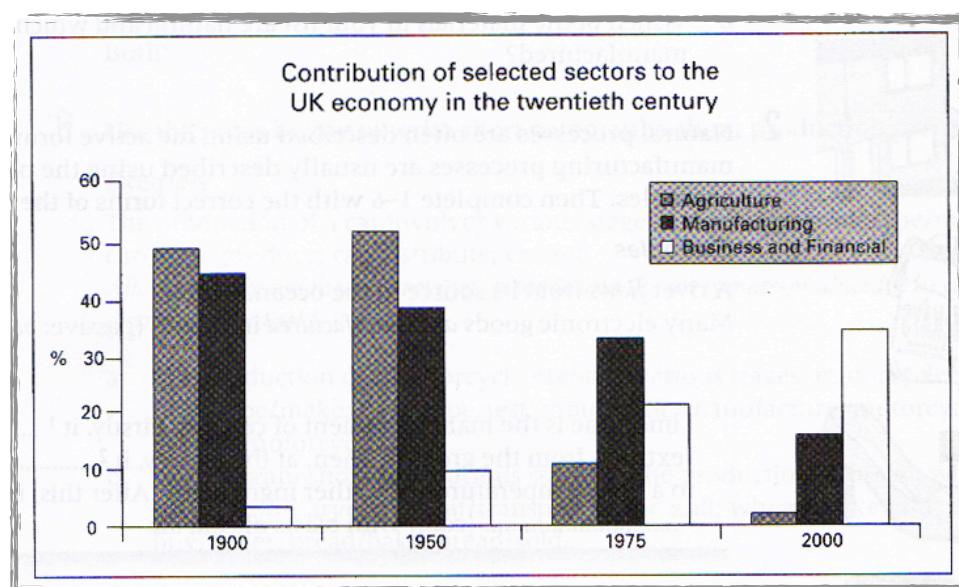
- spent on average

- average expenditure
- weekly spending figures
- levels of spending
- spent per week
- expenditure per week

#### ✍ Exercise 1.5.4

Write a good introduction and body paragraph for this graph.

The graph below shows the contribution of three sectors- agriculture, manufacturing, and business and financial services- to the UK economy in the twentieth century.



## Unit 6

### How to write a good overview paragraph

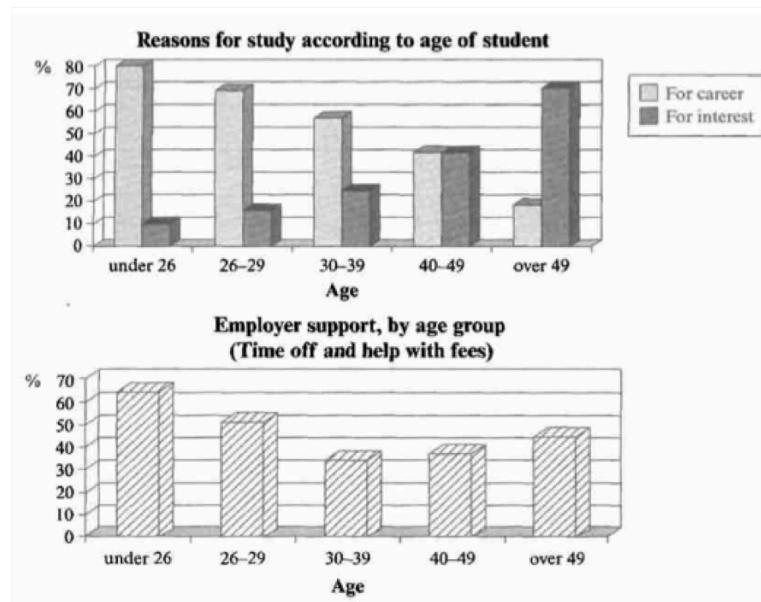
Remember that you do not need to write a conclusion for IELTS writing task 1. You can write an "overview" of the information. An overview is the most important message a graph tries to convey. In fact, it is a description of the most important fact(s) in your report. Generally, trends and correlations are the best indicators of your overview. Sometimes some writers prefer to write the overview immediately after the introduction in a separate paragraph.

**But why do not you need to write a conclusion? What's the difference between a conclusion and an overview?**

First, a conclusion is really a final judgement, decision or opinion. This is perfect for the task 2 essay, but task 1 asks you to write a description without analysis or opinions. On the other hand, an "overview" is a simple description of the main points. It is a summary of the information shown in the graph or chart.

Second, a conclusion should be at the end of a piece of writing. An overview or general summary could go either at the end or near the beginning. Admittedly, it's a good idea to describe the main features of the graph or chart near the beginning of your essay.

**Look at the following graph and its overview:**



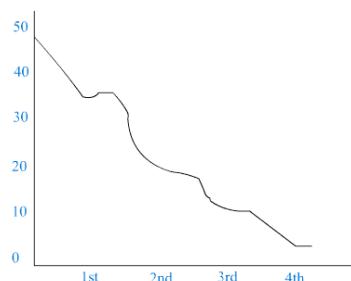
It is clear that the proportion of people who study for career purposes is far higher among the younger age groups, and decreases steadily with age. The need for employer support also decreases with age, but only up to the point when employees enter their forties.

## Trend

We have two trends: **upward and downward**

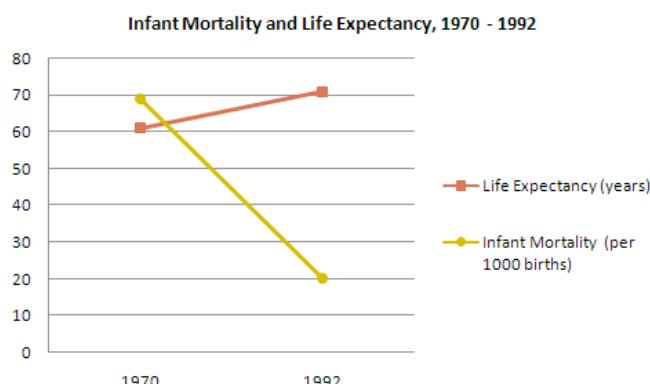


There was an **upward** trend over the period.



There was a **downward** trend over the period.

### Now look at this example



Look at life expectancy in the graph above. We can see that the figure in 1970 stood at 60 and 22 years later it rose to 70. There is an upward trend for life expectancy. Now take a look at the other variable- infant mortality. In 1970, the figure was 70 per 1000 births. It then declined to 20. There is a downward trend here.

### Let us now review some important points again:

- An overview is simply a summary of the main things you can see.
- Because the overview is so important, I recommend putting it at the beginning of your essay, just after the introduction sentence.
- I write two overview sentences. A one-sentence overview is not really enough.
- Try not to include specific numbers in the overview. Save the specifics for later paragraphs.
- Look at the 'big picture' e.g. the overall change from the first year to the last year (if years are shown on the chart), the differences between whole categories rather than single numbers, or the total number of stages in a process.

### Exercise 1.6

#### Task 1

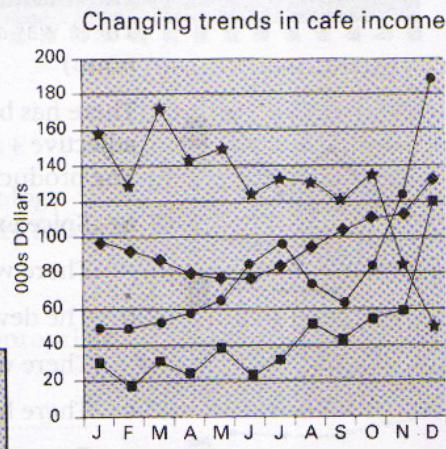
You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graph shows the income of four cafes in New York over last year.

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

Write at least 150 words.

- ▲ The Tea Room
- Internet Express
- ◆ Wi-Fi Cafe
- Cafe Cool



The graph provides information about the income trends of four cafes over the last year.

There are two basic general trends: downward and upwards. As regards the first, the earnings for The Tea room were down over the year, falling .....1..... from almost 160,000 earnings a month to just under \$50,000 in December.

By contrast, the income for the other three cafes went up by varying degrees. There was .....2..... in Cafe Cool's sales over the first ten months, followed by a sudden increase to \$120,000. Furthermore, the income for both Internet Express and Wi-Fi Cafe .....3..... in December. The former experienced .....5..... to June, but after that, income rose .....4..... ending the year at approximately \$130,000. Likewise, the trend for Wi-Fi was upward. Between January to July, earnings .....6..... from \$50,000 to \$100,000 and .....7..... to around \$190,000.

It is noticeable that the income for The Tea Room is lower in the winter months than for other three cafes.

match options a-g with gaps 1-7 in the model text.

- a steadily
- b then rocketed
- c doubled
- d significantly
- e also ended the year up
- f a steady fall
- g a rise

## Correlation

What is a correlation? A correlation is a relationship between two things, two variables. For example, it is generally true that the more junk food you eat, the fatter you get. This is a **positive correlation**- there is a strong relationship.

