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The Key to IELTS

Writing Task 1

Academic

Pauline
Cullen

Key to IELTS



Bands 7, 8, 9

INTRODUCTION

How will this course help?

This course teaches the skills needed to write a formal discursive essay that will meet the criteria of the IELTS writing test. The course is divided into two sections. The first teaches the skills needed to write a clear, logical analysis, and the second section features guided test practice with model answers. Rather than simply presenting these as a finished product, I will take you through the writing process step by step, and show the type of thinking and planning you need to do in the test. I have also included samples of bands 6 and 6.5 writing that candidates have sent to me over the years. I will help you identify the main problems at this level, show you how to address them, and how to increase the band score from 6.5 to band 8.

Why focus on band 7?

A band 7 certificate is an important qualification that can open doors towards immigration and university study. With the right resources, and after working hard to develop the appropriate skills, many candidates manage to attain this level in every other skill except writing, where the vast majority remain stuck at band 6.5, no matter how hard they try. Understandably, when these people first contact me, their most common feelings about IELTS writing are confusion, frustration, and anger. I hope this course will put an end to these feelings. In writing it, I had one clear aim: to help candidates make genuine progress in writing so that they can get the band 7+ score they need, and finally leave IELTS behind.

Problems and solutions

We cannot solve a problem unless we first try to understand what causes it. When I began working on this project, I had been helping people reach band 7 and above in the writing test for 8 years, and I thought I knew what was causing so many candidates to be stuck at band 6.5. However, as I looked deeper into the problem, I gradually refined my approach and what began as a book, evolved into a course that was double the size that I originally planned on writing. I realised that it is not enough to tell people what to do in an abstract way – we have to show it, step by step. I was also very aware that a great deal of writing feedback focuses on language problems, and it is very easy for grammar and vocabulary to dominate, yet many educated native speakers also struggle to reach band 7 in writing. This shows that the Task response and Cohesion and coherence criteria deserve greater attention, and these are a major focus in this course.

Why is writing so difficult?

When speaking, we can keep talking until the person listening understands what we are saying; if they are confused by an explanation, we can simply repeat or rephrase it. In the speaking test, the examiner can help out by asking a new question, but in writing, there is no one else to keep us going, or to keep us on topic. The truth is that all of us struggle when it comes to writing about complex ideas, even in our first language.

People also tend to see writing as the physical act of putting pen to paper or typing on a keyboard, yet a large part of the writing process is mental. When I am writing a book or preparing a talk, a surprising amount of the work is done away from my desk. I may look as though I am taking a break, walking the dog, or staring into the distance, but inside my head, I am actually ‘writing’. This invisible stage of the writing process is a crucial one. It is a time when I can reject ideas, organise my thoughts, and identify my main points, but the fact that we cannot see it means it is often ignored. In fact, many videos give the impression that it’s possible to reach a level where you can simply sit down at a desk and write fluently and coherently.

The reality is that all good writing involves thinking, planning, cutting, and rewriting. What you are reading here is the 5th or 6th draft of these materials. It may surprise you to know that my first rough drafts are often far too long, with ideas that are often repetitive and unclear – all common problems at bands 6 and 6.5. Any attempts you make to simply sit and write will also result in first-draft, band 6 writing.

Sample answers and Model answers

I am often asked for sample answers, and many seem to believe these will provide a quick fix to their writing problems, but I have mixed feelings about answers like this. While I can see merit in providing them, I have always been concerned that they encourage people to learn answers to use in the test. I am also worried about providing just one answer when there are multiple possible ways to approach any task. This is why it is important to see the answers supplied in textbooks as a 'sample' rather than a 'model'. The distinction is an important one: a 'model' sets a standard that students can learn from, while a sample answer often does not.

Sample answers produced by professional writers also tend to result in a level of English that goes beyond the scope of the test, a level I think of as the 'invisible band 10.' These answers are written in the comfort of the writer's home, perhaps in several drafts. If an answer is too long, the writer has time to edit and cut. Before publication, the finished product may also be checked and edited by more professionals, all of which can result in a rather nuanced and subtle response to the task that is closer to a reading passage. Understandably, this process does not produce the same results as an individual candidate writing in a timed test situation. Because of this, in my view, the test book sample answers often don't serve as useful models for candidates or for the classroom. Furthermore, although there are many sample answers online that claim to be band 9, the majority of those I have seen actually show band 6 skills in some criteria. Looking at typical sample answers made me realise that the answers provided as a solution are causing a great deal of the current problems, and that while there are 'sample answers,' good 'model answers' are scarce.

How is this course different?

To address these problems, I set out to produce model answers that set the right standard for the test. These models have been produced using a 40-minute time limit so that they reflect what a band 9 candidate can realistically produce in IELTS. It was a revelation to me that I had to change the way I normally plan in order to achieve band 9 Task response and Coherence and cohesion within the time limit. Whether working on a computer or on paper, without the right planning, my efforts were problematic in terms of these criteria. The truth is that teachers and professional writers seldom practise what we preach. As a result, we don't always appreciate the problems associated with successfully completing the task in exam conditions, and so our advice may not always be practical or effective. This is something I have tried to address throughout this course. The same advice applies whether you are taking the computer or paper version of the test.

A note for native speakers

Native speakers of English also take the IELTS test, sometimes as part of a visa or job application, or perhaps to help in their teaching. Many are disappointed to find that they can score band 9 in almost every paper except writing, where they often receive a score of band 6.5. Some see this as proof that the test is flawed, and even conclude that it is subjective. However, seeing the test this way means that they fail to address the problems in their writing that keep them below band 7.

In many English-speaking countries, discursive essay writing skills are generally not taught at a high level within a standard high-school curriculum. In an exam-driven education system, such skills are often only taught in courses where they will be assessed – if something isn't going to be tested then teachers are not motivated to spend valuable time on it in their lessons. Furthermore, while native speakers practise listening and speaking on a daily basis, the same cannot be said of reading and writing. Thus, in tests of written skills, band 9 does not automatically mean 'native-speaker level,' and a native speaker is just as capable of receiving a lower band in IELTS as a non-native speaker.

Speaking is as different to writing as walking is to dancing. While we walk on a daily basis, we dance far less often; while some enjoy dancing, others avoid it as much as possible. Like dancing, writing is connected to style, and your every-day dancing style is more likely to resemble a relaxed shuffle than a classical waltz. Thus, even if you are writing every day, for example, at work, it is unlikely that the style of writing you are doing is the same as that required to present a formal written argument. As with ballroom dancing, there are steps involved in this style of writing that need to be learned and practised until they become natural to you, and this course will show you how to perform those steps.

How to use this course

To improve your score, you must learn to apply the skills the examiner is looking for in your writing. Lessons 1 – 10 will help with this, so be sure to complete this section first, before moving on to the guided test practice section. Don't rush through the lessons – read, re-read, think, absorb, and be sure to complete the interactive practice exercises. Work at your own pace. Practising little and often is generally the best approach to take, and I've included ideas to help with this.

Throughout the lessons, you will be encouraged to review your writing. If you have done previous essays, have copies of these nearby. Reflect on your own writing problems and try to be systematic in the way that you work on fixing these. On my website, you will find a link to printable worksheets to guide you through any activities and help you organise your own notes. Print these out and have them next to you as you work through the lessons.

All of our language skills are linked in some way, and I have tried to make use of this by incorporating listening exercises as well as writing ones. These add variety, but I hope you will also find that they have a positive effect on your writing. During the thinking stage of writing, we hear our inner voice. Lower levels tend to think of ideas in their own language and then attempt to translate these word for word. At the higher levels, students can think in the language they will use to write, but it is more than likely that your inner voice makes the same mistakes as when you are speaking in English, and these mistakes will be reflected in your writing. The listening exercises not only offer variety but should also help improve your written accuracy.

NOTE:

The writing models in this course are in response to the Academic writing task 1 questions in the Cambridge IELTS 9 test practice book, as well as extra test questions I have written. In addition to my own model answers, there are some essays submitted to me by candidates who were continually scoring band 6.5 in writing, shared here with their permission. I will guide you through the problems in these essays and show you how to fix them to produce essays at band 8+.

To ensure that the scores in this course are accurate, it was edited by two wonderful colleagues with extensive experience in IELTS assessment and IELTS test writing, Sophie Walker and Megan Yucel. Their feedback and comments have been invaluable, and I am indebted to them both. Look out for a separate workbook for GT Task 1, which I plan to produce in the near future.

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SECTION ONE

DEVELOPING

TASK 1 ACADEMIC WRITING

SKILLS

LESSON 1 - Task achievement

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 1.1 Common problems in Task 1
- 1.2 How and why you may be practising Band 3-5
- 1.3 Writing a conclusion in Task 1

1.1 Common problems in writing Task 1

In lessons 1 and 2 we will explore the most common problems in writing task 1. These problems have been selected because each of them will keep your Task 1 score at band 6 or even lower.

Using the wrong materials

As with other parts of the test, many of the misunderstandings about Task 1 come from using the wrong materials for your practice. Some people try to justify this, telling me:

'Task 1 in IELTS is a graph of some kind so we can practice even using a random infographic.'

If you are using materials you find online, or that have been shared following a test, then you are not preparing for the real test. Materials used in the real test are carefully written and edited so that

- they are not confusing
- they don't require specialist or technical knowledge
- they force you to use (and therefore practise) the skills you need to show in the test

You will not find this in 'random infographics' you find online.

Task Achievement V Task Response

In writing task 2, you are assessed on how you **respond** to the task, while in writing task 1, the extent to which you **achieve** the task is being measured. This means that it is very important to follow the instructions you are given. These tell us that you need to:

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

Write at least 150 words.

In spite of this, most of the band 6 answers I see are written as though the instructions tell you to:

List all of the information you can see.

This problem may stem from using practice materials that don't reflect the real test. It is worth noting here that writing task 1 was changed in 2007. This is a sample task taken from the 2003 IELTS Handbook and shows what the task used to look like:

Academic Writing

WRITING TASK 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graph below shows the different modes of transportation used to travel to and from work in one European city, in 1950, 1970 and 1990.

Write a report for a University lecturer describing the information shown below.

Sample test from 2003 – notice the instructions

You should write at least 150 words.

Key

bus
car
bike
foot

Modes of transport and year

The chart displays the following data:

Year	Bus (%)	Car (%)	Bike (%)	Foot (%)
1950	18	5	0	0
1970	30	25	15	0
1990	15	8	0	10

Percentage of total travellers

Modes of transport and year

8 | IELTS Handbook 2003

As you can see, the instructions are different: before 2007 you were asked to '**Write a report *describing* the information shown.**' If you are using materials that are outdated, or tasks that only show a limited amount of data, then you are likely to practise describing, or listing, everything you see. This means you are not '**selecting**' or '**summarising**', which are two of the main **requirements** of this task.

Selecting information

'Selecting the main features' is clearly important if you want to 'achieve' this task. However, for many people this is easier said than done. It is particularly difficult if your education has focused on rote learning, copying texts, or writing according to a fixed formula.

A follower of my Facebook page made this comment:

'Let me explain this from (my country's) perspective: here logical, analytical aspects in writing are mostly ignored. We never learned to look at a graph and write reports about it even in our native language. I think we not only lack the language competence, but we also lack the ability to analyse! I just figured it out in early adulthood: I wrote like a robot when I was in high school and such a mindset follows us well into IELTS when template-learning is the norm.'

If this also applies to you, then you are probably making mistakes that will lower your Task achievement score. Looking at the band descriptors for Task achievement helps to see the impact of this:

Band	Task Achievement
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully satisfies all the requirements of the task • Clearly presents a fully developed response
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers all requirements of the task sufficiently • Presents, highlights, and illustrates key features clearly and appropriately
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers the requirements of the task • Presents a clear overview of main trends, differences or stages • Clearly presents and highlights key features but could be more fully extended
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses the requirements of the task • Presents an overview with information appropriately selected • Presents and adequately highlights key features but details may be irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate

As we can see, you will only reach band 7 in Task achievement if you ***cover the requirements** of the task, namely **summarising the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and making comparisons where relevant**. To reach band 6, each of these needs to be ***addressed**.

***Vocabulary note:** The verbs 'to cover' and 'to address' can both be used to mean 'to deal with'. However, '**covering the requirements**' suggests they are being done in a more complete way than 'addressing' them.

The band descriptors give us more information about what we need to do in task 1:

Band	Task Achievement
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully satisfies all the requirements of the task • Clearly presents a fully developed response
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers all requirements of the task sufficiently • Presents, highlights, and illustrates key features clearly and appropriately
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers the requirements of the task • Presents a clear overview of main trends, differences or stages • Clearly presents and highlights key features but could be more fully extended
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses the requirements of the task • Presents an overview with information appropriately selected • Presents and adequately highlights key features but details may be irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate

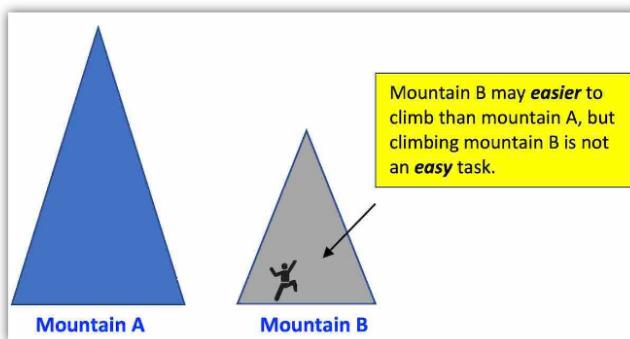
This tells us that, when writing a summary, there are some important do's and don'ts:

Do:
• select the main features
• present and highlight the key features (Band 7)
• make comparisons (where relevant)
• present a clear overview of main trends, differences, or stages (band 7)
Don't
• give details that are irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate (Band 6)

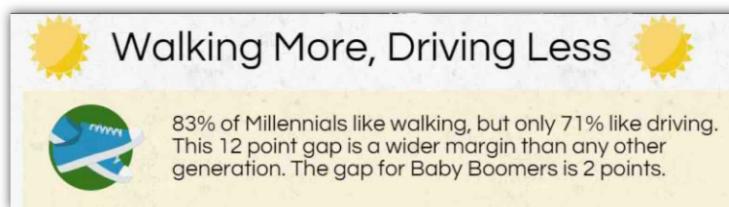
The Band 6 answers I see struggle with each of the 4 elements in the 'Do' list above, which tells me that people often do not know how to select and highlight features, or present a clear overview.

Underestimating the task: 'I'm not worried about Task 1, it's easy.'

Conversely, people also tell me that they are not worried about Writing Task 1 because it's 'easy.' Admittedly, it could be argued that Task 1 is 'easier' than writing Task 2 because you are given all of the information you need, and it is relatively short at only 150+ words. However, 'easier' is a relative term and is not the same as 'easy'.