A **negative correlation** means that there is a strong relationship between two variables, but in the opposite direction. For example, the older a second-hand car is, the lower the price.

**Zero correlation** happens when there is a strong relationship between two things- when they do not affect each other. For example, the number of times you go to the movies a year is probably not related to the number of brothers and sisters you have ... or is it?

## Unit 7

### Tables

Tables seem difficult when they contain a lot of numbers. Here's some advice:

- Try to write 4 paragraphs - introduction, summary of main points, 2 detail paragraphs.
- Before you start writing, highlight some key numbers. Choose the biggest number in each category in the table (i.e. in each column and row). If the table shows years, look for the biggest changes in numbers over the time period. You could also mention the smallest numbers, but you can ignore 'middle' numbers (neither biggest nor smallest).
- For your summary paragraph, try to compare whole categories (columns or rows) rather than individual 'cells' in the table. If you can't compare whole categories, compare the biggest and smallest number. Write 2 sentences for the summary.
- In your two 'details' paragraphs, never describe each category (column or row) separately. The examiner wants to see comparisons. Try to organize the numbers you highlighted into 2 groups - one for each paragraph (e.g. highest numbers for all categories together, and lowest numbers together).
- Describe / compare the numbers you highlighted - include at least 3 numbers in each paragraph.
- Use the past simple for past years, and 'will' or 'is expected/predicted to' for future years. If no time is shown, use the present simple.

**The chart below shows average hours and minutes spent by UK males and females on different daily activities.**

	Hours and minutes per day	
	Males	Females
Sleep	8.04	8.18
Resting	0.43	0.48
Personal care	0.40	0.48
Eating and drinking	1.25	1.19
Leisure		
Watching TV/DVD and listen to radio/music	2.50	2.25
Social life and entertainment/culture	1.22	1.32
Hobbies and games	0.37	0.23
Sport	0.13	0.07
Reading	0.23	0.26
All leisure	5.25	4.53
Employment and study	3.45	2.26
Housework	1.41	3.00
Childcare	0.15	0.32
Voluntary work and meetings	0.15	0.20
Travel	1.32	1.22
Other	0.13	0.15

 **Exercise 1.7**
**FIII in the blanks using the given words**

***doing, up, over, spent, while, sleeping, sleep, twice, amount, takes***

The table compares the average \_\_\_\_\_ of time per day that men and women in the UK spend \_\_\_\_\_ different activities.

It is clear that people in the UK spend more time \_\_\_\_\_ than doing any other daily activity. Also, there are significant differences between the time \_\_\_\_\_ by men and women on employment/study and housework.

On average, men and women in the UK \_\_\_\_\_ for about 8 hours per day. Leisure \_\_\_\_\_ the second largest proportion of their time. Men spend 5 hours and 25 minutes doing various leisure activities, such as watching TV or doing sport, \_\_\_\_\_ women have 4 hours and 53 minutes of leisure time.

It is noticeable that men work or study for an average of 79 minutes more than women every day. By contrast, women spend 79 minutes more than men doing housework, and they spend \_\_\_\_\_ as much time looking after children.

### My thinking steps

#### Example 1

I am going to explain my thinking process when I answer an IELTS Writing Task 1 question. We will use this question (Cambridge IELTS 7, page 30):

***The table below gives information on consumer spending on different items in five different countries in 2002.***

Percentage of national consumer expenditure by category - 2002

Country	Food/Drinks/ Tobacco	Clothing/ Footwear	Leisure/ Education
Ireland	28.91%	6.43%	2.21%
Italy	16.36%	9.00%	3.20%
Spain	18.80%	6.51%	1.98%
Sweden	15.77%	5.40%	3.22%
Turkey	32.14%	6.63%	4.35%

Before I worry about what language to use, it is really important to understand the information, and decide how to organize it. This is what I'm thinking:

1. I know that I can write a short introduction by paraphrasing the question.
2. I look for an overall trend. I can see that the food/drinks/tobacco category has the highest percentages, and leisure/education has the lowest.
3. Now I want to write two main body paragraphs. I need to select something to say about each country. Remember, there is no rule about what information you select; everyone will do this differently.

4. I look for the highest figures in each category: I can see that Turkey has the highest figure for food/drinks/tobacco AND for education/leisure. Italy has the highest figure for clothing/footwear.
5. So, I'll write a paragraph about Turkey and Italy.
6. My final paragraph needs to talk about Ireland, Spain and Sweden.
7. Maybe I'll point out that Ireland has a high figure for the first category, Spain has the lowest figure for education/leisure, and Sweden has the lowest figures for the first AND second categories.
8. I don't need a conclusion because I have already mentioned a general trend in point 2.

### **Now let us take a closer look at a good report.**

The table shows percentages of consumer expenditure for three categories of products and services in five countries in 2002.

It is clear that the largest proportion of consumer spending in each country went on food, drinks and tobacco. On the other hand, the leisure/education category has the lowest percentages in the table.

Out of the five countries, consumer spending on food, drinks and tobacco was noticeably higher in Turkey, at 32.14%, and Ireland, at nearly 29%. The proportion of spending on leisure and education was also highest in Turkey, at 4.35%, while expenditure on clothing and footwear was significantly higher in Italy (9%) than in any of the other countries.

It can be seen that Sweden had the lowest percentages of national consumer expenditure for food/drinks/tobacco and for clothing/footwear, at nearly 16% and just over 5% respectively. Spain had slightly higher figures for these categories, but the lowest figure for leisure/education, at only 1.98%.

### **Example 2**

**The table below shows the proportion of different categories of families living in poverty in Australia in 1999.**

Family type	Proportion of people from each household type living in poverty
single aged person	6% (54,000)
aged couple	4% (48,000)
single, no children	19% (359,000)
couple, no children	7% (211,000)
sole parent	21% (232,000)
couple with children	12% (933,000)
<b>all households</b>	<b>11% (1,837,000)</b>

The table gives information about poverty rates among six types of household in Australia in the year 1999.

It is noticeable that levels of poverty were higher for single people than for couples, and people with children were more likely to be poor than those without. Poverty rates were considerably lower among elderly people.

Overall, 11% of Australians, or 1,837,000 people, were living in poverty in 1999. Aged people were the least likely to be poor, with poverty levels of 6% and 4% for single aged people and aged couples respectively.

Just over one fifth of single parents were living in poverty, whereas only 12% of parents living with a partner were classed as poor. The same pattern can be seen for people with no children: while 19% of single people in this group were living below the poverty line, the figure for couples was much lower, at only 7%.

### Example 3

**The table below shows the amount of waste production (in millions of tonnes) in six different countries in three different years over a twenty-year period.**

	1980	1990	2000
Ireland	0.6	*	5
Japan	28	32	53
Korea	*	31	19
Poland	4	5	6.6
Portugal	2	3	5
US	131	151	192

\*Figure not available

Here are my thinking steps for this questions:

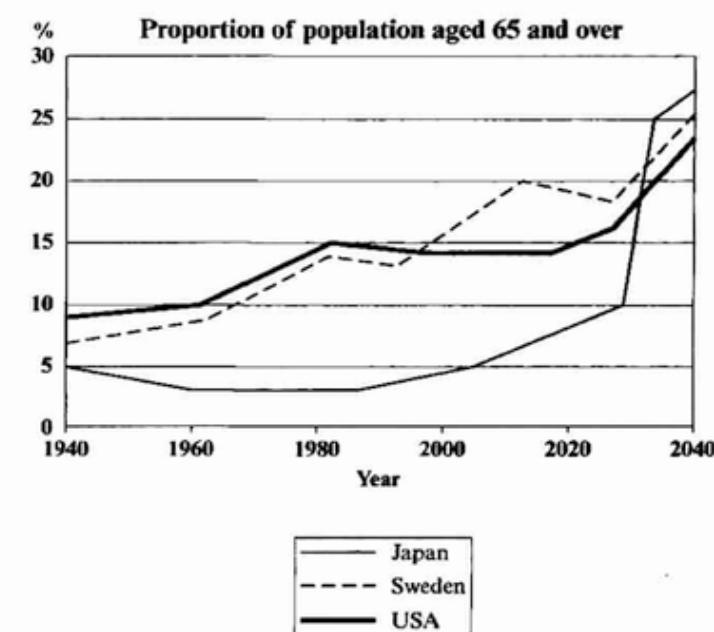
1. It's fine to repeat the word 'waste' because there isn't really an ideal synonym ('rubbish' and 'garbage' have a more limited meaning). However, we can vary our sentences by writing things like 'waste output', 'waste materials' or 'the waste that was produced'.
2. The most noticeable feature must be that the US produced by far the most waste in all 3 years. Use this idea in your 'overview' paragraph.
3. The general trend is that waste production rose in every country apart from Korea. This could be your second 'overview' idea.
4. I would write one main paragraph comparing the 3 countries with the highest figures (US, Japan, Korea), and a separate paragraph about Ireland, Poland and Portugal. Try to use some 'comparing' language when describing the countries (e.g. while, whereas, by contrast) and some 'trend' language when describing the years (e.g. increased, rose, fell).