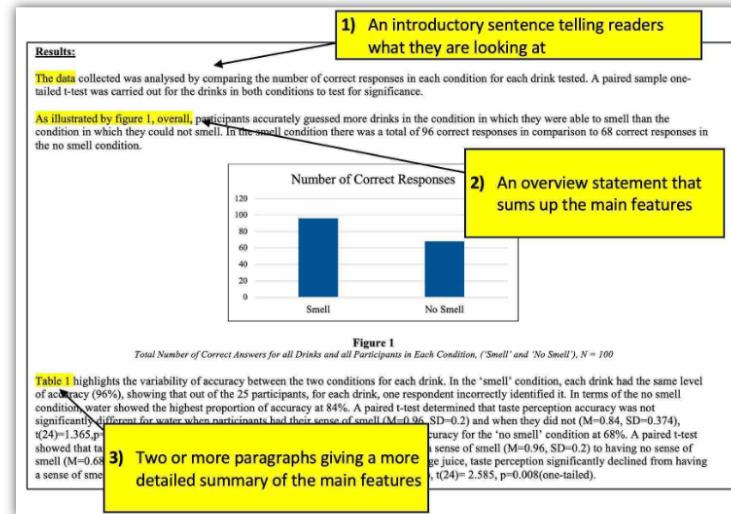


IELTS aims to be a 'valid' test of your language skills. This means that the tasks used to assess your level are similar to those you might expect to carry out in a real-world situation. In a professional setting, Task 1 can be compared to writing about a new manufacturing process; the results section of a company's annual report; or the results of a survey conducted by local government:



Extract from Community & Transportation Preferences Survey U.S. Metro Areas, 2015 July 23, 2015

In an academic context, this task is closest to the results section in a scientific paper or university assignment. The following image is an extract from one of my daughter's papers from her first year at university. I have added notes showing the main features:



Although you are not being asked to produce an academic piece of writing, the elements you need to include are very similar to those listed above. The lessons in this book will show you how you achieve these in your own writing. What I hope this sample shows you is that, although Task 1 is a short task, it should definitely not be dismissed as an easy one. In fact, in my view, it may be easier to get a low score in Task 1 than in Task 2.

1.2 How and Why you may be practising Bands 3 to 5 Task Achievement

Many people fail to show some of the key aspects of Task achievement in their Task 1 answers. This may occur because they want to spend as much time as possible on their task 2 answer, effectively 'stealing' time from writing task 1.

Looking at the lower bands, you can begin to see that writing too quickly could easily lower your score:

Band	Task Achievement
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Generally addresses the task, the format may be inappropriate in placesRecounts detail mechanically, with no clear overview; there may be no data to support the descriptionPresents but inadequately covers key features, there may be a tendency to focus on details
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Attempts to address the task but does not cover all key features; the format may be inappropriateMay confuse key features with detail; parts may be unclear, irrelevant, repetitive or inaccurate
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fails to understand the task, which may have been completely misunderstoodPresents limited ideas, which may be largely irrelevant/inaccurate or repetitive

I have seen examples of each of these problems in the sample answers sent to me – even those written by people who are currently scoring band 7 overall and hoping to reach band 8. This tells me that writing task 1 may be holding people back from their goal far more than they realise, as the following table shows:

Task 1 may be more of a problem than you think		
Task 1 Score	Task 2 Score	Overall score
7	9	8.5
7	8	8
6	8	7.5
5	8	7
5	7	6.5

If you don't take the time to select key features then you are more likely to 'recount details mechanically'. Similarly, if you don't then analyse these key features to identify the main trends, patterns, or stages, you will not be able to present a clear overview. Thus, Task achievement is linked to both time management and thinking before writing.

KEY IDEA:

You are likely to list or 'recount details mechanically' and lower your TA score if you begin writing as quickly as possible, and/or you are unsure about:

- the difference between details and key features
- how to clearly present and highlight key features
- how to give a clear overview
- how to select information.

Language issues - giving details that are inappropriate or inaccurate

As we saw earlier, a feature of Band 6 writing is that candidates may

give details that are irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate (Band 6)

Although presenting inaccurate details can come from writing the wrong information down (for example, writing 15% instead of 35%), at band 6 it is often the result of using words without an **awareness of style**, or it may even be the result of using the wrong tense or preposition. Because of this, accurate use of language will be a particular focus throughout the lessons in this book.

Flexibility and precision

To reach Band 7 in Lexical resource, you need to:

- use a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some **flexibility and precision**
- use less common lexical items **with some awareness of style and collocation**

Flexibility refers to your ability to explain something clearly even when you don't know exactly the right word to use. Nevertheless, the information and facts you give must be **accurate**, so even if you do not know exactly the right word, you still need to be precise.

To demonstrate this, look at the following sentences describing changes to a hospital that include adding a footpath so that people can reach a new cafe:

- A new pedestrian way** will be added so that visitors can get to the cafe.
- A new mall** will be added so that visitors can go to the cafe.

Although both candidates use the wrong words, the first candidate shows band 7 skills because they used the words they know with flexibility and enough precision for the reader to clearly understand what is being added. The second candidate had a similar issue but the result is an inaccurate detail' because a mall is a large shopping centre, and is not the same as a footpath.

If we think back to the real-world applications of this type of writing (writing up the results of research, summarising sales in an annual report, explaining how a new system works), we can see just how important this *precision* is. This is another important distinction between Task 1 and Task 2 – the facts you present *have to be correct* according to the data you are given.

Learning 'high-level' words

Problems often occur when people try to use vocabulary to impress rather than to accurately convey meaning.

"My teacher taught me this noun phrase “*wild fluctuation”. Is it wrong?" (see **vocabulary note**)

"I write 100-150 new words every day but don't manage to learn all of them."

As these comments show, a great deal of emphasis is put on teaching and learning 'less common' vocabulary to prepare for IELTS. This may be because it is easier to focus on this than on developing writing skills, which are difficult to explain and to measure. There is also a psychological element: learning long lists of words makes people feel as though they are working hard: '*Look how many words I learned this week!*' But this way of thinking gives a false sense of achievement and progress.

Previously I have compared this behaviour to a peacock, walking in a circle and proudly showing off your feathers.

Another bird also comes to mind here: the magpie who likes to collect objects because they are shiny or colourful, without knowing the difference between a diamond ring or a piece of plastic. So, when learning vocabulary, don't be a magpie, collecting words without understanding their value. Instead, the best approach is to focus on fully understanding the words you already know – learning how and when to use them effectively – while also occasionally adding more to your vocabulary bank. The vocabulary chapter of my free book (*The Key to IELTS Success*) explains how to do this.

***Vocabulary note:** To fluctuate means to frequently or continuously change levels or move up and down. Wild (adj.) = uncontrolled, violent, or extreme.

N.B. Although it is quite possible that the data you are given in a graph will fluctuate, it is highly unlikely that it will do so in a "wild way".

KEY IDEA: Learning words and phrases without thinking of their meaning or learning how and when it is appropriate to use them will keep you below band 7.

Synonyms and avoiding repetition

A second cause of using words inaccurately in task 1 is trying to avoid repetition. Attempting to use as many synonyms as possible creates problems in this task because of the need to be accurate. If you are given statistics related to a specific group (e.g. teenagers), then you cannot use a more general synonym (e.g. young people). Similarly, a tiger is a type of cat, but if we are given data for 'tigers' we cannot apply this to 'cats' in general. Remember, there are often times when the simplest word is the most accurate – don't worry too much about using it several times in your answer.

Practice

In the following exercise, you will practise finding and correcting vocabulary errors to make the language more accurate.

Click Here
to Practise

QUESTION 1

Complete Task A below. When you have finished, think about the questions in Task B, then click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

Task A)

Click on the problem word/s in sentences 1 - 5 and replace them with the more accurate word or phrase in the list below.

More accurate words:

slight fluctuations

rose

reached

fell

increased by

dropped

falling

- 1) The figure for motorcycles registered 50 thousand and underwent an increase of 20% over the next five years.
- 2) In contrast, despite tiny ebbs and flows, the consumption of fish remained relatively stable.
- 3) These two figures commenced at similar levels at around 150 grams but then chicken consumption fluctuated to 190 grams in 1989 and lamb consumption oscillated to 105 grams.
- 4) In spite of the slight declivitous trend in the first decade, calls generally increased over the period shown.
- 5) The figure plummeted from 6 percent to 5.8 percent between 1995 and 2000.

Task B)

- 1) Which of these problems could affect the Task achievement score because the details are inaccurate?
- 2) Which sentence is presenting a minor detail and not a key feature and so should be rewritten or deleted from the answer?

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Complete Task A below. When you have finished, think about the questions in Task B, then click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

Task A)

Click on the problem word/s in sentences 1 - 5 and replace them with the more accurate word or phrase in the list below.

More accurate words:

slight fluctuations

rose

reached

fell

increased by

dropped

falling

- 1) The figure for motorcycles registered **X** 50 thousand and **underwent an increase of X** 20% over the next five years.
- 2) In contrast, despite **tiny ebbs and flows X**, the consumption of fish remained relatively stable.
- 3) These two figures commenced at similar levels at around 150 grams but then chicken consumption **fluctuated X** to 190 grams in 1989 and lamb consumption **oscillated X** to 105 grams.
- 4) In spite of the slight **declivitous X** trend in the first decade, calls generally increased over the period shown.
- 5) The figure **plummeted X** from 6 percent to 5.8 percent between 1995 and 2000.

Task B)

- 1) Which of these problems could affect the Task achievement score because the details are inaccurate?

- 2) Which sentence is presenting a minor detail and not a key feature and so should be rewritten or deleted from the answer?

The answer:

- 1) The figure for motorcycles **reached** 50 thousand and **increased by** 20% over the next five years. 2) In contrast, despite **slight fluctuations**, the consumption of fish remained relatively stable. 3) These two figures commenced at similar levels at around 150 grams but then chicken consumption **rose##increased** to 190 grams in 1989 and lamb consumption **fell##dropped** to 105 grams. 4) In spite of the slight **falling** trend in the first decade, calls generally increased over the period shown. 5) The figure **dropped##fell** from 6 percent to 5.8 percent between 1995 and 2000. Task B) 1) Which of these problems could affect the Task achievement score because the details are inaccurate? 2) Which sentence is presenting a minor detail and not a key feature and so should be rewritten or deleted from the answer?

Task A**Vocabulary notes**

- 1) a machine or measuring instrument can 'register' a number (show this number) but a 'figure' cannot do very much; we use 'undergo' with a negative experience - it is not appropriate for talking about a rise or fall in numbers
- 2) we only refer to 'ebbs and flows' when talking about a tide or perhaps when writing literature or poetry
- 3) to fluctuate means to go up and down repeatedly; to oscillate means to move or change repeatedly and is used with a needle on a dial (e.g. a speedometer)
- 4) a declivity is a trough and is a very technical word possibly only used in geography - declivitous does not exist
- 5) to plummet means to fall very steeply and sharply - this is inaccurate here as the figure only fell very slightly.

Task B

- 1) Numbers 3 and 5 are most likely to affect the TA score as these give inaccurate details.

- 2) Sentence 5 is a minor detail and so should be deleted or rewritten.

All done !

1.3 Writing a conclusion in Task 1

Having looked at why you may be giving details that are 'inaccurate' we also need to understand how or why you may be giving details that are **irrelevant or inappropriate** (Band 6)

Irrelevant or inappropriate details

In my view, the meaning of the term 'irrelevant details' is not as clear as it could be. In fact, I did not fully understand the implications of the term myself until a few years ago. The best way to understand it is in the context of the real-world examples I gave earlier. When writing the 'Results' section of a document, the information is presented as objectively as possible – without personal opinions. Any discussion of what the results **mean** is presented in another part of the paper – the Discussion section – and so is **irrelevant** here. This means that you should **not** give any personal conclusions about the information in the task, for example:

The bar chart and the table show that when people eat more they have a higher risk of developing diabetes. This suggests that people should eat less to avoid diabetes.

We can find evidence for this in examiner comments in the more up-to-date Cambridge test books (books 9 onwards). Look at the following example from page 134 of Cambridge IELTS 11:

Candidate sample (band 6):

"The charts show the percentage of the British students, who are able to speak languages other than English, in 2000 and in 2010. In 2000, 20% of the British students were not able to speak another language. But in 2010 the number has decreased to 10%, which is good because it shows that more people have learned other languages well."

The examiner makes the following comment:

There is some repetition of information and some irrelevant commentary

and then tells us which part this refers to:

(which is good because it shows that more people have learned other languages well).

Again, older materials might cause a problem here. In the early practice test books, even model answers produced by examiners contained comments that would be seen as irrelevant or inappropriate in the present exam, and they also lack a clear overview. This is because these were not assessed in the first version of the test.

KEY IDEA: Be sure to use the most up-to-date materials for your test practice. Use Cambridge IELTS books 9 onwards and look for updated or second editions of any course books.

Practice

In this exercise, you will practice identifying **irrelevant details**.

**Click Here
to Practise**

'I saw a video that said in Task 1 you need to give a conclusion to get a high score.'

I am often told about this advice, which I believe can cause problems if it is misunderstood. Many people understand the word conclusion to mean '*a final paragraph that sums up your ideas and makes your own position clear.*' As we saw above, writing a conclusion like this can lower your TA score as your position or personal views are 'irrelevant' here. Task 1 is a brief summary and is quite different to the essay you will produce in Task 2. If your Task 1 answers look similar to your Task 2 essays then it is likely that you are not '**covering the requirements of the task**' (band 7).

A summary is a piece of text that would normally be one part of a much longer document. As such, it does not need a conclusion. Some writers do prefer to 'conclude' their summary with an overview – this means that the overview statement comes at the end of their answer. However, this is not a 'conclusion' in the sense of a Task 2 essay – it is simply one way to 'conclude' or 'finish' the summary. You can see examples of this in sample answers produced by examiners in the most up-to-date Cambridge test books. For example:

Cambridge IELTS 9, page 164:

'To sum up, although local fixed line calls were still the most popular in 2002, the gap between the three categories had narrowed considerably over the second half of the period in question.'

You can find a similar example in Practice book 10 (page 167). In each case, what may look like a 'conclusion' is actually the overview. I only found one example where the overview is given twice – once at the beginning and again at the end, again, to act as a 'conclusion'. This is not at all necessary and attempting to do this will **create more work** for you as you need to paraphrase your own overview to avoid any repetition. More importantly, **I do not believe this can be done well under test conditions**, even by expert writers, especially if you hope to produce a good writing Task 2 answer.

Many people contact me after their writing test and tell me that they ran out of time and didn't complete Task 1. As we have seen, this can have a big impact on your overall score. Writing a clear overview is important to reach band 6 or 7 in Task 1, and this is why I advise you to prioritise it and write it early in your answer. In my own models, you will see that I always write the overview statement immediately after the introduction. This is my personal preference and feels right to me. Furthermore, it is the convention in many academic papers to give a general overview before going into the details (see the sample at the start of this lesson).

It is very important to remember that you are preparing to take a test – a test where we know what the examiner is looking for. Your job, and the aim of this book, is to practise producing an answer that will meet the criteria for band 7 and above. We are not taking our time to produce clever answers to put in a book. This is why you will not find any ‘conclusions’ in my models, which have all been assessed as being Band 9 answers.

KEY IDEA: Remember, you are preparing for a test – a test where we know what the examiner is looking for. Your job is to practise producing answers that will meet the criteria for band 7 and above. We are not trying to write clever answers, or show off special language we have learned.