## Unit 8

### Further Samples and Exercises

#### Example 1

*The graph below shows the proportion of the population aged 65 and over between 1940 and 2040 in three different countries.*



Here are the steps I would follow to write my essay:

1. **Introduction:** write one sentence to introduce what the graph shows. Just paraphrase the question statement (i.e. change a few words).
2. **Summary:** describe 2 main things e.g. the overall trend for all 3 countries, and the biggest change that you can see.
3. **Details:** compare all 3 countries in 1940, then in 1990.
4. **Details:** describe the dramatic increase predicted for Japan, and compare all 3 countries in 2040.

The line graph compares the percentage of people aged 65 or more in three countries over a period of 100 years.

It is clear that the proportion of elderly people increases in each country between 1940 and 2040. Japan is expected to see the most dramatic changes in its elderly population.

In 1940, around 9% of Americans were aged 65 or over, compared to about 7% of Swedish people and 5% of Japanese people. The proportions of elderly people in the USA and Sweden rose gradually over the next 50 years, reaching just under 15% in 1990. By contrast, the figures for Japan remained below 5% until the early 2000s.

Looking into the future, a sudden increase in the percentage of elderly people is predicted for Japan, with a jump of over 15% in just 10 years from 2030 to 2040. By 2040, it is thought that around 27% of the Japanese population will be 65 years old or

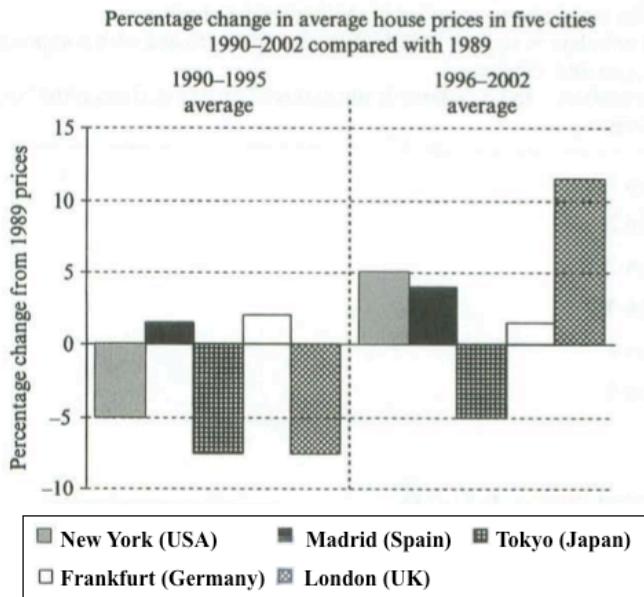
more, while the figures for Sweden and the USA will be slightly lower, at about 25% and 23% respectively.

(178 words, band 9)

### Example 2

The question below comes from Cambridge IELTS book 7. Students tend to find this question difficult.

***The chart below shows information about changes in average house prices in five different cities between 1990 and 2002 compared with the average house prices in 1989.***



Some advice:

- Introduction: paraphrase the question.
- Summary: compare the two periods (prices fell overall from 1990-95, but rose from 1996-2002), and mention that London prices changed the most.
- Details: write one paragraph about each period.
- Note: don't write -5%, write "fell by 5%".

**Now look at the model answer done for you:**

The bar chart compares the cost of an average house in five major cities over a period of 13 years from 1989.

We can see that house prices fell overall between 1990 and 1995, but most of the cities saw rising prices between 1996 and 2002. London experienced by far the greatest changes in house prices over the 13-year period.

Over the 5 years after 1989, the cost of average homes in Tokyo and London dropped by around 7%, while New York house prices went down by 5%. By contrast, prices rose by approximately 2% in both Madrid and Frankfurt.

Between 1996 and 2002, London house prices jumped to around 12% above the 1989 average. Homebuyers in New York also had to pay significantly more, with prices rising to 5% above the 1989 average, but homes in Tokyo remained cheaper than they were

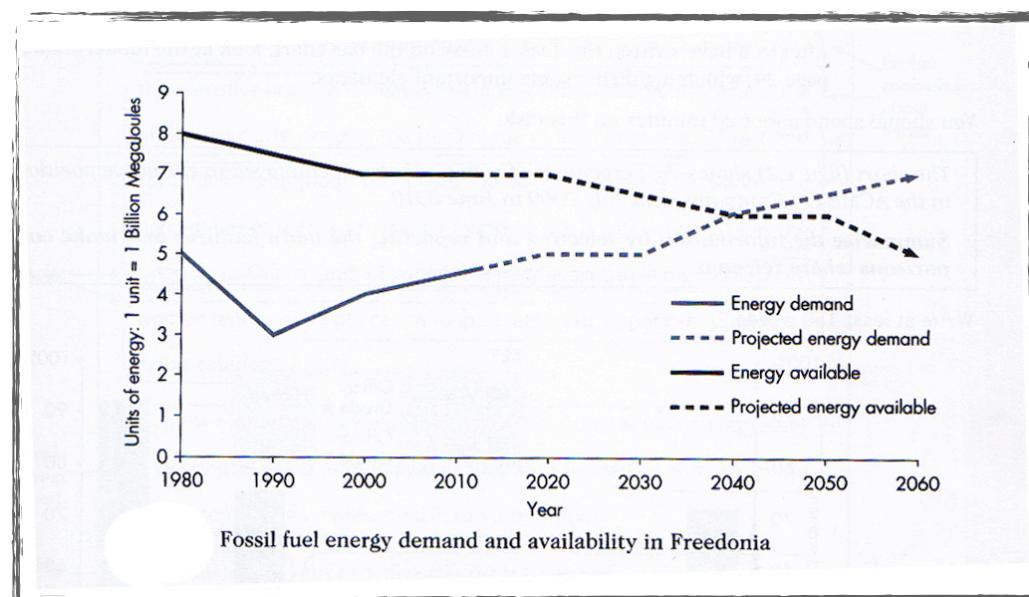
in 1989. The cost of an average home in Madrid rose by a further 2%, while prices in Frankfurt remained stable.

### Example 3

Now it is your turn to describe this graph:

The graph below gives information about fossil fuel energy demand and availability in the country of Freedonia from 1980 to 2060 (projected).

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



### A final word of advice:

Here are some mistakes that can really affect your IELTS score:

1. Writing less than 150 words. My advice: count how many words you write, on average, per line. If you write about 10 words per line, make sure that you write more than 15 lines for writing task 1.
2. Not separating paragraphs. Your score will immediately drop if you do not separate paragraphs clearly. My advice: leave a full line between paragraphs.
3. Not answering the question. My advice: in the writing exam, keep checking the question to make sure you are answering it fully.

# Chapter 2

## Processes

## Unit 9

### What is a process?

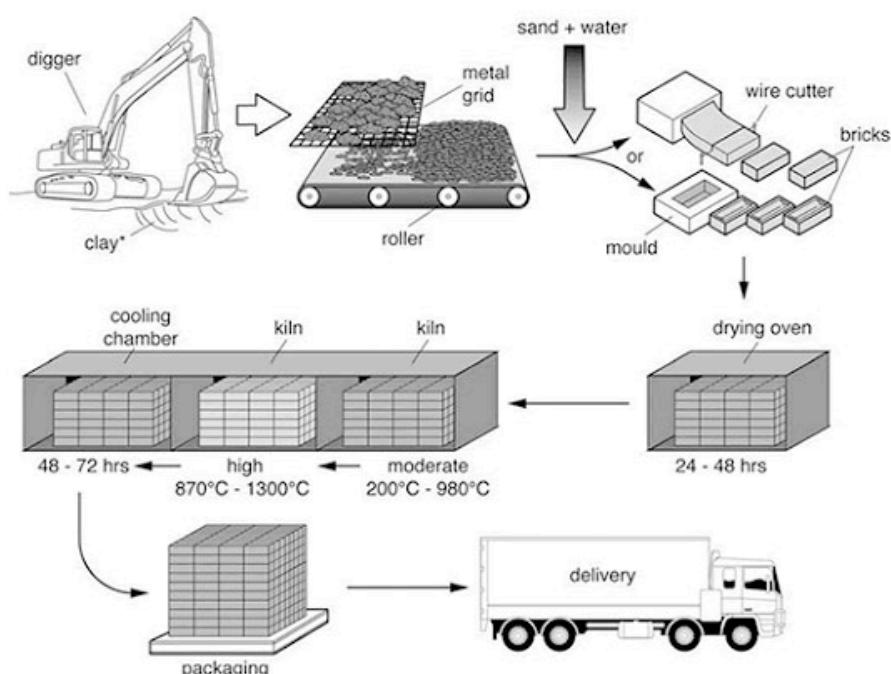
To begin, look at this question:

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

**The diagram illustrates the process that is used to manufacture bricks for the building industry.**

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

Write at least 150 words.



It is less common in the writing test, but sometimes you will get a **process diagram** to describe. An IELTS process diagram is different from a line, bar, pie chart or table in that there are not usually key changes or trends to identify. However, you should still give an **overview** of what is taking place.

### Enumeration

A process is a **series of events**, one taking place after the other. Therefore, to connect your stages, you should use '**time connectors**'. Here is the rest of the answer with the time connectors highlighted (notice that you simply go from the beginning to the end of the process):

**To begin**, the clay used to make the bricks is dug up from the ground by a large digger. This clay is **then** placed onto a metal grid, which is used to break up the clay into smaller pieces. A roller assists in this process.

**Following this**, sand and water are added to the clay, and this mixture is turned into bricks by either placing it into a mould or using a wire cutter. **Next**, these bricks are placed in an oven to dry for 24 – 48 hours.

**In the subsequent stage**, the bricks go through a heating and cooling process. They are heated in a kiln at a moderate and **then** a high temperature (ranging from 200c to 1300c), **followed by** a cooling process in a chamber for 2 – 3 days. **Finally**, the bricks are packed and delivered to their destinations.

Here is an example using stages four and five:

*Before being dried in the oven, the mixture is turned into bricks by either placing it into a mould or using a wire cutter.*

Now let us take a look at **enumerators** in detail. There are generally two types of enumerators. Pay attention to how punctuation is applied to either group:

#### Group 1

First/To begin, there is ...  
 Second, ....  
 Third, ....  
 Fourth/Next/Then, ...  
 Following that,  
 Finally, .....

#### Group 2

The first stage is ...  
 The second phase is ...  
 The third/next step is ...  
 In the subsequent stage ...  
 The last stage is ...

#### Note:

These connectors are the same you would use to write a graph over time when you explain a series of changes.

### Model Paragraph for Enumeration

There are **three basic kinds** of materials that can be found in any good library. **First**, there are books on all subjects, both in English and in many other languages. These books are organized according to subject, title, and author in a central file called the card catalog. Books can be generally checked out of library and taken home for a period of two to four weeks. **Second**, there are reference works, which include encyclopedias, dictionaries, bibliographies, atlases, and so forth, and which generally must be used in the library itself. **Third**, there are periodicals - magazines, newspapers, pamphlets - which are filed alphabetically in racks, or which have been microfilmed to conserve space. Like reference works, periodicals usually cannot be removed from the library.

## CLAUSES OF TIME

**SIMULTANEOUS ACTIONS (while/as)** are used to show that a shorter action happens in the middle of a longer action:

As/While the butter is melting, break three eggs into a bowl.

**SEQUENTIAL ACTIONS (when, before, after, until)** are used to show that one action follows another action:

After/when the eggs thicken/have thickened , serve them with toast.  
 (first action) (second action)

The eggs must thicken BEFORE you serve them.  
 (first action) (second action)

Do not serve the eggs UNTIL they thicken/have thickened.  
 (second action) (first action)

**Participial phrases** are used to make a longer complex sentence shorter by omitting the repeated subject and converting its verb into a gerund.

**Clause:** while you are melting the butter, break three eggs into a bowl.  
**Phrase:** **while melting the butter**, break three eggs into a bowl.

**Clause:** After/when you have beaten the eggs, pour them into the pan.  
**Phrase:** **having beaten the eggs**, .....  
**After having beaten the eggs**, .....

**Clause:** you must beat the eggs before you pour them into the pan.  
**Phrase:** ..... **before pouring them into the pan**.



### Exercise 2.9.1

Now read the following paragraph and try to fill in the blanks with the given words.

#### How to make a computer functional

First	When	therefore	following
Next	However	Finally	after

When a computer is purchased, normally the software and applications needed to run it are not installed. The ..... thing one needs to do is installing an operating system such as Windows or Linux. The operating system, also called OS, is a set of programs that is necessary to make the commands and functions applicable. The user needs to choose one of these systems he is acquainted with and install it on his or her computer. ....you want to install such a program, you need a bootable CD/DVD inserted in your CD/DVD ROM. .... the simple instructions provided by the programming company and choosing the drive on which you install the program, you can finish the process with no difficulty. ...., you need to install all the drivers such as the graphic card, the sound card and the motherboard on your PC or Laptop. This may take some time. Our computer is now ready. ...., we need to install some essential programs hereafter in order to do different tasks. ...., we choose the set of programs that are necessary for everyday use and our jobs and install them one by one. ...., we can restart the computer for the operating system to apply the changes. .... the system rebooted, it is ready for use.

## How to write reports on processes

### single processes

#### Type 1:

introduction	Here you should state what the process shows.
body	State the overview
conclusion	Start from the first stage and move from step to step. Do not skip any stages.

#### Type 2:

introduction	Here you should state what the process shows.
body	Start from the first stage and move from step to step. Do not skip any stages.
conclusion	State what the outcome of the process is (linear processes) <b>or</b> State that the process repeats itself (circular processes)

### double processes<sup>3</sup>

introduction	Here you should state what each process or the process and graph show.
body	<b>Paragraph 1:</b> Here describe the first process in an organized fashion.  <b>Paragraph 2:</b> Now turn to the second process/graph and describe it
conclusion	Establish the relationship between the first and the second process/graph.

### Types of processes:

#### 1 Natural processes:

Natural processes take place in the nature. We use active sentences to describe them. These processes might be circular or linear. A good illustration of linear natural process is the process in which coal was formed, and an example of a circular natural process is the formation of rain.

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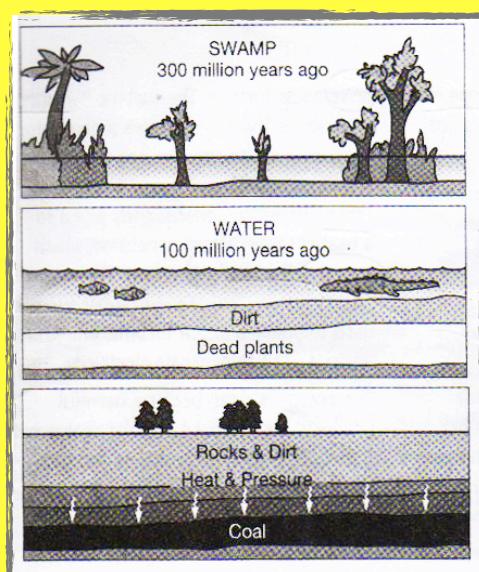
<sup>3</sup> You may have a combination of two processes or a process and a graph

**Exercise 2.9.2**

Look at the diagram below and fill in the blanks using the given words.

- |                           |                       |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>a</b> died and dropped | <b>e</b> was trapped  |
| <b>b</b> was formed       | <b>f</b> turned       |
| <b>c</b> lived            | <b>g</b> is now mined |
| <b>d</b> was covered      | <b>h</b> built up     |
| <b>e</b> was trapped      |                       |

The diagram shows the process by which coal .....1.....over a period of millions of years. First of all, large plants .....2..... in enormous swamps a long time ago. These .....3.....to the bottom of the water. Over the years, the dead plants formed a layer, which became deeper and deeper. More and more earth and dirt .....4..... on top of this layer. Subsequently, this layer .....5..... by rocks and dirt, and so the energy of the dead plants .....6..... underneath. As the pressure and heat grew over time, the layer of dead plants .....7..... into coal. Seams of coal were formed, and coal .....8.....



## 2 Manufacturing processes:

In these processes, a product is made in a factory or workshop. Because the person/people who do the process are not very important to us we use passive voice in our report. Take a look at the example below and how the report is done for you. Choose the correct alternative.