Extra practice

- Look through your previous task 1 answers and use the following checklist to help you decide how well you ‘achieved’ the task. N.B. It is very important to only look at your answers based on the Cambridge IELTS books 9 onwards.

Look through your previous task 1 writing. To check if you ‘achieved’ the task, see how many of these boxes can you tick - NB only tick the box if you are sure, leave it blank if the answer is ‘No’, or ‘I’m not sure’.



- 1 Did you select information before you began writing?
- 2 Did you make comparisons? (NB this does not apply to most process tasks)
- 3 Were the details you gave always accurate?
- 4 Were the details you gave ‘relevant’ to the task (i.e. not a personal conclusion).
- 5 Did you highlight the key information? (can you point to where you did this in your answer?)
- 6 Did you give a clear overview of the main patterns or trends?
- 7 Did you use accurate synonyms of the words on the question paper?
- 8 Are you confident that the words you used help to present the information accurately or did you use them to show off some high-level words and phrases?

- How many boxes could you tick? If your answers are mostly **No** or **I am not sure**, then your Task achievement score in these tasks is probably band 6 or lower. The boxes that are still clear show the skills you still need to develop.

QUESTION 1

Look carefully at the language used in the following sentences and decide the sentences contain irrelevant details that should be deleted. To help, think about whether it is possible to show these details in visual information.

When you have finished, click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

	OK to include	Contains irrelevant details
1. In terms of the size of the railways system, London, for certain, has the largest underground railway system.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The amount of energy used started to decrease in 2014, which is good because it shows that people were trying to save electricity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. The changes in emissions are probably connected to changes in economic development and better technology being available.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. The size of the town centre will increase and therefore the countryside will disappear.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. The use of sustainable energy sources is expected to remain relatively insignificant in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. The increase in fridge and washing machine ownership is evidence of a rise in living standards and a trend to lifestyles based on comfort and convenience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. The first step in this process is the most difficult because the animal skins have to be cut very carefully.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Look carefully at the language used in the following sentences and decide the sentences contain irrelevant details that should be deleted. To help, think about whether it is possible to show these details in visual information.

When you have finished, click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

1. In terms of the size of the railways system, London, for certain, has the largest underground railway system.
2. The amount of energy used started to decrease in 2014, which is good because it shows that people were trying to save electricity.
3. The changes in emissions are probably connected to changes in economic development and better technology being available.
4. The size of the town centre will increase and therefore the countryside will disappear.
5. The use of sustainable energy sources is expected to remain relatively insignificant in the future.
6. The increase in fridge and washing machine ownership is evidence of a rise in living standards and a trend to lifestyles based on comfort and convenience.
7. The first step in this process is the most difficult because the animal skins have to be cut very carefully.

OK to include	Contains irrelevant details
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1. This is a key feature that can be shown in a table or chart.
2. We cannot show this detail in visual information: 'it shows that people were trying to save electricity'. Making statements like this: 'which is good because it shows that' is a sign that you are making a personal comment and you should not do this in task 1.
3. The comment, 'are probably connected to changes in economic development and better technology being available.' is irrelevant here. If you use words like 'probably' in Task 1, then you are making a personal comment about what the information shows and you should not do this.
4. This is a key feature that can be shown visually on a map or plan.
5. This is a future prediction that can be shown in a graph or chart.
6. This is an irrelevant comment: 'is evidence of a rise in living standards and a trend to lifestyles based on comfort and convenience.' In task 1, if you say that something 'is evidence of' something else, then you are drawing a conclusion about what the information shows and you should not do this in task 1.
7. Saying that a step in a process is 'the most difficult' means you are making a personal judgement about it and you must not do this in task 1.

All done !

LESSON 2 - Coherence and cohesion problems in Task 1

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 2.1 Is Coherence and cohesion different in Task 1?
- 2.2 Coherence and cohesion between and within sentences
- 2.3 Lack of progression and clear organisation

2.1 Is Coherence and cohesion different in Task 1?

The following comment shows a problem with coherence and cohesion:

I think I understand how CC works in task 2 ... (thanks to your (Task 2) book I've learned to connect ideas ...), but I have little idea how to do the same in task 1... I'm having a hard time imagining what a main idea in task 1 look like.

Many people feel that because Task 1 is different, coherence and cohesion must also work differently here. There is some truth in this, which we can see by comparing this criterion in Task 1 and Task 2:

	Coherence and cohesion in Task 1	Coherence and cohesion in Task 2
Band 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logically organises information and ideas, there is clear progression throughout • Uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logically organises information and ideas, there is clear progression throughout • Uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use • Presents a clear central topic within each paragraph
Band 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression • Uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical • May not always use referencing clearly or appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression • Uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical • May not always use referencing clearly or appropriately • Uses paragraphing but not always appropriately

The green highlighting shows the similarities, and the yellow shows the one difference in Task 1: there is no requirement to have a 'clear central topic' and no mention of paragraphing. This may be why a lot of the answers I see either present all of the details in one body paragraph or have two paragraphs where the break appears to be chosen at random – when I ask how the information is organised, they often cannot tell me.

If we read the criterion more carefully, we learn that a Band 8 candidate '**uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately**', while a Band 9 candidate '**skillfully manages paragraphing**'. To reach Band 6 or 7, we are told that you must '**arrange information coherently**' (Band 6) or '**logically**' (Band 7), and an examiner comment about a band 6.5 answer (IELTS 10, page 165) says the following: 'Referencing and substitution are well managed, **however, there are lapses in paragraphing**'. All of which tells us that paragraphs are more important than many people realise.

In Task 1, we are not responding to or presenting an argument, so we do not need to think about the PEEL structure. However, I am not aware of any way to show a logical 'arrangement' of information **without** using separate paragraphs, and making the 'main point' of each paragraph clear will clearly signal this arrangement to your examiner. Thus, although we do not need to think about paragraphs **in the same way** as in Task 2, we should not ignore paragraphing altogether.

KEY IDEA: Remember, your aim here is to **pass a test**. To do that, you need to signal very clearly that you are meeting the criteria being used to assess your answer. With Coherence and cohesion, clearly showing the **logical organisation** of your paragraphs is important if you want to score band 6 or above.

Are you practising band 3-5 Coherence and cohesion?

In Lesson 1, I made the point that it may be easier to achieve a low score in Task 1 than people realise, because many underestimate the importance of the task and try to answer hurriedly. As with Task achievement, doing so can result in Band 3-5 coherence and cohesion errors. The highlighted text in this table shows what these are:

Band	Coherence and cohesion
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression Makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices May be repetitive because of a lack of referencing and substitution
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response Uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not organise ideas logically May use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas

As we can see, a lack of overall progression, repetition, and inaccurate use of cohesive devices can all lead to a lower score here. I have seen several of these elements in sample answers sent to me by candidates who are repeatedly scoring band 6.5 in writing, and even in those who are scoring band 7 or 7.5 overall and aiming for Band 8. I have even seen examples of Band 3 (does not organise ideas logically), a problem I have never seen in the Task 2 samples people send me.

Using cohesive devices effectively (band 6) and inaccurately (Band 5)

People often think of Coherence and cohesion in terms of common cohesive devices, and then learn lists of these to use in their writing. I was recently sent 12 lists like this, with headings such as: **Comparison, Contrast, Cause / effect, Emphasis, Addition**.

Presenting linking words and phrases under one heading is a convenient way to start learning about them and such lists can be useful to post on a classroom wall as a helpful reminder to students. However, such devices are not always exact synonyms of each other. For example, '**however**' and '**although**' are both used to show contrast, but they are not used in the same way, so we cannot just substitute one for another. Furthermore, learning lists like this tends to mean that these 'devices' are used mechanically, without an understanding of how they work. This is a little like using a screwdriver to hammer in a nail.



The screwdriver **is** a useful tool, but it won't work for this purpose, in other words, it will not be **effective**.

Cohesive devices

The following extract is part of a sample answer based on a writing task question from Cambridge IELTS 7. The highlighted words and phrases show how people typically think of cohesive devices and cohesion **between** sentences:

¹**First**, chicken consumption stood at 150 grams for every person per week in 1979. ²**After this**, it witnessed a slight rise in its value throughout the given period to reach 250 grams in 2004.
³**On contrary**, beef consumption, which recorded a high of just above 200 grams in 1979, showed a slight initial growth in its level in the following 10 years before declining significantly to end at approximately half its starting level by 2004. ⁴**Likewise**, lamb which was consumed at an identical rate to chicken in 1979, showed a marked drop in its consumption throughout the next 25 years to hit a low of about 60 grams per week in 2004.
⁵**Also**, Fish consumption, despite showing a minimal decrease in the first 5 years, it remained stable throughout the following 20 years to report a shy of 50 grams per person per week in 2004.

As you can see, there is a 'device' being used between each sentence, which gives the **appearance** of cohesion. However, some of these words and phrases are being used rather mechanically. This is like picking up any tool you can find without thinking about how to use it. As a result, they are either inappropriate or inaccurate.

Practice

Look at the following list and match the highlighted words and phrases in the sample above (numbers 1-5) with the appropriate problem/s (A-D). You may use any letter more than once.

- A. it should not be used in this context (it is inaccurate or inappropriate here)
- B. it can be too informal
- C. there is a collocation problem

See The
Answers

This is a good example of band 6 use of cohesive devices, which 'may be faulty or mechanical'. However, as most are being used **inaccurately**, this also shows some elements of Band 5 coherence and cohesion.

Notice that many of these problems are similar to those with Lexical resource (collocation problems, too informal, the wrong meaning or use). This again shows that learning lists of words or phrases without understanding them fully is not a good idea.

**Answers**

- 1) A (this is more likely to be used in a process task)
- 2) A (this is more likely to be used in a process task)
- 3) A and C: There is a collocation error - it should say 'On the contrary', and this phrase is used to correct something. 'In contrast' should be used here.
- 4) B This can be too informal when used at the beginning of a sentence. 'Similarly' is better here.
- 5) B 'also' is not used at the start of a sentence – doing so makes it seem like spoken language and so it too informal here.

2.2 Coherence and cohesion between and within sentences

Learning lists of cohesive devices creates another problem: it puts the emphasis at the **beginning** of a sentence and on sentence linkers. However, cohesion is being assessed both **between and within** your sentences, so it is important to think about cohesive devices more broadly.

Look at the highlighted words in the following sentence:

This is like picking up any tool you can find without thinking about how to use **it**.

The highlighted pronouns are cohesive devices. We can see that **it** refers to 'a tool' because it is **within** the same sentence, but we do not know what **'This'** refers to without looking at the previous sentence, so it is an example of a cohesion **between** sentences.

Here is the complete paragraph with different colours showing which ideas are being connected:

As you can see, there is a 'device' being used between each sentence, which gives the **appearance** of cohesion. However, some of these words and phrases are being used rather mechanically. This is like picking up any tool you can find without thinking about how to use it. As a result, they are either inappropriate or inaccurate.

Practice

In this exercise, you will identify the type of cohesive devices being used in the paragraph above.

Click Here
to Practise

Assessing Coherence and cohesion

Looking back at our earlier sample, the highlighted areas below show the types of language your examiner is actually considering when assessing your use of cohesive devices within and between sentences:

First, chicken consumption stood at 150 grams for every person per week in 1979. **After this**, it witnessed a slight rise in **its value** throughout **the given period** to reach 250 grams in 2004.

On contrary, beef consumption, **which** recorded a high of just above 200 grams in 1979, showed a slight initial growth in **its level** in **the following** 10 years **before** declining significantly to end at approximately half **its starting level** by 2004. **Likewise**, lamb **which** was consumed at **an identical rate to** chicken in 1979, showed a marked drop in **its consumption** throughout **the next 25 years** to hit a low of about 60 grams per week in 2004. **Also**, Fish consumption, **despite** showing a minimal decrease in **the first 5 years**, **it** remained stable throughout **the following 20 years** to report a **shy of** 50 grams per person per week in 2004.

Each of the highlighted words and phrases have an impact on how the information is connected and whether this is being done clearly and logically (so that we know what is being referred back to and understand how these ideas are connected). I used red to show the inaccurate use of cohesive devices (we will go into this in more detail in a later lesson when we look at the data being described). Notice that many of the errors are due to the cohesive devices often learned in a list and used mechanically (or template style) at the beginning of sentences.

Using cohesive devices to avoid repetition

Repetition is a particular problem in Task 1 because you are generally dealing with a single topic throughout, and often have to refer to the same periods of time or the same type of products, goods, or services. Band 5 mentions that an answer may be repetitive because of a 'lack of referencing and substitution', and these are both important in reducing repetition in your answer.

As this extract shows, the sample above manages this well (I have made corrections to the vocabulary where necessary):

In contrast, beef consumption, **which recorded** a high of just above 200 grams in 1979, showed a slight growth in **the following 10 years** before declining significantly to end at approximately **half its initial level** by 2004.

Without the use of cohesive devices, this is what the sentence would say (notice the repetition):

In contrast, beef consumption recorded a high of just above 200 grams in 1979 and beef consumption grew to slightly above 200 grams from 1979 to 1989 then beef consumption declined significantly to approximately half beef's 1979 level by 2004.

For me, it is this level of control **within** sentences that makes this answer Band 6 for coherence and cohesion rather than Band 5.

Practice

Because they have different uses and different meanings, not all connecting words and phrases are appropriate for the different Task 1 questions. The following exercises will help you think about when (or whether) a specific connector might be helpful in your writing and practise using them accurately. In the final task, you will correct some common errors in cohesive devices. If you find this too difficult, just make notes about any problems you can see. When you have completed each exercise, click on 'show answers' to see the answers and my comments.

Click Here
to Practise

If you had any problems in these exercises, be sure to return to it later and practise again.

KEY IDEA: As we saw with vocabulary, it is not a good idea to learn lists of cohesive devices without thinking of their meaning and learning how and when it is appropriate to use them.

As you can see, there is a ‘device’ being used between each sentence, ¹which gives the **appearance** of cohesion. ²However, ³some of these words and phrases are being used rather mechanically. ⁴This is like picking up any **tool** you can find without thinking about how to use ⁵it. ⁶As a result, ⁷they are ⁸either inappropriate ⁹or inaccurate.

QUESTION 1

Look at the numbered words and phrases (1-9) and match them to the following types of cohesive devices.

- A) linking words or phrases used between sentences
 - B) pronoun (it, this, they, these etc.)
 - C) relative pronouns (which, where, that, etc.)
 - D) conjunctions (and, but, or, etc.)
 - E) substitution (both, some, each, neither + a synonym)

Write your answers below and click on 'show answers' when you have finished.



Show answers

As you can see, there is a 'device' being used between each sentence, ¹which gives the **appearance** of cohesion. ²However, ³some of these words and phrases are **being used rather mechanically**. ⁴This is like picking up any **tool** you can find without thinking about how to use ⁵it. ⁶As a result, ⁷they are ⁸either inappropriate ⁹or inaccurate.

QUESTION 1

Look at the numbered words and phrases (1-9) and match them to the following types of cohesive devices.