**Some useful terminology to be used in process are as follows:**

to run a turbine	to distill	to powder
conveyor belt	to condense	to package
to pipe something	to contract	to ship
to heat something	to power generators	raw material
to cool something	to expand	ingredients
blasts of cold air	to evaporate	byproduct
furnace	to add/mixblend	to apply pressure
slag	a mixtureblend	to apply heat

## Process diagram summary

When describing a process diagram, most students have no problem describing the stages in the process step by step. However, not many students are able to write a good summary (or 'overview') of the process as a whole. The '**public band**

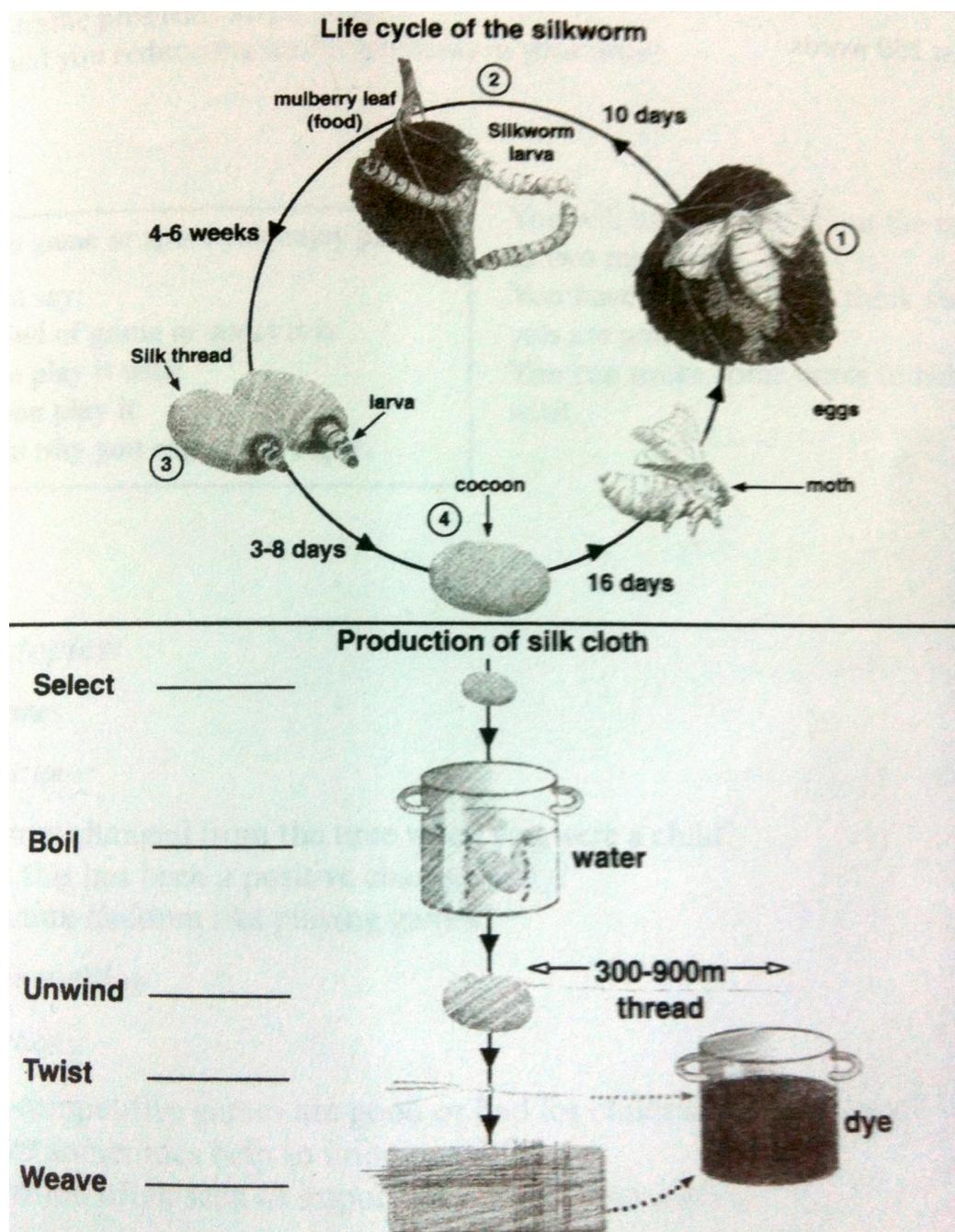
**descriptors**' state that to achieve a band 6 or more for '**task response**' the student must **provide an overview** in a task 1. As there are no trends to comment on, you can make a comment on, for example, the **number of stages in the process** and how it **begins and ends**:

*Overall, there are eight stages in the process, beginning with the digging up of clay and culminating in delivery.*

**Note:**

Manufacturing and natural processes can be either circular or linear

Exercise 2.9.3

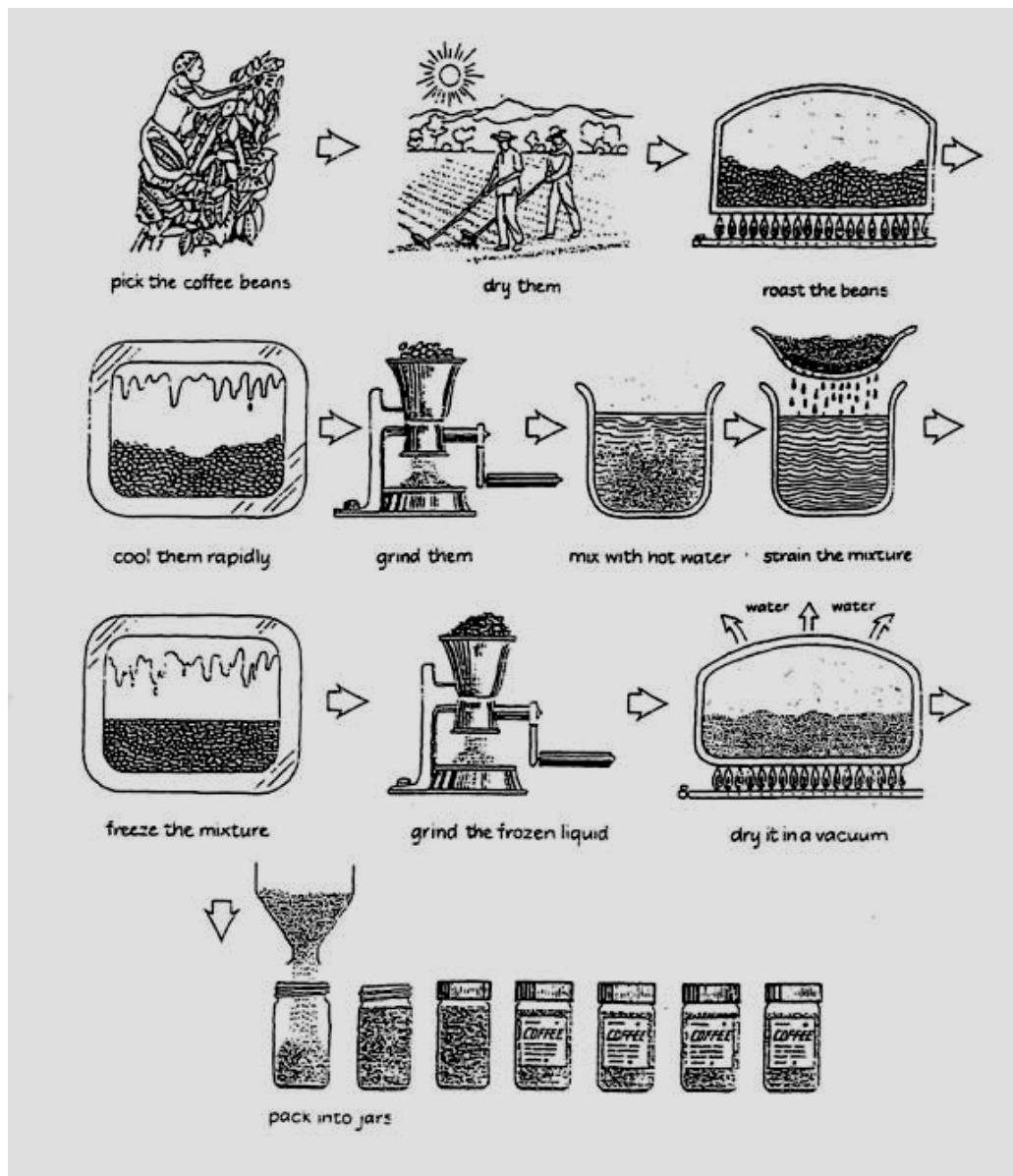


Look at the following natural process and write a report on it.