- A) linking words or phrases used between sentences
- B) pronoun (it, this, they, these etc.)
- C) relative pronouns (which, where, that, etc.)
- D) conjunctions (and, but, or, etc.)
- E) substitution (both, some, each, neither + a synonym)

Write your answers below and click on 'show answers' when you have finished.

¶ ↪ ⌂ B I S U ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ⚭ 🔴 🔵 🔳

- 1 C
- 2 A
- 3 E
- 4 B
- 5 B
- 6 A
- 7 B
- 8 D
- 9 D

All done !

QUESTION 1

- 1) Fill in the gap in the sentence by dragging and dropping the correct word from the list.
 2) When you have finished, decide which of these words you would use for: a process task; a bar chart or graph.

In contrast First Meanwhile Besides Likewise On the contrary While However Also Initially Similarly In comparison Although Furthermore

- 1) _____ is used to show contrast between two ideas or sentences and highlights this contrast.
- 2) _____ is used to show contrast within a sentence but does not highlight the contrast.
- 3) _____ is used in a similar way to although.
- 4) _____ is used to add new information that is even more important than the previous information.
- 5) _____ is used within a sentence to add new information that is similar to the previously mentioned information.
- 6) _____ is used to introduce the first step in a process.
- 7) _____ is used to show you are talking about what happened at the start of something and later changed.
- 8) _____ is used to show something followed a similar pattern or trend to something else.
- 9) _____ is used to show you are talking about the difference between two things.
- 10) _____ is used to show you are comparing two things.
- 11) _____ is used to show something happened, or happens, at the same time as something else, or to say what happened while waiting for something else to happen.

QUESTION 2

Fill in the gaps in the sentences below using one of the words or phrases from exercise 1. NB You need to use some of the words more than once.

Possible words:

although, also, furthermore, first, however, in comparison, in contrast, initially, meanwhile, similarly, while

- (1) _____, the number of male students increased each year. _____, in 1990, this figure began to fall.
- (2) _____ the number of male students increased steadily in the first decade, from 1990 onwards the trend was reversed.
- (3) Chicken consumption rose slowly in the first twenty years then increased rapidly. Lamb consumption _____ followed this trend up until 1990.
- (4) Chicken consumption rose slowly in the first twenty years then increased rapidly. _____, lamb consumption rose steadily then more rapidly. _____, it remained at a relatively low level _____ to chicken.
- (5) Chicken consumption rose slowly in the first twenty years then increased rapidly, _____ beef consumption fell almost continually throughout this period.
- (6) _____, the raw materials are delivered to the factory.

QUESTION 3

Each of these sentences has a common mistake with different types of cohesive devices. Decide what the mistake is and then try to correct it if you can. Write your answers below and click on 'show answers' when you have finished.

- 1) Lamb which was consumed at an identical rate to chicken in 1979, showed a marked drop in its consumption throughout the next 25 years.
- 2) Looking at the information in more detail, at 6:00am the proportion of radio listeners was about 8% and no one watched television at that time.
- 3) Turkey was the least popular destination which had only 3 million visitors.
- 4) In the case of spending on research of development, developing countries saw a downward trend. However, in industrialised countries, expenditure on research and development continued to rise.
- 5) Two groups of houses will be built on either side of the reception area, which they are connected by footpaths.
- 6) Fish consumption, despite showing a minimal decrease in the first 5 years, it remained stable throughout the following 20 years.
- 7) Although this figure continued to rise until 2008, but it began to fall again in the following decade.
- 8) However, the figure for TV fluctuated, but the trend was upward.



Show answers

QUESTION 1

- 1) Fill in the gap in the sentence by dragging and dropping the correct word from the list.
 2) When you have finished, decide which of these words you would use for: a process task; a bar chart or graph.

In contrast First Meanwhile Besides Likewise On the contrary While However Also Initially Similarly In comparison Although Furthermore

- 1) is used to show contrast between two ideas or sentences and highlights this contrast.
- 2) is used to show contrast within a sentence but does not highlight the contrast.
- 3) is used in a similar way to although.
- 4) is used to add new information that is even more important than the previous information.
- 5) is used within a sentence to add new information that is similar to the previously mentioned information.
- 6) is used to introduce the first step in a process.
- 7) is used to show you are talking about what happened at the start of something and later changed.
- 8) is used to show something followed a similar pattern or trend to something else.
- 9) is used to show you are talking about the difference between two things.
- 10) is used to show you are comparing two things.
- 11) is used to show something happened, or happens, at the same time as something else, or to say what happened while waiting for something else to happen.

The answer:

- 1) However is used to show contrast between two ideas or sentences and highlights this contrast.
- 2) Although is used to show contrast within a sentence but does not highlight the contrast.
- 3) While is used in a similar way to although.
- 4) Furthermore is used to add new information that is even more important than the previous information.
- 5) Also is used within a sentence to add new information that is similar to the previously mentioned information.
- 6) First is used to introduce the first step in a process.
- 7) Initially is used to show you are talking about what happened at the start of something and later changed.
- 8) Similarly is used to show something followed a similar pattern or trend to something else.
- 9) In contrast is used to show you are talking about the difference between two things.
- 10) In comparison is used to show you are comparing two things.
- 11) Meanwhile is used to show something happened, or happens, at the same time as something else, or to say what happened while waiting for something else to happen.

'However, Although, also, Similarly, In contrast, In comparison, and while' could all be used in any type of task 1.

'First' and 'Initially' are more suitable for process tasks.

'Meanwhile' is only suitable for a process task if it is very clear two things are happening at the same time. It could be used when describing a table (or similar chart). For example, a table giving a snapshot of 2 or more areas in one particular year, or with no time element.

Furthermore should only be used if it is clear that the new information is more important.

QUESTION 2

Fill in the gaps in the sentences below using one of the words or phrases from exercise 1. NB You need to use some of the words more than once.

Possible words:

although, also, furthermore, first, however, in comparison, in contrast, initially, meanwhile, similarly, while

- (1) , the number of male students increased each year. , in 1990, this figure began to fall.
- (2) the number of male students increased steadily in the first decade, from 1990 onwards the trend was reversed.
- (3) Chicken consumption rose slowly in the first twenty years then increased rapidly. Lamb consumption followed this trend up until 1990.
- (4) Chicken consumption rose slowly in the first twenty years then increased rapidly. , lamb consumption rose steadily then more rapidly. , it remained at a relatively low level to chicken.
- (5) Chicken consumption rose slowly in the first twenty years then increased rapidly. beef consumption fell almost continually throughout this period.
- (6) , the raw materials are delivered to the factory.

The answer:

- (1) Initially, the number of male students increased each year. However, in 1990, this figure began to fall.
- (2) Although / While the number of male students increased steadily in the first decade, from 1990 onwards the trend was reversed.
- (3) Chicken consumption rose slowly in the first twenty years then increased rapidly. Lamb consumption also followed this trend up until 1990.
- (4) Chicken consumption rose slowly in the first twenty years then increased rapidly. Similarly, lamb consumption rose steadily then more rapidly. However, it remained at a relatively low level in comparison to chicken.
- (5) Chicken consumption rose slowly in the first twenty years then increased rapidly, while beef consumption fell almost continually throughout this period.
- (6) First, the raw materials are delivered to the factory.

QUESTION 3

Each of these sentences has a common mistake with different types of cohesive devices. Decide what the mistake is and then try to correct it if you can. Write your answers below and click on 'show answers' when you have finished.

- 1) Lamb which was consumed at an identical rate to chicken in 1979, showed a marked drop in its consumption throughout the next 25 years.
- 2) Looking at the information in more detail, at 6:00am the proportion of radio listeners was about 8% and no one watched television at that time.
- 3) Turkey was the least popular destination which had only 3 million visitors.
- 4) In the case of spending on research of development, developing countries saw a downward trend. However, in industrialised countries, expenditure on research and development continued to rise.
- 5) Two groups of houses will be built on either side of the reception area, which they are connected by footpaths.
- 6) Fish consumption, despite showing a minimal decrease in the first 5 years, it remained stable throughout the following 20 years.
- 7) Although this figure continued to rise until 2008, but it began to fall again in the following decade.
- 8) However, the figure for TV fluctuated, but the trend was upward.



Corrections and notes

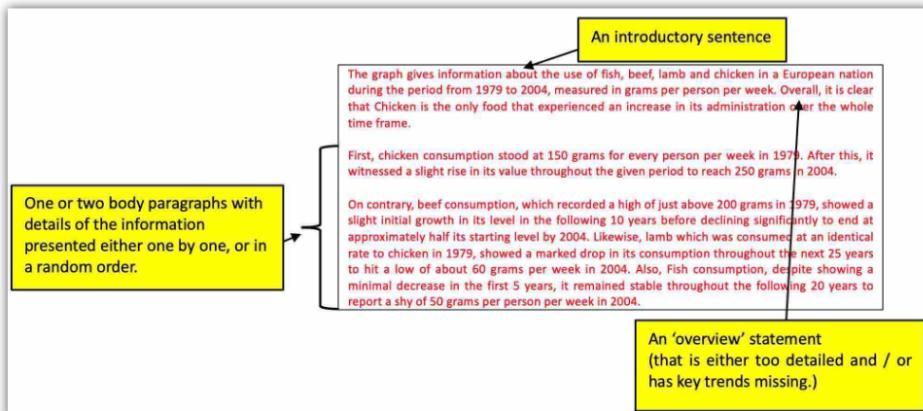
- 1) Lamb, which was consumed at an identical rate to chicken in 1979, showed a marked drop in consumption throughout the next 25 years.
(Notice the comma before 'which'. We do not need 'it' in this sentence.)
- 2) Looking at the information in more detail, at 6:00am the proportion of radio listeners was about 8% but // while no one watched television at that time. (There is a contrast here so we need to use but or while instead of 'and').
- 3) Turkey, which was the least popular destination, had only 3 million visitors.
(Notice the position of 'which' and the use of commas).
- 4) In the case of spending on research of development, developing countries saw a downward trend. However, in industrialised countries, such expenditure // this type of expenditure continued to rise. (We need to use substitution here to avoid repetition).
- 5) Two groups of houses, (which will be) connected by footpaths, will be built on either side of the reception area.
(Notice the position of the relative clause and the use of commas. NB I have used brackets to show we can omit 'which will be' to avoid repetition of 'will be'.)
- 6) Fish consumption, despite showing a minimal decrease in the first 5 years, remained stable throughout the following 20 years.
(We do not need 'it' here. We can also write: Despite showing a minimal decrease in the first 5 years, fish consumption remained stable throughout the following 20 years. (This order is more natural and is easier to read).)
- 7) Although this figure continued to rise until 2008, it began to fall again in the following decade.
(We do not need 'but' here - Although tells us there is a contrast within the two clauses in the sentence)
- 8) Although the figure for TV fluctuated, the trend was upward.
(However shows contrast between sentences - 'although' is used to show contrast within the sentence, so we do not need 'but' here.)

All done !

2.3 Lack of progression and clear organisation

At the beginning of this lesson, I made the point that paragraphing is important in Task 1. Without clear paragraphing there is often a lack of overall progression (Band 5) and a lack of clear organisation, which is needed for Band 7. The sample answer we saw earlier shows a common problem with this.

This is what the paragraphs in the complete answer looked like:



If we look at the first sentence in each body paragraph, we have no sense of the organisation here. Why has one short paragraph been devoted to chicken? What is the main idea or purpose of the final paragraph?

Another problem helps to show why we cannot easily fix the problems we saw with the inaccurate use of cohesive devices in this answer. I have removed these devices to show the individual sentences below. What do you notice about the organisation of the information?

- *Chicken consumption* stood at 150 grams for every person per week *in 1979* ... it witnessed a slight rise in its value throughout the given period to reach 250 grams *in 2004*.
- *Beef consumption*, which recorded a high of just above 200 grams *in 1979*, showed a slight initial growth in its level in the following 10 years before declining significantly to end at approximately half its starting level *by 2004*.
- *Lamb*, which was consumed at an identical rate to chicken *in 1979*, showed a marked drop in its consumption throughout the next 25 years to hit a low of about 60 grams per week *in 2004*.
- *Fish consumption*, despite showing a minimal decrease *in the first 5 years*, it remained stable throughout the following 20 years to report a shy of 50 grams per person per week *in 2004*.

Did you notice that every sentence follows almost exactly the same pattern? The writer presents a category (chicken, beef, lamb, or fish), then gives information about 1979 and finishes with information about 2004. If we tried to use this summary to sketch or recreate the graph, it would be very difficult to do so, which shows it does not give us a clear picture of the information.

While there is some logic to the organisation (writing about each category in turn), it is repetitive and presents each piece of information one by one as though in a list. As we saw earlier, the attempts to link the sentences (using '*First*, *Likewise*, etc.) are not successful. Because of this, there is no overall sense of progression here.

Doing this causes a bigger problem: discussing each category separately means that there is very little comparison here, which is one of the key requirements for the task. So, writing about the information in this way can create problems for both Task achievement and Coherence and cohesion. I have seen this problem repeatedly in the sample answers sent to me. We will return to this writing task in lesson 5 to address these issues.

KEY IDEA: If you organise the information in your summary in a 'list' this can lower your TA and CC score, because there is a lack of progression (CC) and you are less likely to make comparisons (TA).

Now that we have identified the most important problems in Task 1, in lessons 3 to 5 we will look at how to address these problems before going on to look at issues that arise in the different types of task you may find in the test.

Extra practice

- Look through your previous task 1 answers and use the following checklist to think about Coherence and cohesion.
 - Did you use more than one body paragraph to write about the key details?
 - Did you choose a logical organisation for the information before writing?
 - Can you point to the logical organisation of the information? (how will the examiner know what the organisation is?)
 - Look at the linking words and phrases you used between sentences. Are they used accurately?
 - Do the linking words and phrases give a clear sense of progression or are they used mechanically?
 - Can you find examples of other cohesive devices in your sentences? (look for relative clauses, pronouns etc.)
 - Did you use relative clauses accurately? (look for the word 'which' in particular).
 - Did you successfully use cohesive devices to avoid repetition?
 - Does the organisation of the information in each paragraph help you to make comparisons in your answer? (How many comparisons can you find?)

- If your answers are mostly **No** or **I am not sure**, then your Coherence and cohesion score in these tasks is probably band 6 or lower. The boxes that are still clear show the skills you still need to develop.
- To check how successfully you showed good cohesion between and within your sentences, use different colour highlighters to show which ideas are connected as I did here:

As you can see, there is a 'device' being used between each sentence, which gives the appearance of cohesion. However, some of these words and phrases are being used rather mechanically. This is like picking up any tool you can find without thinking about how to use it. As a result, they are either inappropriate or inaccurate.

- Did you use a variety of cohesive devices to connect your ideas? If not, which of the following do you need to practice using more often or more accurately?

- linking words or phrases (As a result, For example, etc.)
 - pronouns (it, this, they, these etc.)
 - relative clauses and relative pronouns (which, where, that, etc.)
 - conjunctions (and, but, or, etc.)
 - substitution (both, some, each, neither + a synonym)
-
-

LESSON 3 - Getting Started

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 3.1 Step 1: Noticing details
- 3.2 Step 2: Identifying key features
- 3.3 Step 3: Organising information

3.1 Step 1: Noticing details

In this lesson, we will be looking at several examples of charts. The first two are not complete writing task questions as there is not enough information to write about; in the real test, some additional data would be given to you. Although we will also see some complete examples, you should not try to write answers to these just yet – we will return to them in later lessons to work on model answers. The purpose of this lesson is to show what you need to be doing **before** you begin writing and to practise these steps.

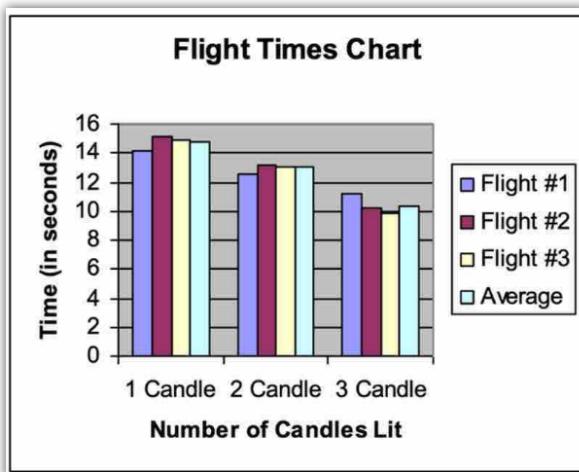
Using your time well

As we saw in lessons 1 and 2, many of the problems in Task 1 come from beginning to write too soon. Doing this can significantly lower your Task achievement and Coherence and cohesion scores, which will reduce your overall writing score. This shows that, if you do not manage your time well, for example, if you decide to begin with Task 2, but spend more than 40 minutes on your answer, this can have serious repercussions for your test result.

As your time is limited, the pre-writing stage needs to be practised often so that you can do it as quickly as possible. In the test, you should aim to complete this stage in under 5 minutes. However, allow a little more time now, when you are practising and developing the skills. As with Task 2, you should find that spending a little extra time on thinking will make writing your answer easier, so this is time well spent. One advantage with Task 1 is that any planning can be done using the information given on the question paper, and I have included short videos in this lesson to demonstrate how to do this.

As we saw in lesson 1, a score of Band 3 for Task achievement is given if the task has '**been completely misunderstood**'. This is easily done if you begin writing your answer without taking the time to think about what the data is showing you. When people jump to a quick conclusion about the information, they inevitably produce misleading statements.

To show this, look very quickly at the following chart, which shows the results of an experiment involving a balloon and either 1, 2, or 3 candles.

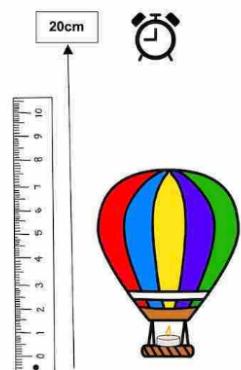
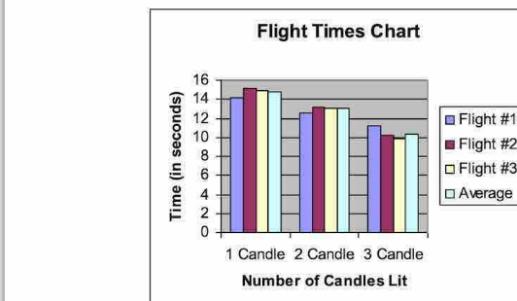


A candidate who looks at the information too quickly is likely to produce statements like this:

With each flight, using 1 candle was shown to be better than using 2 or 3 candles. When one candle was used, the balloon stayed in the air longer (between 14 and 15 seconds), while the flights with 3 candles were shorter, lasting an average of just over 10 seconds.

Now look at the complete task more carefully to see if you can spot the problems in this extract:

The chart below shows how long it took a small hot air balloon to reach a height of 20 cm using candles.



As you can see, this experiment actually measured **how long it took a small hot air balloon to reach a height of 20 cm using 1, 2, or 3 candles**. When we take the time to process and understand all of the information we are given, we can see that the statements above misrepresent the information in the table. If your whole answer was based around ideas like this, then you would have misunderstood the task, and you would score Band 3 for Task achievement.

KEY IDEA: If you do not allow enough time for Task 1 (i.e. 20 minutes), it is easy to misunderstand the information you are given, and produce an answer that will significantly lower your Task achievement score – even resulting in a Band 3 score.

In the next exercises, we will correct this extract and practise noticing details.

Practice

**Click Here
to Practise**

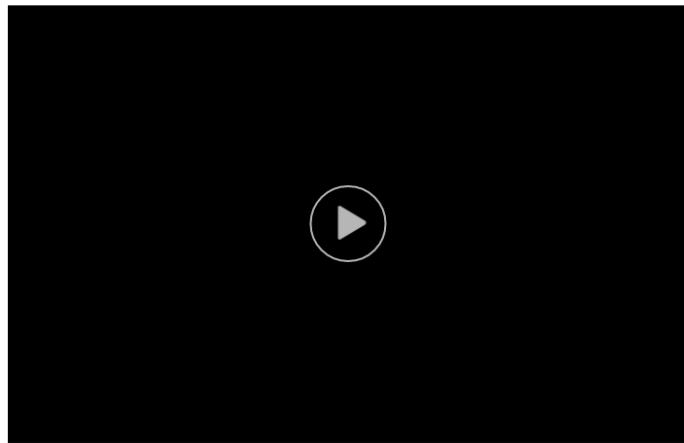
Noticing details

Noticing small details like this (the number of travellers and what is being measured) is very important as it means you can then write about it accurately. I circle this information on the question paper, which helps me to pay closer attention to it.

The next exercise uses a task from Cambridge IELTS 10 (page 54). Spend **no more than 30 seconds** looking at the tables and noticing as many details as you can.

**Click Here
to Practise**

Watch the video below to see the important details you need to notice in step 1.



This question is one that I often see being misunderstood or written about inaccurately, as the next exercise shows.

Practice

Look at the information again and identify the problems in the following sentences.

**Click Here
to Practise**

Although noticing details like this **is** important, it is not enough – if you only do this type of thinking before writing then you are likely to list all of the information and **'focus on details'** (Band 5 Task achievement). The next step will help prevent this.



QUESTION 1

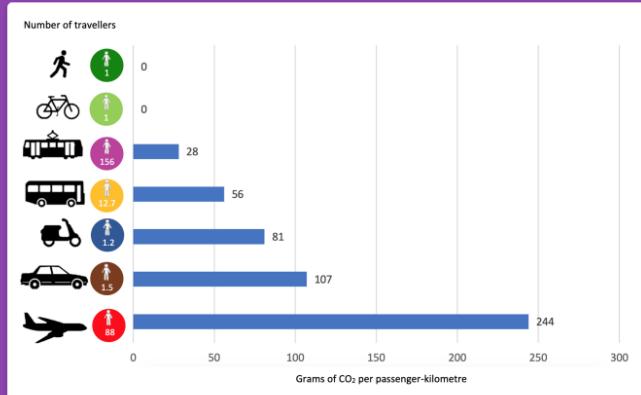
The experiment measured how long it took a small hot air balloon to reach a height of 20 cm using 1, 2, or 3 candles.

Click on the incorrect information below and make changes so that it accurately represents this information.

With each flight, using 1 candle was shown to be better than using 2 or 3 candles. When one candle was used, the balloon stayed in the air longer (between 14 and 15 seconds), while the flights with 3 candles were shorter, lasting an average of in just over 10 seconds.

QUESTION 2

Look carefully at the image and decide which sentence is the most accurate.



- The bar chart shows how many people travel by these types of transport.
- The bar chart shows the best way to travel to help the environment.
- The bar chart shows how much carbon dioxide is produced when we travel.
- The bar chart shows how many people should travel on these types of transport.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

The experiment measured how long it took a small hot air balloon to reach a height of 20 cm using 1, 2, or 3 candles.

Click on the incorrect information below and make changes so that it accurately represents this information.

With each flight, using 1 candle X was shown to be better than using 2 or 3 X candles. When one candle was used, the balloon stayed in the air longer X (between 14 and 15 seconds), while the flights with 3 candles were shorter X, lasting an average of X in just over 10 seconds.

The answer:

With each flight, using 3 candles was shown to be better than using 1 or 2 candles. When one candle was used, the balloon took longer to reach 20cm (between 14 and 15 seconds), while the flights with 3 candles were faster, reaching 20cm in just over 10 seconds.

To avoid repetition, we can also write:

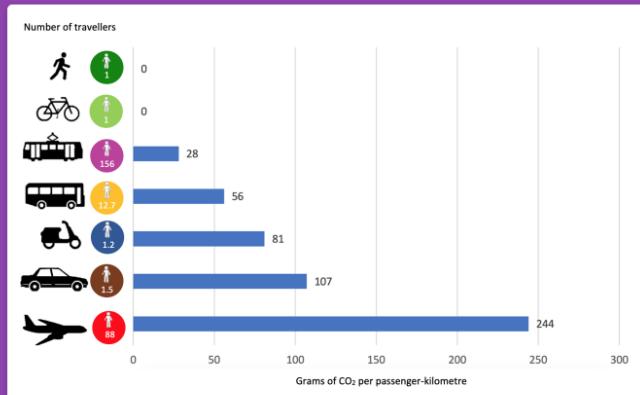
"With each flight, using 3 candles was shown to be better than using 1 or 2 candles. When one candle was used, the balloon took longer to reach the required height (between 14 and 15 seconds), while the flights with 3 candles were faster, reaching 20cm in an average of just over 10 seconds."

OR

"With each flight, using 3 candles was shown to be better than using 1 or 2 candles. When one candle was used, the balloon took longer to reach 20cm (between 14 and 15 seconds), while the flights with 3 candles were faster, reaching this height in an average of just over 10 seconds."

QUESTION 2

Look carefully at the image and decide which sentence is the most accurate.



- The bar chart shows how many people travel by these types of transport.
- The bar chart shows the best way to travel to help the environment.
- The bar chart shows how much carbon dioxide is produced when we travel.
- The bar chart shows how many people should travel on these types of transport.

- 1) x The chart tells us how much CO₂ is produced when this number of people travel by these types of transport.
- 2) x "the best way to travel to help the environment" is a personal conclusion about what the information shows.
- 3) This is the correct answer.
- 3) x "how many people should travel on these types of transport" is a personal conclusion about what the information shows.

All done !

Sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas (1999 & 2004)

Coffee	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
UK	1.5	20
Switzerland	3	6
Denmark	1.8	2
Belgium	1	1.7
Sweden	0.8	1

Bananas	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
Switzerland	15	47
UK	1	5.5
Belgium	0.6	4
Sweden	1.8	1
Denmark	2	0.9

*Fairtrade: a category of products for which farmers from developing countries have been paid an officially agreed price.

Sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas (1999 & 2004)

Coffee	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
UK	1.5	20
Switzerland	3	6
Denmark	1.8	2
Belgium	1	1.7
Sweden	0.8	1

Bananas	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
Switzerland	15	47
UK	1	5.5
Belgium	0.6	4
Sweden	1.8	1
Denmark	2	0.9

*Fairtrade: a category of products for which farmers from developing countries have been paid an officially agreed price.

QUESTION 1

Each writer below has misunderstood the information in the tables. Make notes about any problems you can see then click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

1. Sweden earned the lowest amount of Euros from selling coffee in both years.
2. Overall, while the total money earned from planting coffee in all countries increased, there were falls in the figures of bananas in Sweden and Denmark throughout the period.
3. It is noticeable that how much money Switzerland got from bananas was consistently the highest in tables.
4. Looking at the information in more detail, in 1999, the UK earned 1.5 million Euros by selling coffee.



Show answers

QUESTION 1

Each writer below has misunderstood the information in the tables. Make notes about any problems you can see then click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

1. Sweden earned the lowest amount of Euros from selling coffee in both years.
 2. Overall, while the total money earned from planting coffee in all countries increased, there were falls in the figures of bananas in Sweden and Denmark throughout the period.
 3. It is noticeable that how much money Switzerland got from bananas was consistently the highest in tables.
 4. Looking at the information in more detail, in 1999, the UK earned 1.5 million Euros by selling coffee.



Problems:

According to sentences 1, 3 and 4, the tables tell us about how much money each country "earned" or "got" from "selling" coffee or bananas, which is not accurate.

Sentence 2 suggests the coffee and bananas were grown in these countries, which is not accurate.

The information in the tables tells us:

- the value of 'sales' of fair-trade coffee and bananas in 5 countries in two years
 - these products were grown by farmers in developing countries and the farmers were paid a fair price for their goods
 - we do not know who 'sold' the products
 - we do not know who 'earned' this money

All done !

3.2 Step 2: Identifying key features

Writing task 1 begins with a sentence like this one:

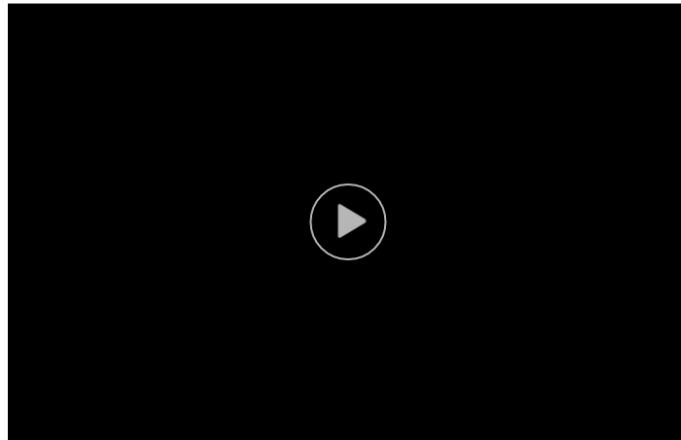
*The tables below give information about sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas in 1999 and 2004 in five European countries.*

This information is necessary to ensure candidates know exactly what they are looking at. However, it is a mistake to think, 'this is *all* I need to know about the data'.

As we saw in lesson 1, your task is to **summarise** and **give an overview** of the information, and you are told to do this by **selecting the main features** and **making comparisons**. In your answer, you should explain what the information shows and **highlight key features**, and you cannot do this if you do not take the time to fully understand it, and make connections between the data.

In lesson 2 we saw what happens when you do not take the time to do this: an answer where each piece of data is presented separately, with few or no connections made between them. Even more problematic is the fact that you may miss out or omit key features in your answer. This can result in a lower Task achievement score, because a Band 5 answer **presents, but inadequately covers, key features**.

The next video shows you how to identify **key features** like this, so that you can write about the data in a way that **highlights** them (Band 7 Task achievement) rather than listing them. This step also means you are more likely to cover **all** of the key features in your answer.



KEY IDEA: If you don't take the time to identify key features, then you are likely to miss some of these features out in your answer, which may lower your TA score.

Identifying key features

Here is a reminder of the type of information to look for when identifying the key features and trends:

- **big changes in the data**
- **the highest and lowest points**
- **any similarities**
- **anything that stayed the same**

And these are some of the symbols I use when making my notes:

Symbol	Use
}	to group similar information together
*	to highlight important or information (such as a significant change or the highest or lowest point)
!	to highlight something unusual
↑	Arrows are used to show an increase
↓	decrease
↑↑↑	or significant changes

In the next exercise, you will practise

- identifying key features
- using symbols to highlight these on the question paper
- presenting some of these key features in a sentence

We will do this using a task I have adapted from Cambridge IELTS 8.