 Exercise 2.9.4

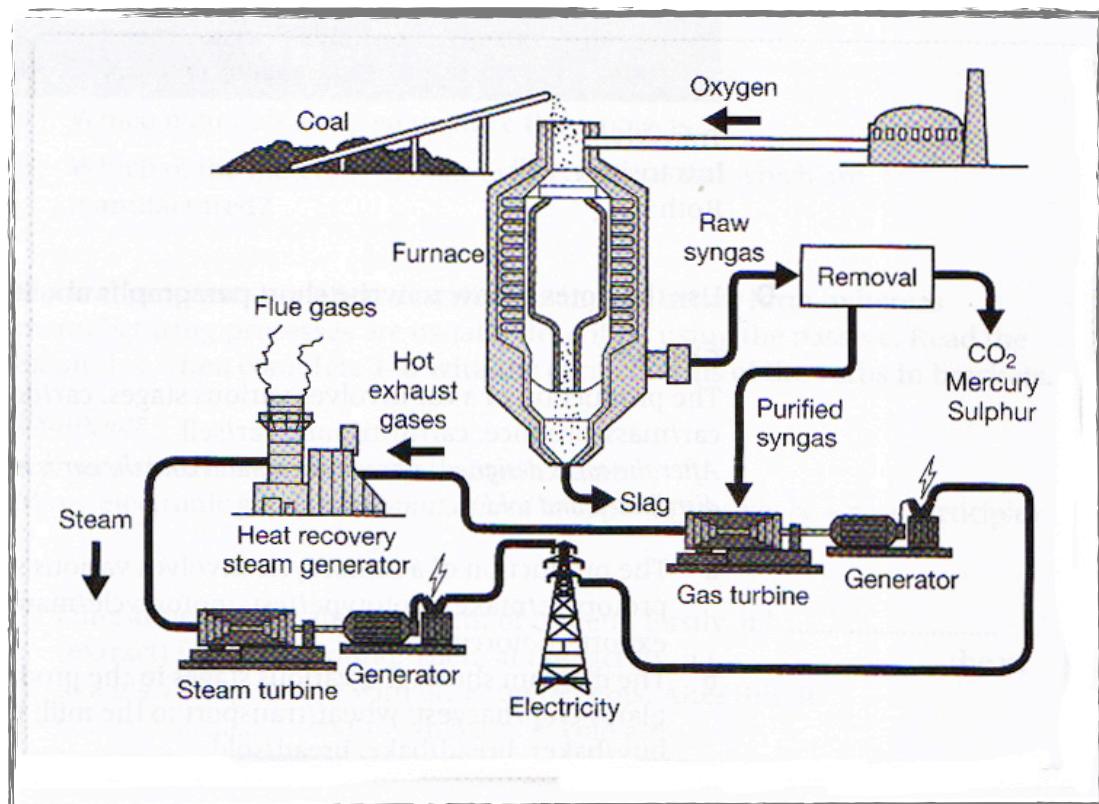
The diagram below shows how coffee is produced and prepared for sale in supermarkets and shops.

Write a summary paragraph for the above diagram.



 **Exercise 2.9.5**

Choose the correct word or phrase.



The diagram shows the various stages in the production of clean energy from coal.

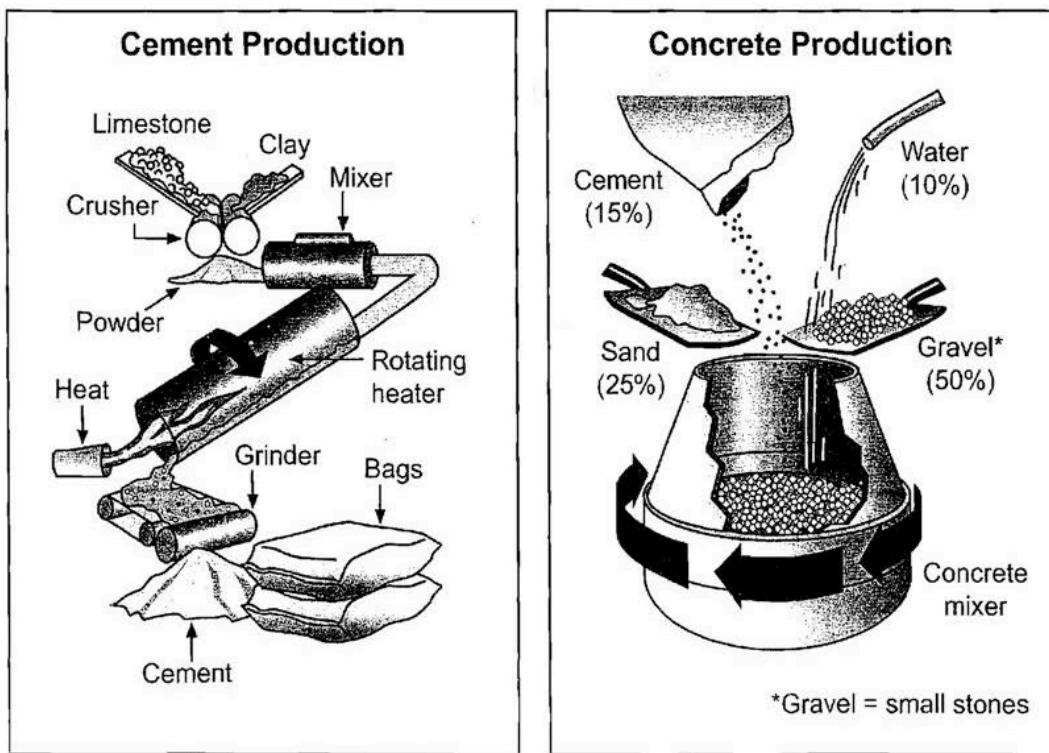
First of all/At first/One, the coal is mined in deep pits underground and then carried to the surface. Furthermore/After that/As a result, it is carried along a conveyor belt to a power plant where/then it is burned in a large furnace to which oxygen is added. Otherwise/From this/Therefore, raw syngas is produced. At the next stage of the process harmful substances such as carbon dioxide, mercury, and sulfur are removed. Following that/Following Subsequent, the purified gas is used to

drive a gas turbine. The turbine in turn afterwards/therefore powers a generator, producing electricity. The gas turbine also produces hot exhaust gases. These are then/therefore/consequently piped to a heat recovery steam generator, which converts the heat into steam. The steam is consequently/subsequent/subsequently used to power a steam turbine, which again is used to generate electricity.

The energy is clean because the harmful products are removed and the coal is not transported to another site to produce electricity.

**Exercise 2.9.6**

Look at the following diagram from Cambridge 8 and try to write a report on it.

**Linear and circular processes:**

Those processes in which there is a point of commencement and a point of termination are called linear processes. These processes have an output which cannot, in turn, produce the ingredients necessary to restart the process. Circular processes are those processes which can continue non-stop. There is no point of commencement and no point of termination.

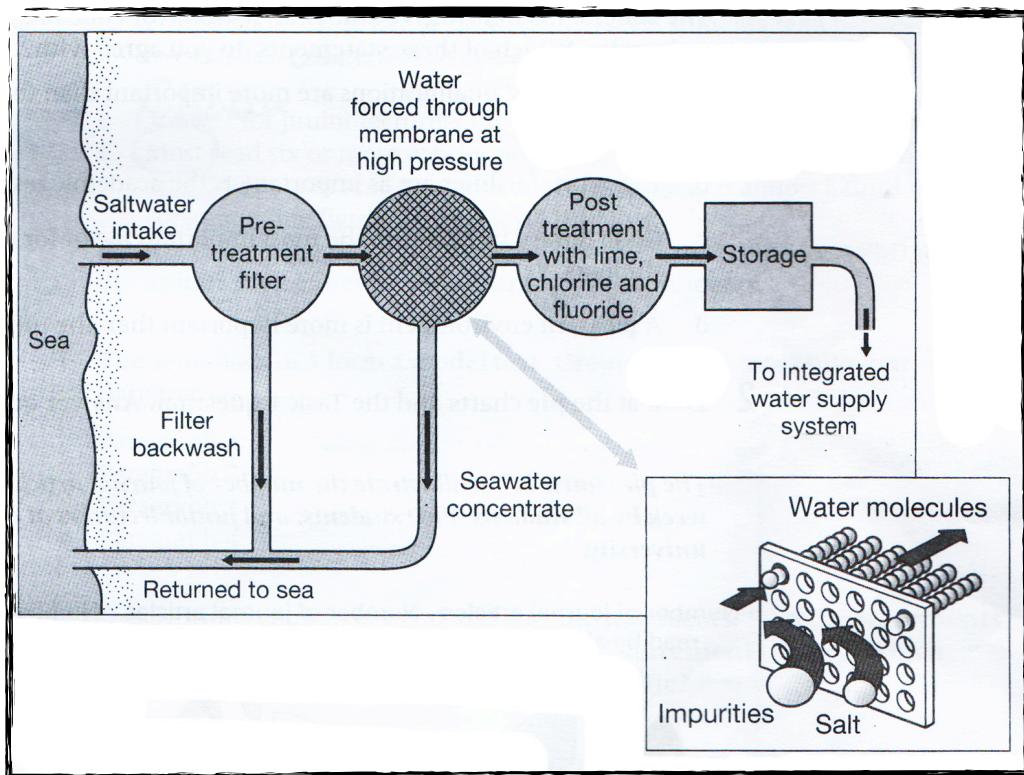
There are several phrases you can use to make your paragraph more coherent:

1. At the first stage of this process .....
2. After ....., in the next stage, .....
3. Following that, .....
4. Subsequently, .....
5. At the next phase of this process, .....
6. Finally/ ultimately, .....
7. In turn
8. Consequently

**Exercise 2.**

The diagram below shows how salt is removed from sea water to make it drinkable.

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



### How to use the passive voice

When we describe an IELTS process, the focus is on **the activities**, NOT the person doing them (especially in manufacturing processes). When this is the case, we use **the passive voice**, not the active. This is a brief explanation of how to use the passive voice, but if you are new or unsure about using it, you should do some further study and practice.