Practice

Click Here
to Practise

Click here to see my notes again and read my comments.

See My
Version Here

A reminder of the Points to notice:

The pie chart:

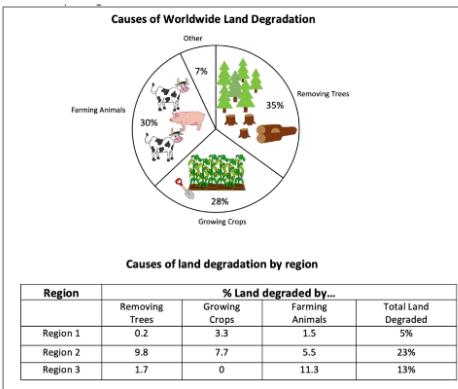
- I circled 'Other' to remind me to mention this very briefly in my answer. I'll discuss this idea in more detail in the test practice section.
- With the three main causes, my note is pointing out they are quite similar because they are all close to a third (1/3). I used + / - to show this, but you might know other symbols you can use here.

The Table:

- The table compares 3 regions (the rows), and we have 4 categories of data for each region (the columns). During step 2, I looked down each column and wrote (1) or (3) next to the highest and lowest figures in each category, which helped me to see when a region was highest or lowest, and whether this happened in one region more often than the others.
- In these notes, I have used three arrows to indicate 'the highest' or 'the lowest'.
- I also used arrows to connect figures that I wanted to make a point about in my writing (e.g. I could see that, in Region 1, almost all of the 'total land degradation' was due to 'growing crops', so I connected these with an arrow).
- I used an exclamation mark to indicate an unusual figure - 0 in the 'growing crops' column for Region 3.

QUESTION 1

Look at the charts below and try to identify as many key features as you can. Use the symbols we saw in the lesson to highlight these key these on the question paper. When you have finished, compare your notes to mine.

**QUESTION 2**

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences to present some of the key features in the table.

_____ had the greatest proportion of degraded land overall.

_____ was the biggest cause of land degradation in Region 3.

Region 1 had the least land degradation in each category except for _____.

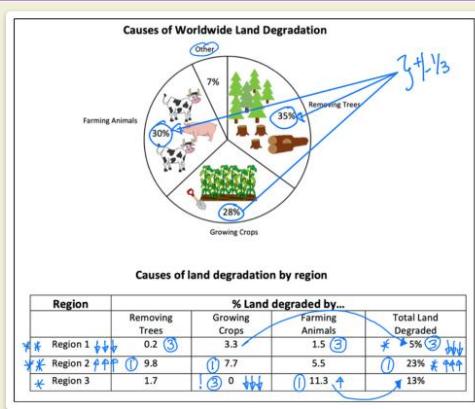
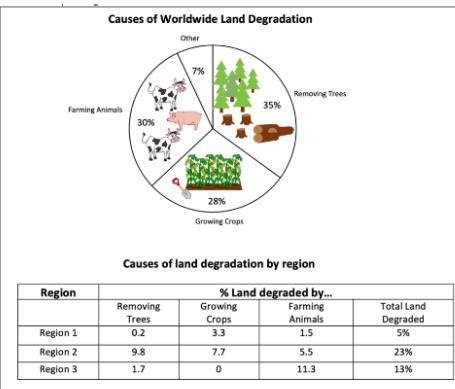
Logging was the greatest cause of soil degradation in _____ but the least in _____.

Globally, the biggest single cause of soil degradation is _____.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Look at the charts below and try to identify as many key features as you can. Use the symbols we saw in the lesson to highlight these key features on the question paper. When you have finished, compare your notes to mine.



QUESTION 2

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences to present some of the key features in the table.

_____ had the greatest proportion of degraded land overall.

_____ was the biggest cause of land degradation in Region 3.

Region 1 had the least land degradation in each category except for _____.

Logging was the greatest cause of soil degradation in _____ but the least in _____.

Globally, the biggest single cause of soil degradation is _____.

The answer:

Region 2 had the greatest proportion of degraded land overall.

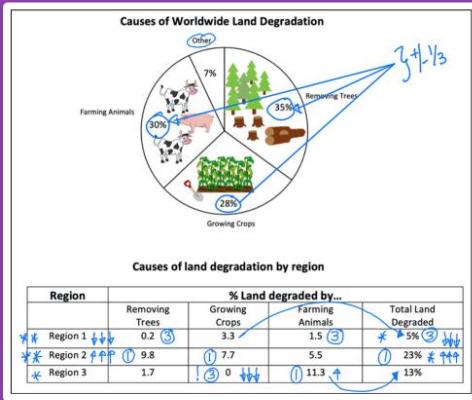
Farming animals was the biggest cause of land degradation in Region 3.

Region 1 had the least land degradation in each category except for *growing crops*.

Logging was the greatest cause of soil degradation in *Region 2* but the least in *Region 1*.

Globally, the biggest single cause of soil degradation is *logging / removing trees*.

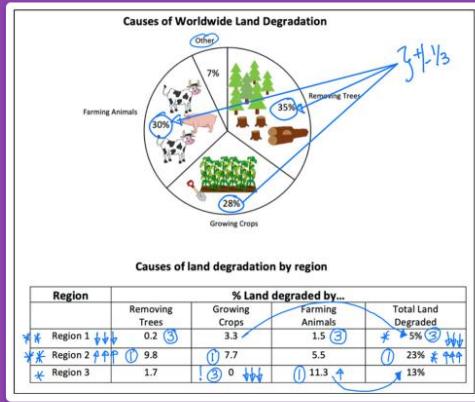
All done !



Points to notice

- In the pie chart, I circled 'other' to remind me to mention this very briefly in my answer. With the three main causes, my note here shows they are quite similar because they are all close to 1/3. I used + / - to show this, but you might know other symbols you can use here.
- The table compares 3 regions (the rows), and we have 4 categories of data for each region (the columns). During step 2, I looked down each column and wrote (1) or (3) next to the highest and lowest figures in each category, which helped me to see when a region was highest or lowest, and whether this happened in one region more often than the others.
- In these notes, I have used three arrows to indicate 'the highest' or 'the lowest'.
- I also used arrows to connect figures that I wanted to make a point about in my writing (e.g. I could see that, in Region 1, almost all of the 'total land degradation' was due to 'growing crops', so I connected these with an arrow).
- I used an exclamation mark to indicate an unusual figure - 0 in the 'growing crops' column for Region 3.

Show answers



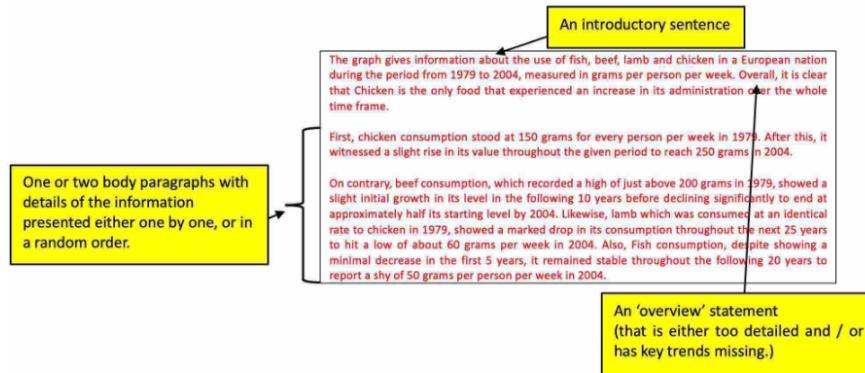
Points to notice

- In the pie chart, I circled 'other' to remind me to mention this very briefly in my answer. With the three main causes, my note here shows they are quite similar because they are all close to 1/3. I used + / - to show this, but you might know other symbols you can use here.
- The table compares 3 regions (the rows), and we have 4 categories of data for each region (the columns). During step 2, I looked down each column and wrote (1) or (3) next to the highest and lowest figures in each category, which helped me to see when a region was highest or lowest, and whether this happened in one region more often than the others.
- In these notes, I have used three arrows to indicate 'the highest' or 'the lowest'.
- I also used arrows to connect figures that I wanted to make a point about in my writing (e.g. I could see that, in Region 1, almost all of the 'total land degradation' was due to 'growing crops', so I connected these with an arrow).
- I used an exclamation mark to indicate an unusual figure - 0 in the 'growing crops' column for Region 3.

All done !

3.3 Step 3: Organising information

As we saw in lesson 2, your examiner is looking for clear organisation within your answer, and clear paragraphing is a good way to show this. We also saw a common problem in the organisation of Task 1 answers:



Sometimes, all of the information is put into one paragraph, but even when there are two clear body paragraphs, the organisation is still unclear and appears to jump from one date to another. When I ask the writers why they have organized the information in this way, they often cannot tell me. If you do not know how you have organized your information, this shows you have not taken the time to think about it, which is likely to lower your Coherence and cohesion score. So, the final step before you begin writing is deciding how to group information together for your paragraphs.

Remember, in Coherence and cohesion, the examiner is looking for signs that the information is organised logically (Band 7). Fortunately, the most logical way to organize your information is also often the easiest and fastest.

KEY IDEA: In coherence and cohesion, the information must be organised 'logically.' If you don't take the time to think about how you will organise the information, then the organisation will not be clear to the examiner. You do not need to be inventive or clever – the most obvious organisation is usually the most logical.

With the Fairtrade goods task, the most logical way to organize the paragraphs is by writing about the sales of Fairtrade coffee in one paragraph, and the sales of Fairtrade bananas in another paragraph. I note this on my question paper too, before I start writing. This idea may seem to be a simple one, but noting these ideas down reduces your mental load when you are writing and also helps to focus your thinking.

The image below shows what all of my notes look like before I begin writing and after I have spent a few moments **noticing the details**, **identifying key features**, and **grouping the information logically**:

My complete notes

Sales of Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas (1999 & 2004)			
	Coffee	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
*	UK	1.5	① * (20) ↑↑↑
*	Switzerland	① * (3)	* (6) ↑ × 2
	Denmark	1.8	2 { +
	Belgium	1	1.7 { +
	Sweden	0.8	1

BP1
F.T. coffee

	Bananas	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
*	Switzerland	① 15	① 47 ↑↑↑
	UK	?	5.5 { ?
	Belgium	0.6	4 { ?
	Sweden	1.8	1 { ? + !
	Denmark	2	0.9 { ? + !

BP2
F.T. bananas

*Fairtrade: a category of products for which farmers from developing countries have been paid an officially agreed price.

KEY IDEA: Following these three thinking steps **before you begin writing** will help you meet the criteria for Task achievement and Coherence and cohesion:

Step 1: Noticing details

Step 2: Identifying key information

Step 3: Grouping information

Making notes about this on the question paper reduces your mental load when you are writing and also helps to focus your thinking.

Practice

The following exercises will help you to think about how to organise information into paragraphs.

**Click Here
to Practise**

KEY IDEA: Your paragraphs should serve a purpose: to help the reader by organising the information logically.

Remember, the most logical choice has several benefits:

- **It is often the most obvious**
- **It is the easiest to write about in a clear way**
- **It will help improve your Coherence and cohesion score**
- **It may also increase your Task achievement score because it encourages you to make comparisons**

With the previous tasks, choosing the organisation was relatively easy because there are two tables and two categories (Fairtrade coffee and Fairtrade bananas); a pie chart and a table; a map before and a map after the development of an island.

Sometimes the organisation is less obvious. For example, when you are given a line graph and a range of dates. In this situation, it helps to decide on two (or three) categories, so that you can *logically* group the information in your paragraphs.

There may be several ways to do this. For example, if you have a line graph showing changes in the number of men and women enrolled in 5 different university courses, you might write about the data for women in one paragraph, and the data for men in another. Alternatively, you might decide to group together the most popular courses and the least popular courses, and use these categories to organize your information. Occasionally, three paragraphs may be more appropriate. There is no correct answer, there just needs to be some logic to the organisation you choose, and this should be clear in your answer. We will work on this in later lessons.

Extra practice

- Look back at one or two of your Task 1 answers based on charts or tables. Look at the information in the question/s first and practise the three steps we learned in this lesson:
 - Step 1: Noticing details
 - Step 2: Identifying key information
 - Step 3: Grouping information
- Make notes on the question paper using the symbols we saw earlier, or use your own symbols. Try to develop a habit of using the same symbols.

Noticing details:

- Look at the answer you wrote. Did you misunderstand or misrepresent any part of the information in your answer?

Identifying key information:

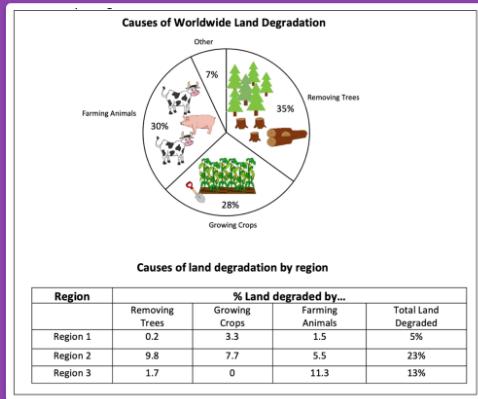
- Did you miss out any of the key features you noticed?

Grouping information:

- How did you organize your information? Is it organised *logically*? Did your organisation help you to make comparisons?
- What changes could you make to your answer now to improve your TA and CC score?

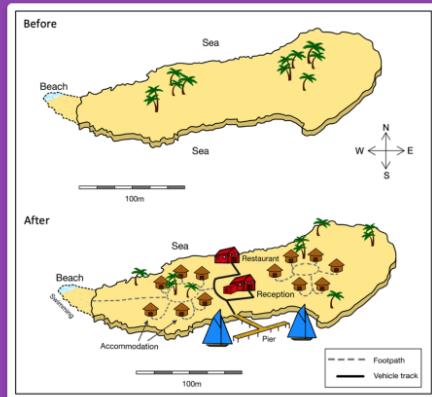
QUESTION 1

Thinking about your body paragraphs, what is the most logical way to organise the information in this task?



QUESTION 2

Which of the following is the best way to organise this information into paragraphs?

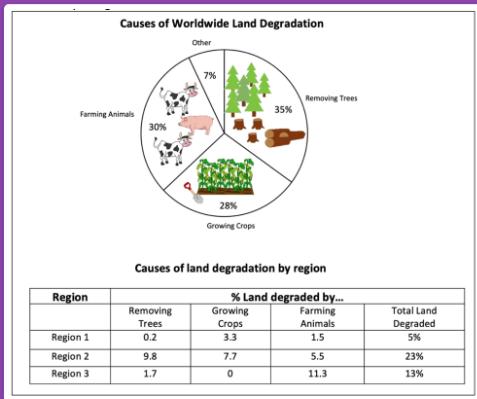


- Paragraph 1: What will happen on the island; Paragraph 2: What will happen in the water
- Paragraph 1: The island before development; Paragraph 2: The island after development
- Paragraph 1: The north of the island; Paragraph 2: The south of the island
- Paragraph 1: The east of the island; Paragraph 2: The west of the island

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Thinking about your body paragraphs, what is the most logical way to organise the information in this task?

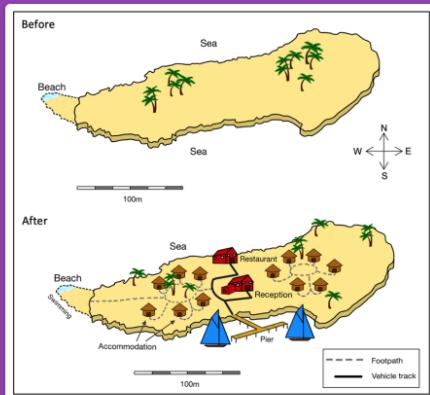


The easiest and most logical way to organise this information is to write two body paragraphs summarising

- 1) the pie chart
- 2) the table

QUESTION 2

Which of the following is the best way to organise this information into paragraphs?



- Paragraph 1: What will happen on the island; Paragraph 2: What will happen in the water
- Paragraph 1: The island before development; Paragraph 2: The island after development
- Paragraph 1: The north of the island; Paragraph 2: The south of the island
- Paragraph 1: The east of the island; Paragraph 2: The west of the island

The best way to organise the information in your paragraphs here is:

Paragraph 1: The island before development
 Paragraph 2: The island after development.

The other answers will be difficult to write about and will not help you to make comparisons.

All done !

LESSON 4 - Introductory sentences

- In this lesson, you will learn about:**
- 4.1 The introductory sentence
 - 4.2 Paraphrasing the test question
 - 4.3 Introducing map and plan tasks

4.1 The Introductory sentence

In lesson 3, we saw that it is important to work as quickly as possible in task 1 and to use the limited time you have very well. When I am writing my answers, the first sentence is the one I spend the least amount of time on. This lesson will help you to write this sentence as quickly as possible, so that you can then concentrate on the more important elements of your answer.

As we saw in Lesson 3, your test question begins with a sentence that very briefly introduces the information you are given. This sentence answers questions like this:

- **What**
- **Who**
- **Where**
- **When**

Your introductory sentence will do the same. However, it is important to note that this is **not** your overview.

KEY IDEA: The introductory sentence explains what we are looking at and answers questions such as **what, who, where, when**. However, this is **NOT** your overview.

Introductory sentences are more complex than you may realise as they force you to include several pieces of information in one sentence. To demonstrate this, look back at our previous test question:

*The tables below give information about sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas in 1999 and 2004 in five European countries.*

This sentence combines all of the following information:

These are tables.

- The **tables** are **below**.
- The tables **give information**.
- The information is **about sales of Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas**.
- The Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas were sold **in 1999 and 2004**.
- The Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas were sold **in five European countries**.

We can divide this information up like this:

1) What

2) When

*The tables below give information about sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas in 1999 and 2004*

3) Where

in five European countries.

Points to notice:

- To answer the question 'what are we looking at?' we need to say: the type of chart or diagram we are looking at + shows + details of what is being measured or shown.
- This sentence will reflect the details you noticed in step 1 of your thinking process:

Coffee	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
UK	1.5	20
Switzerland	3	6
Denmark	1.8	2
Belgium	1	1.7
Sweden	0.8	1

- The information about 'when' and 'where' can **sometimes** be reversed:

We can write:

*The tables below give information about sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas in 1999 and 2004 in five European countries.*

Or

*The tables below give information about sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas in five European countries in 1999 and 2004.*

- In some tasks, the information is about **who**, and there may not always be information about **when** and **where**.
- Combining different clauses like this often involves relative clauses, which creates even more complex sentences and raises new problems.

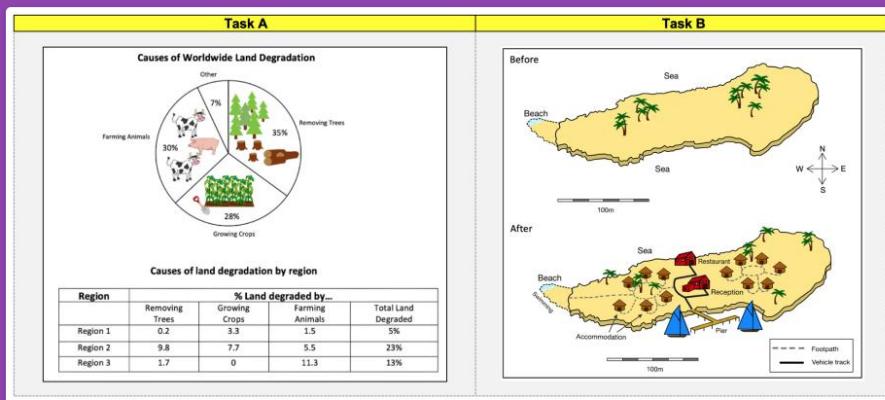
Practice

Complete the test questions by dragging and dropping the correct words and phrases into the sentences.

Click Here
to Practise

QUESTION 1

Complete the test questions below by dragging and dropping the correct words and phrases.

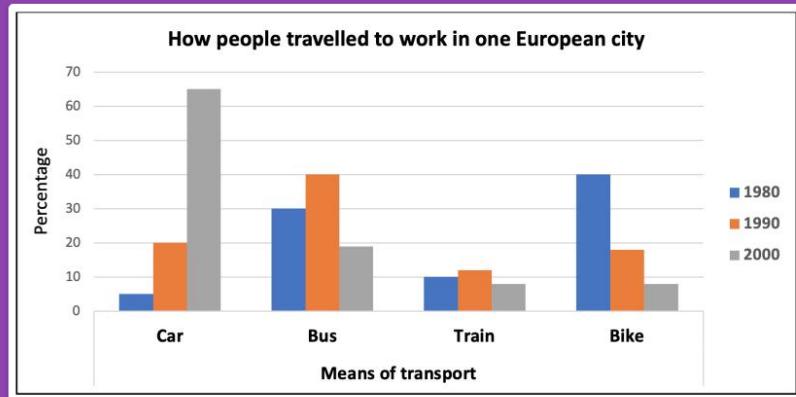


and after construction of information about in three the causes of land degradation worldwide an island some tourist facilities regions of the world charts below
two maps before

Task A: The [] give [] [] [] and [] [].
Task B: The [] show [] [] [] the [] [].

QUESTION 2

Now do the same for this task. NB There are more words than you need.



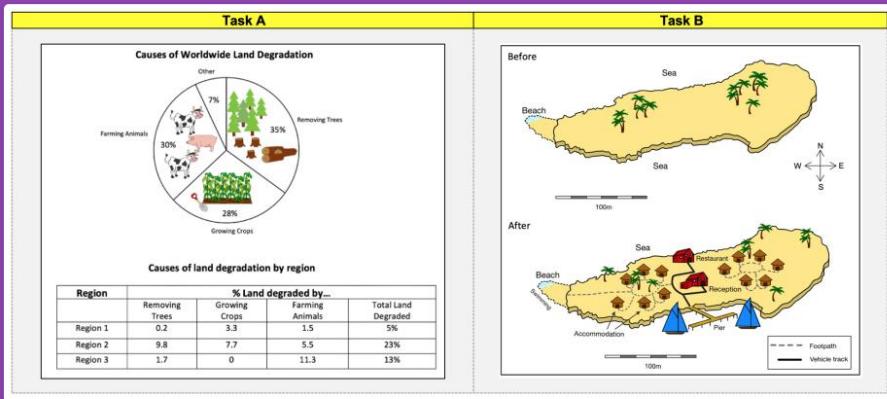
between four to work number 1990 1980 percentage European city 2000 travelling country from of means of transport and one in

The chart below shows the [] [] [] people [] [] by [] [] [] in [] [] [] [] [] [] [].

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Complete the test questions below by dragging and dropping the correct words and phrases.



and after construction of information about in three the causes of land degradation worldwide an island some tourist facilities regions of the world charts below

two maps before

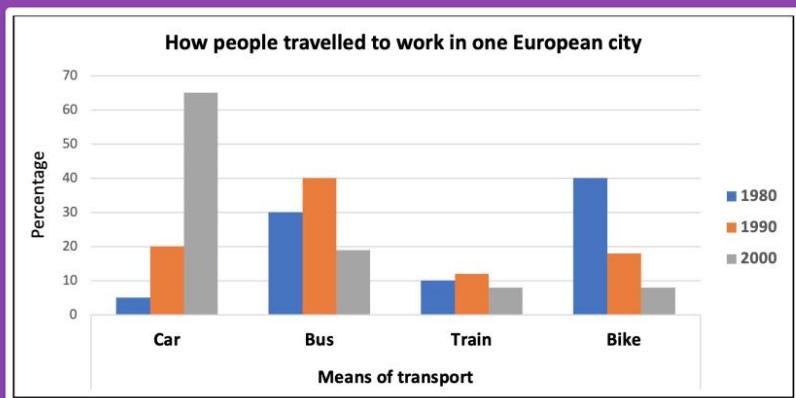
Task A: The **x** give **x** **x** **x** and **x** **x**.
 Task B: The **x** show **x** **x** **x** the **x** **x**.

The answer:

Task A: The charts below give information about the causes of land degradation worldwide and in three regions of the world.
 Task B: The two maps show an island before and after the construction of some tourist facilities.

QUESTION 2

Now do the same for this task. NB There are more words than you need.



between four to work number 1990 1980 percentage European city 2000 travelling country from of means of transport and one in

The chart below shows the **x** **x** people **x** **x** by **x** **x** in **x** **x** **x** **x** **x**.

The answer:

The chart below shows the percentage of people travelling to work by four means of transport in one European city in 1980 1990 and 2000.

All done !

4.2 Paraphrasing the question

In your answer, you should paraphrase the test question. If you copy large parts of it word for word the examiner cannot reward your use of grammar and vocabulary. If this happens too often in your answer, it will significantly lower your GRA and LR scores.

However, although you need to introduce the data ***in your own words***, you do not need to go too far when doing this, which is a problem I often see in band 6 and below. People may do this out of concern that you '***cannot use more than two consecutive words from the question paper without being penalised***'. This advice is not very helpful because you do not have time to count words in this way, it is more likely to lead to errors, and there may well be topics where it is necessary to use more than two consecutive words.

Instead of thinking like this, just make sure that you don't copy large chunks of language, or complete phrases from the test question. It can help to ask yourself the following questions:

- ***What is being measured here?***
- ***What is this showing?***
- ***What is this telling us about?***

The following answers give us some ideas about how to paraphrase the information.

- ***This chart is showing how much / how many....***
- ***This diagram is showing the steps involved in...***
- ***These maps / plans are showing changes / how (something) changed....***

KEY IDEA: You don't need to make big changes to the information in the test question – just aim present it in a slightly different way.

The chart/s below

Your test question will always begin by referring to ***The charts / diagrams / maps / plans below***. With charts, an easy way to paraphrase the information is to specify the type of chart. Use this exercise to practise if you are not sure what these are.

Practice

Click Here
to Practise

Points to notice

- If you are given maps, plans, or diagrams, use the same word in your introductory sentence don't try to think of a synonym.
- Many people include the word 'below' in their introductory sentence. This word is needed in the test question to link this sentence to the visual. Your answer will appear ***below*** the question, and so the chart/s or diagram/s will be ***above*** your answer. Having said this, ***you do not need to include it*** in your introduction – the examiner will know which charts you are writing about.
- Some people refer to 'the ***given*** charts'. This may come from typical maths test questions where you are 'given' certain data and asked to use 'the given data' to calculate something else. I don't use it in my model answers as it feels unnatural to me.

Paraphrasing the verb 'show'

When it comes to the main verb in this sentence, you will see in my model answers that I ****almost always*** use 'show'. This is because it is often the most natural word to use, and I don't want to waste time thinking of different ways to write this when it is more important to 'achieve' the whole task and focus on other parts of my answer. If the question says, '***The charts below show***' then writing '***The two pie charts show***' is different enough – you do not need to change this further.

*If or when I use a different word in my model answers I will explain why.

KEY IDEA: Don't make your task harder by trying to change every word in the question - this is more likely to lower your score.

When people try to use a synonym for 'show' they often replace it with a word that is inaccurate. The following words are just some of the examples I have seen:

Words often inaccurately used instead of 'show'

- Display = to place things in a place where they can easily be seen
- Demonstrate = to show how something is done (e.g. How to use a machine; prove something to be true (e.g. in a study)
- Indicate = to show that something is true (used to draw a conclusion about data)
- Provide = to give; supply
- Present = to give (e.g. to present someone with a trophy)
- Reflect = to be a sign of something, to act like a mirror
- Represent = to stand in the place of (i.e. is a symbol of)
- Reveal = to make people aware of something that was hidden
- Tell = to give information (NB. This verb needs an object – "to tell someone something")

With numbers, figures, or charts, it is important to remember that they cannot 'do' very much. This is why many of the synonyms above are often used inaccurately and without **an awareness of style**.

Charts: Paraphrasing the details of what is being measured

With charts, the test question will often present the information like this:

The chart shows / gives information about....

- **the amount of**
- **the number of....**
- **the percentage of**
- **the proportion of**

Think back to the questions and answers I mentioned earlier:

Q: What is being measured here? What is this the chart showing?

A: This chart is showing how much / how many....

So, the easiest way to paraphrase this type of question is to make the following changes:

The bar chart shows

- **the amount of how much....**
- **the number of how many....**
- **the percentage of the proportion of....**
- **the proportion of the percentage of....**

If a noun is used in the test question, this can be changed to a verb, and verbs can be changed to or from the passive. Alternatively, you can refer to 'changes in' something. But you should only do this if it is relevant to the data (e.g. if there are changes over time). For example:

The tables below give information about sales of Fairtrade bananas and coffee...

The tables show changes in the sales of Fairtrade bananas and coffee...

A Band 7.5 candidate wrote the following:

The tables illustrate how the sales of coffee and bananas with Fairtrade labels changed in five different countries in the years ~~of~~ 1999 and 2004.

Points to notice

- The candidate rephrased the question by using a different grammatical structure, changing 'Fairtrade labelled coffee and bananas' to 'coffee and bananas with Fairtrade labels'.
- The candidate used the word 'illustrate' instead of 'show', which works well here. Notice how this verb is being used – the sentence does not say 'the tables **illustrate** the sales of..' (which would be inaccurate), it says that 'the tables **Illustrate how the sales changed**'. Used literally, the verb 'illustrate' means to add an

image or drawing to a text. However, this candidate is showing an awareness of style by using it in an idiomatic way:

illustrate verb [T] (EXPLAIN)

C1
to show the meaning or truth of something more clearly, especially by giving examples:

- *The lecturer illustrated his point with a diagram on the blackboard.*
- *This latest conflict further illustrates the weakness of the UN.*
- [+ question word] *The exhibition will illustrate how life evolved from water.*

It's important to point out here that this candidate reached Band 7.5 (and later, Band 8) not by adding words like this, but because of the overall effect of their answer. He could have achieved the same score by writing:

The tables show how the sales of coffee and bananas with Fairtrade labels changed in five different countries in the years 1999 and 2004.