Most sentences use this structure:

Subject + Verb + Object

(S) A large digger (V) digs up (O) the clay in the ground.

In the active voice (as above), the digger is doing the verb i.e. the digger is doing the digging.

When we use the passive voice, we make the object (the clay) the subject, and make the subject (the digger) the object. We also add in the verb 'to be' and the past participle (or Verb 3).

(S) The clay in the ground (V) is dug up (O) by the digger.

So throughout most of your description for your IELTS process diagram, you should be using the passive voice.

This is difficult as some verbs cannot take the passive. For example, 'to go' cannot be passive, so it is kept in the active voice:

*...the bricks go through a heating and cooling process.*

This is why you need to make sure you practice the passive so you know exactly how to use it.

Here is the same example description with uses of the passive highlighted:

**Now let us take a look at how different passive tenses are formed:**

### Present Simple

am

..... is      past participle .....

are

*We are always divided into three teams by the coach.*

*The immigration rules and regulations are changed every September.*

Your own example:

.....

### Present Continuous

am

..... is      being      past participle+ .....

are

*The Beethoven's 5<sup>th</sup> symphony is being played at the moment.*

*The measures are being taken smoothly.*

Your own example:

.....

**Past Simple**

..... **was** .....      **past participle+** .....  
 ..... **were** .....

***The trees were cut by the villagers to make room for new farms.***

***Jews were massacred by Nazis.***

***He was discriminated against because of his race.***

*Your own example:*

.....

**Past Continuous**

..... **was** .....      **being** ..... **past participle+** .....  
 ..... **were** .....

***She was being taken to the hospital when I arrived there.***

*Your own example:*

.....

**Present Perfect**

..... **have** .....      **been** ..... **past participle+** .....  
 ..... **has** .....

***We have been forced into accepting whatever they say.***

***The mother has been diagnosed with AIDS.***

*Your own example:*

.....

**Past Perfect**

..... **had** ..... **been** ..... **past participle+** .....

***He had been murdered when the police arrived at the premises.***

***She had been arrested four times before she was killed in a bank robbery.***

*Your own example:*

.....

### Modals

..... verb	modal	be	past participle+.....
---------------	-------	----	-----------------------

*The substance can be kept in a cool environment.*

*She may be admitted at our university due to her excellent research background.*

*Your own example:*

.....

### Some advice

- Write the introduction by paraphrasing the question (rewrite it by changing some of the words).
- For your summary, first say how many steps there are in the process. Then say where/how the process begins and ends (look at the first and last stages).
- Describe the process step by step. Include the first and last steps that you mentioned in the summary, but try to describe them in more detail or in a different way.
- You could describe the steps in one paragraph, but it looks more organized if you break the description into two paragraphs. Just start paragraph 4 somewhere in the middle of the process.
- Mention every stage in the process.
- Use 'sequencing' language e.g. at the first / second / following / final stage of the process, next, after that, then, finally etc.
- Times (e.g. past dates) are not usually shown, so use the present simple tense.
- It's usually a good idea to use the passive e.g. 'At the final stage, the product is delivered to shops' (because we don't need to know who delivered the product).

# Chapter 3

## Maps

## Unit 10

### Describing a map

#### Types of maps

Generally there are two types of maps in the IELTS test. First, they may give us two maps of the same place but in different times (e.g 1940, 2010). They ask us to write a report on how this place had changed over time. Let's call such maps **diachronic**. Second, they give us one single map and ask us to describe two locations on them or even compare them. Let's call them **synchronic** maps.

#### How to write reports on maps

##### Diachronic maps

introduction	Here you should state what the maps show.
body	Start with the most obvious changes and then try to cover all the changes.
conclusion	State what the direction of change is (is the city more modernized, has it turned to a tourist attraction/resort, etc.)

##### Synchronic maps

introduction	Here you should state what the map shows.
body	Compare the two points
conclusion	Depending on what the purpose of those points are, give an opinion about which one may serve our purpose better

##### Sample introductory sentence

The maps show the developments which took place in ... (the name of the town/city) .... between ..... and .....

The maps show the developments which ..... (the name of the town/city)..... experienced over a period of ... (the span of time).... years between ..... and .....

##### Sample conclusion sentence

Overall, a comparison of the two maps reveals a change from ..... to .....

## Useful Vocabulary

When describing maps the following expressions can be handy:

(of trees) to be chopped, to be cut down, to be cleared, to make way for, to make room for, to be felled

to be planted

e.g. *The trees north of the river were chopped down to make way for new skyscrapers.*

(of buildings) to be demolished, to be erased, to be knocked down, to be cleared, to be destroyed, to be pulled down

to be put up, to spring up, to be constructed, to be built

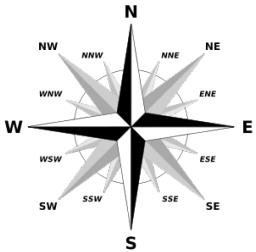
e.g. *The rows of houses were cleared to make room for a new factory.*

(of roads, railway lines, rivers) to run, a stretch of, along, across

e.g. *A new stretch of railway was built running directly north.*

(developments) to experience dramatic change, to witness change, changes were implemented, to be substituted with, to be converted into, to undergo change, to be renovated

(geographical directions)



**Nouns:** north, north-east, north-west, south, south-east, south-west, east, west

**Adjectives:** northern, north-eastern, north-western, southern, south-eastern, south-western, eastern, western

**Other adjectives:** The northernmost/southernmost/easternmost/westernmost tip/extremity/point of ...

e.g. *The northernmost tip of the island is full of trees.*

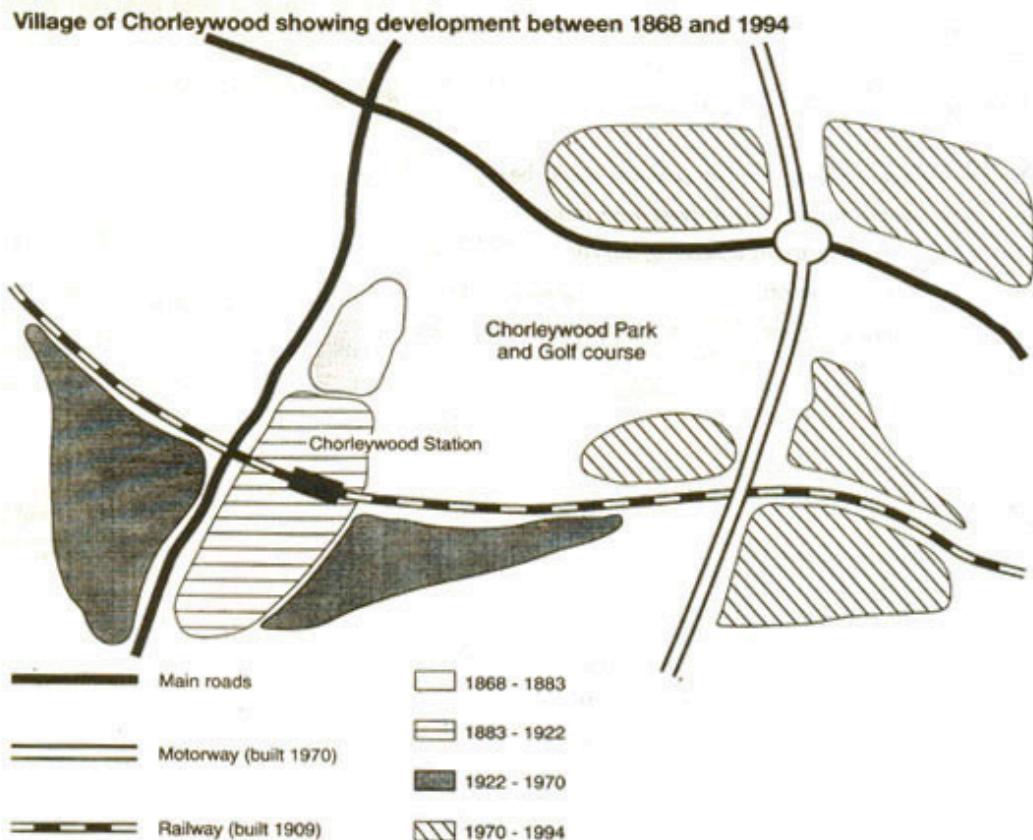
(of places) rural landscape, urban landscape, coastal town, tourist resort, marina, harbor, warehouse, industrial zone/estate, campus, woodland, banks of a river, seaside, shores of a lake



### Exercise 3.10.1

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate form of the verbs in brackets.

1. The row of old houses ..... (knocked down) to make way for a road.
2. The forest ..... (cut down) to build a railway.
3. The area ..... (redeveloped) completely.
4. The factory ..... (converted) into an art gallery.
5. The city center ..... (undergo) a total transformation.
6. The row of old terrace houses in the city ..... (pull down) and ..... (replace) by a block of flats.
7. A sports complex ..... (construct) in the suburbs.
8. A number of spectacular changes ..... (take place)
9. The whole center of the town ..... (transform) by new developments.



**Look at the map below:**

**Now look at the following example report:**

The map shows the growth of a village called Chorleywood between 1868 and 1994.

It is clear that the village grew as the transport infrastructure was improved. Four periods of development are shown on the map, and each of the populated areas is near to the main roads, the railway or the motorway.

From 1868 to 1883, Chorleywood covered a small area next to one of the main roads. Chorleywood Park and Golf Course is now located next to this original village area. The village grew along the main road to the south between 1883 and 1922, and in 1909 a railway line was built crossing this area from west to east. Chorleywood station is in this part of the village.

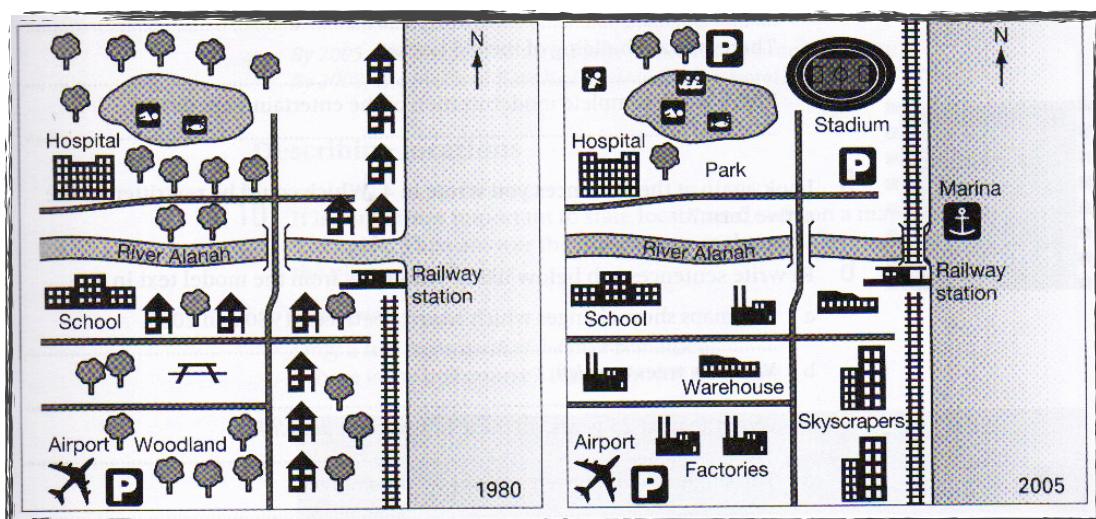
The expansion of Chorleywood continued to the east and west alongside the railway line until 1970. At that time, a motorway was built to the east of the village, and from 1970 to 1994, further development of the village took place around motorway intersections with the railway and one of the main roads.

**Spend some time analyzing it:**

- In what order was the information described?
- What information was chosen for paragraphs 3 and 4?
- What good vocabulary does the essay contain?

 **Exercise 3.10.2**

Now look at the following map and fill in the blanks.



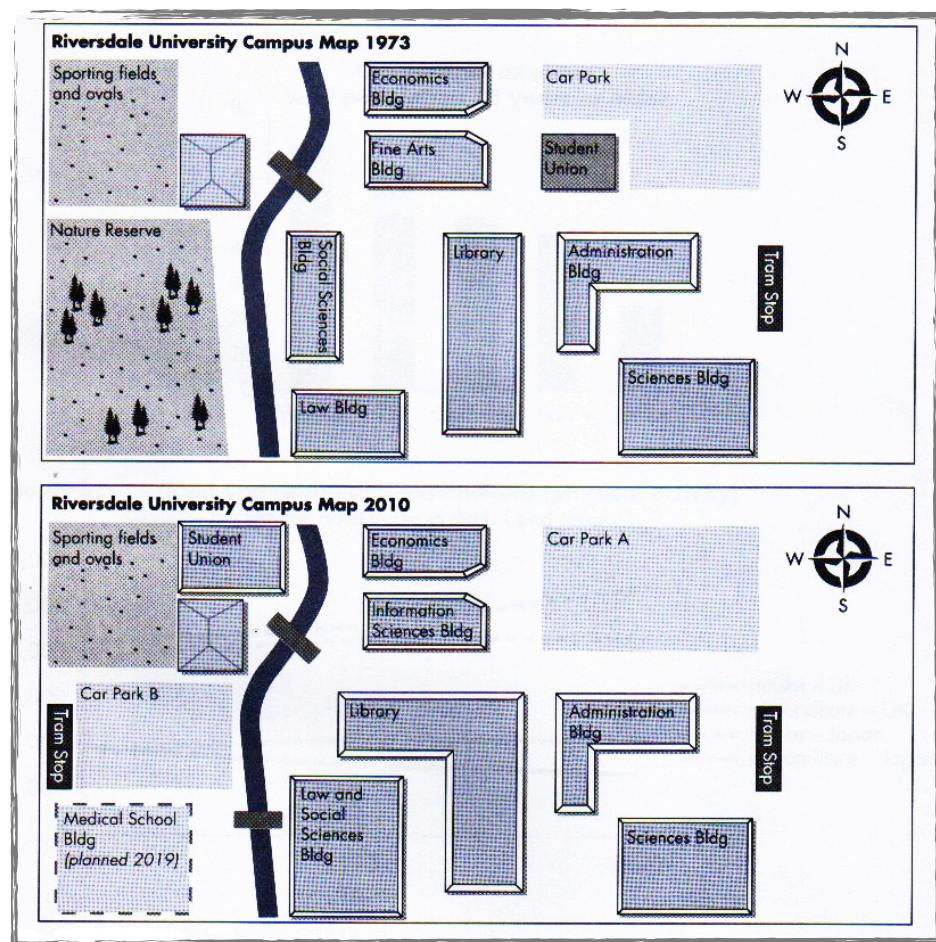
houses	experienced	noticeable	factories	developments
comparison	residential	corner	facilities	construction

The maps show the developments which took place in the coastal town of Youngsville between 1980 and 2005.

In 1980, the town was a much greener ..... area with a large number of trees and individual houses, but during the next 25 years the town ..... a number of dramatic changes. The most ..... is that all of the trees south of the River Alanah were cut down, with all the ..... along the railway line being knocked down and replaced by skyscrapers. Moreover, a new industrial estate with ..... and warehouses sprang up around the airport and school.

Only a few trees north of the river remained. The woodland was cleared to make way for a park, a golf course, and car parking ..... Further developments were the ..... of a stadium near the north-east ..... of the lake and a new stretch of railway from the river running directly north. A marina was also built at the mouth of the river. Overall a ..... of the two maps reveals a change from a largely rural to a mainly urban landscape.

Now look at this example.



The two maps reveal several changes to Riversdale University Between 1973 and 2010.

By 2010, improvements had been made to service facilities. The nature reserve in the campus's south west in 1973 made way for a second car park adjacent to a new tram stop. The previous car park located in the north-east corner had also been extended. In 2010, two bridges joined the two parts of the campus, compared with only one in 1973. In addition, there was a relocation of the student union building north of the existing sports centre.

There were also noticeable changes to the educational facilities. The library, which remained in the centre of the campus, was extended. South of this, a large, new building became the shared home of Law and Social Sciences. In the 37-year period, there were no changes to the Sciences, Economics and Administration buildings. In contrast, Fine Arts no longer appeared to exist and the Information Sciences Faculty took over this facility. A future plan includes the building of a medical school by 2019.

Overall, by 2010, there was several new developments that showed an improvement to amenities and reflected new trends in university studies.

**Now look at these expressions from the report:**

- 1 improvements had been made to ...
- 2 in the north-east corner of ...
- 3 a relocation of ...
- 4 to be adjacent to ...
- 5 to take over ...

## Especial tenses

We can use **past perfect (had+pp)** to talk about events which took place before a specific time in the past.

By 2010, improvements had been made to service facilities.

By 2005, The block of flats had been turned into a hotel.

Now take a looked at the previous map and see how past perfect was used to identify changes.

## Prepositions



### Exercise 3.10.3

**Choose the right preposition.**

- 1 Several changes took place at/in/on the town of Northgate.
- 2 North of the town there is a lake surrounded in/of/by trees.
- 3 A number of new houses were built beside/at/on the railway line.
- 4 There was a large industrial area located in/on/at the north.
- 5 A new railway was constructed which ran from/at/in north to south.
- 6 Two new hotels were erected on/in/at the banks of the river.
- 7 A large number of new villas were built beside/at/to the sea.
- 8 A yachting club was set up on/in/at the shores of the lake.
- 9 20 new wind turbines were placed in the sea, just off/on/to the coastline.