Relative clauses

As we saw earlier, introductory sentences combine several clauses and explain exactly what you are looking at. Combining clauses for this purpose often involves using a defining relative clause. These can occur in the test question too, so it helps to remember the following grammatical rules for defining relative clauses.

Defining relative clauses

- the relative pronoun generally comes immediately after the noun being defined
- are not separated by commas
- you **can** omit the relative pronoun (that, who, where etc) if it is the **object** of a verb
- you **cannot** omit the relative pronoun if it is the **subject** of a verb
- can be reduced to a participle

The final point is useful when paraphrasing because you may be able to reduce a clause in the question, or expand one that is reduced.

Practice

The following exercises will help you to practise recognising relative clauses and making changes to them.

Click Here
to Practise

Paraphrasing where and when

The information about where and when is often presented as follows:

- **in 1999 and 2004 in five European countries**
- **in England and Wales between 1918 and 2011**
- **in the UK, from 1995 to 2002.**

We can paraphrase this information by either changing the prepositions, changing the order, or by using a synonym. You will not be expected to know the names and nationalities of all countries, but learning the most common ones can help you here. Look at following examples:

Original	Ways to paraphrase
in 1999 and 2004	1) in the years 1999 and 2004. 2) in two separate years.
in five European countries	1) in five countries in Europe. 2) in the UK, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium and Sweden
in England and Wales between 1918 and 2011	in two countries from 1918 to 2002.
in the UK, from 1995 to 2002.	between 1995 and 2002 in the UK.

Using *namely*

When paraphrasing the introduction, we can use the adverb 'namely' to show we are giving more details or being specific about something. For example, we can write:

...in five countries in Europe, **namely** the UK, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium and Sweden.

Here, 'namely' tells the reader we are 'naming' the five countries. We can do the same with years:

...in three separate years, **namely** 1990, 2000, and 2010.

Notice the position of the comma, which comes **before** the adverb.

Prepositions

Prepositions are important here. Look at the following information then complete the exercise below.

Preposition used with place and time

- We use **in** with a specific country or region: **in** Australia, **in** the US, **in** South America.
- We use **in** with a specific year. NB: '**in** 1999 and 2004' tells us the information is only about these two years.
- We use **from...to...** and **between...and.....** to give the start date and end date of a period of time: **from** 1995 **to** 2005; **between** 1995 **and** 2005.
- We can use **over** and **during** with a length of time to say **when** something happened: **over** a ten-year period; **during** a ten-year period.
- We can also use **during** and **in** to say that something happened **within** that time: sales rose **during** the first ten years.
- We use **for** to say **how long** something lasted: sales rose **for** ten years.

Practice

In this exercise, you will practise using the prepositions *between*, *during*, *for*, *from*, *in*, and *to* accurately.

Click Here
to Practise

QUESTION 1

Can you match the label to the correct image?

a pie chart



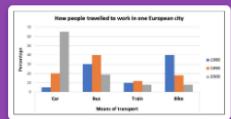
a line graph



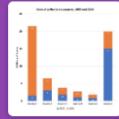
a bar chart



a table



a stacked bar chart

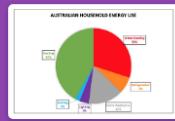


Show answers

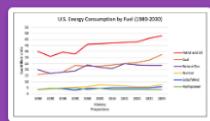
QUESTION 1

Can you match the label to the correct image?

a pie chart



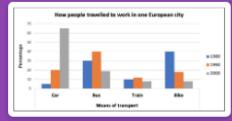
a line graph



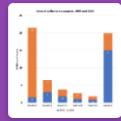
a bar chart

Country	2005	2006	2007
US	27.1	26.5	26.0
Germany	3.4	3.2	3.1
Japan	2.7	2.7	2.7
UK	2.5	2.5	2.5
France	2.3	2.3	2.3
Canada	2.1	2.1	2.1
Australia	1.9	1.9	1.9

a table



a stacked bar chart



All done !

QUESTION 1

Match the sentences to the type of relative clause used.

	A relative pronoun that cannot be left out	A relative pronoun that can be left out	A reduced relative clause
1) The chart shows the number of men and women who attended a college in the UK in 2000 and 2010.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) The line graph shows the amount of tea and coffee drunk each month in the UK in one year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) The table shows the percentage of people who bought or rented accommodation in one year in four countries.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) The pie charts show how adults in one country spend the money that they earn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5) The charts show the number of tourists visiting an island in 1990, 2000, and 2010.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6) The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups who did regular physical activity in 2010.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

QUESTION 2

Now fill in the gaps to expand or reduce the relative clauses.

- 1) The line graph shows the amount of tea and coffee drunk each month in the UK in one year.

EXPANDED CLAUSE:

The line graph shows the amount of tea and coffee [redacted] each month in the UK in one year.

- 2) The charts show the number of tourists visiting an island in 1990, 2000, and 2010.

EXPANDED CLAUSE:

The charts show the number of tourists [redacted] an island in 1990, 2000, and 2010.

- 3) The chart shows the number of men and women who attended a college in the UK in 2000 and 2010.

REDUCED CLAUSE:

The chart shows the number of men and women [redacted] a college in the UK in 2000 and 2010.

- 4) The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups who did regular physical activity in 2010.

REDUCED CLAUSE:

The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups [redacted] regular physical activity in 2010.

- 5) The table shows the percentage of people who bought or rented accommodation in one year in four countries.

REDUCED CLAUSE:

The table shows the percentage of people [redacted] accommodation in one year in four countries.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Match the sentences to the type of relative clause used.

	A relative pronoun that cannot be left out	A relative pronoun that can be left out	A reduced relative clause
1) The chart shows the number of men and women who attended a college in the UK in 2000 and 2010.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) The line graph shows the amount of tea and coffee drunk each month in the UK in one year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) The table shows the percentage of people who bought or rented accommodation in one year in four countries.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) The pie charts show how adults in one country spend the money that they earn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5) The charts show the number of tourists visiting an island in 1990, 2000, and 2010.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6) The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups who did regular physical activity in 2010.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- 1) 'men and women' is the subject of the verb 'attended', so the relative pronoun cannot be left out (i.e. we cannot write: 'the number of men and women attended a college').
 3) 'people' is the subject of the verbs 'bought or rented', so the relative pronoun cannot be left out (i.e. we cannot write: 'the percentage of people bought or rented').
 4) 'the money' is the object of the verb 'earn' ('the adults' is the subject here), so we can omit the relative pronoun and write: 'how adults in one country spend the money they earn').
 6) 'men and women' is the subject of the verb 'did regular physical activity', so the relative pronoun cannot be left out (i.e. we cannot write: 'men and women did regular physical activity').

QUESTION 2

Now fill in the gaps to expand or reduce the relative clauses.

- 1) The line graph shows the amount of tea and coffee drunk each month in the UK in one year.

EXPANDED CLAUSE:

The line graph shows the amount of tea and coffee [] each month in the UK in one year.

- 2) The charts show the number of tourists visiting an island in 1990, 2000, and 2010.

EXPANDED CLAUSE:

The charts show the number of tourists [] an island in 1990, 2000, and 2010.

- 3) The chart shows the number of men and women who attended a college in the UK in 2000 and 2010.

REDUCED CLAUSE:

The chart shows the number of men and women [] a college in the UK in 2000 and 2010.

- 4) The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups who did regular physical activity in 2010.

REDUCED CLAUSE:

The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups [] regular physical activity in 2010.

- 5) The table shows the percentage of people who bought or rented accommodation in one year in four countries.

REDUCED CLAUSE:

The table shows the percentage of people [] accommodation in one year in four countries.

The answer:

- 1) The line graph shows the amount of tea and coffee drunk each month in the UK in one year.

EXPANDED CLAUSE:

The line graph shows the amount of tea and coffee *that was drunk* each month in the UK in one year.

- 2) The charts show the number of tourists visiting an island in 1990, 2000, and 2010.

EXPANDED CLAUSE:

The charts show the number of tourists *that visited / who visited* an island in 1990, 2000, and 2010.

- 3) The chart shows the number of men and women who attended a college in the UK in 2000 and 2010.

REDUCED CLAUSE:

The chart shows the number of men and women *attending* a college in the UK in 2000 and 2010.

- 4) The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups who did regular physical activity in 2010.

REDUCED CLAUSE:

The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups *doing* regular physical activity in 2010.

- 5) The table shows the percentage of people who bought or rented accommodation in one year in four countries.

REDUCED CLAUSE:

The table shows the percentage of people *buying or renting* accommodation in one year in four countries.

All done !

QUESTION 1

Fill in the gaps with either between, during, for, from, in, or to.

the first six years, the level remained stable.

the first decade, the percentage increased several times but remained below 20%.

The line graph shows population changes a fifty-year period.

There were no changes in Switzerland this time.

The pie chart shows household expenditure one country 1992.

The line graph shows populations changes 1950 to 2000.

The line graph shows populations changes 1950 and 2000.

In the UK, sales fell from 1990 2000 then increased steadily a decade before beginning to fall again 2010.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the gaps with either between, during, for, from, in, or to.

the first six years, the level remained stable.

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The line graph shows population changes a fifty-year period.

There were no changes in Switzerland this time.

The pie chart shows household expenditure one country 1992.

The line graph shows populations changes 1950 to 2000.

The line graph shows populations changes 1950 and 2000.

In the UK, sales fell from 1990 2000 then increased steadily a decade before beginning to fall again 2010.

The answer:

For the first six years, the level remained stable.

In / During the first decade, the percentage increased several times but remained below 20%.

The line graph shows population changes *during / over* a fifty-year period.

There were no changes in Switzerland *during* this time.

The pie chart shows household expenditure *in* one country *in* 1992.

The line graph shows populations changes *from* 1950 to 2000.

The line graph shows populations changes *between* 1950 and 2000.

In the UK, sales fell from 1990 *to* 2000 then increased steadily *for* a decade before beginning to fall again *in* 2010.

All done !

4.3 Introducing map and plan tasks

Paraphrasing the details of what is being shown in a map or plan

With maps and plans, you are always shown at least two images that show what something is/was like before something happened and then after something happened. For example,

- **an island before and after the construction of some tourist facilities.**
- **the layout of a university's sports centre now, and how it will look after redevelopment.**
- **the number of visitors at Ashdown Museum during the year before and the year after it was refurbished.**

If we ask, 'What is this showing me?', our answer is '**The maps show changes that have occurred / been made**' or '**The maps show what has changed**', which can again help us to paragraph the test question.

An easy way to paraphrase the idea of '**before**' and '**after**' is to use '**prior to**' and '**following**'. However, they cannot be used in the same way grammatically:

- **after / before + doing x: after building** some facilities / **before building** some facilities
- **after / before + noun: after the construction of** / **before the construction of**
- **prior to and following** can only be used with a noun.

Synonyms can help here. For example, you can replace 'construction' with 'building':

- **prior to the building of / following the building of**

Again, you can change any nouns in the question to a verb (**the construction of** → **were constructed**) or you can change a verb to a noun (**it was refurbished** → **the refurbishment of**). We can also change a grammatical structure used in the question. For example, if the question refers to '**tourist facilities**', we can change this to '**facilities for tourists**'.

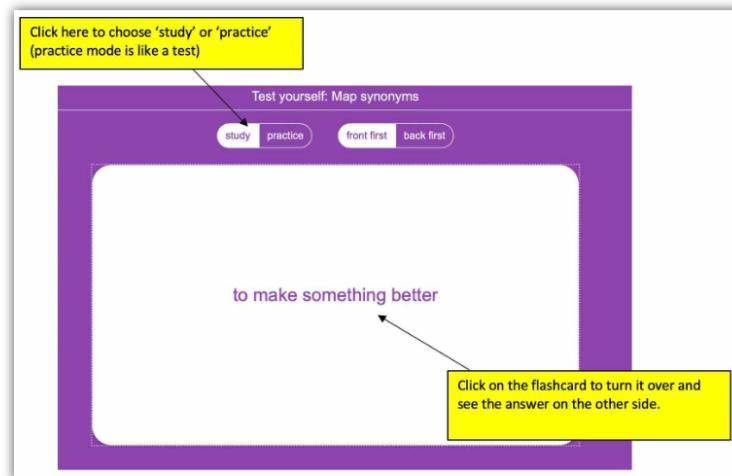
KEY IDEA: Grammatical knowledge can be useful when it comes to paraphrasing the test question - if you focus on learning 'complex grammar', you may find this is less useful.

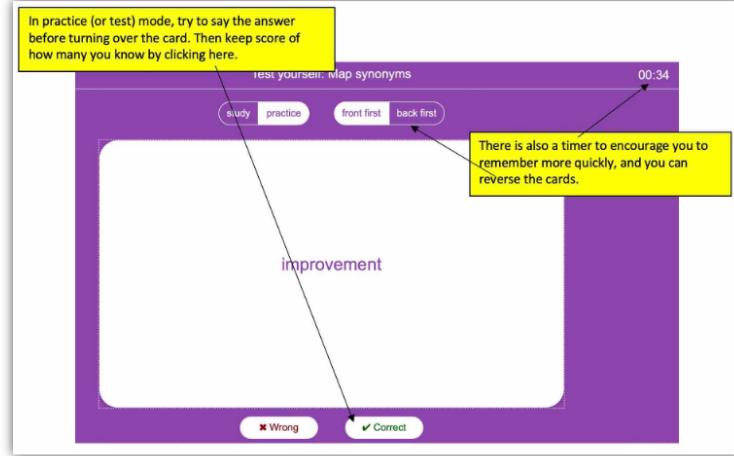
Practice

The following exercises will help you develop your vocabulary and practise paraphrasing.

Click Here
to Practise

Now, use the flashcards in the next exercise to test yourself and see how many of the map and plan synonyms you can remember. The following images show you how to use the flashcards to help you do this.





Click on the button below to study or practice with the flashcards:

**Click Here
to Practise**

Giving too much information

As we saw earlier, the introductory sentence should not be confused with your overview. Sometimes people add extra information or comments to this sentence. Look at the following example:

The two maps illustrate the development that has taken place on the island in terms of facilities for tourists that has turned a desolate place into one with several amenities for visitors.

Points to notice

- This candidate has not introduced the information (we can only refer to 'the island' if it has already been mentioned).
- They have also included a comment that might be useful later in their answer (that the island was **deserted** and now has amenities for visitors), but this information does not answer any of the questions we asked earlier, namely **What, Who, Where, When**, and so it doesn't belong in the introductory sentence.
- The word 'illustrate' works here – we can say that '**the maps illustrate the changes that have been made**', or '**the development that has taken place**'.
- The word '**development**' is a nice one to include as it very accurately describes what has happened on the island. I would use it like this:

The maps show an island prior to and following its development as a tourist destination.

The next exercise will help you practice matching paraphrases from different types of tasks.

Practice

**Click Here
to Practise**

Extra practice

Look back at the introductory sentences from your previous task 1 answers and compare these to the information in the test question.

- Did you change enough of the test question or did you copy chunks of text?
- Did you change the test question too much (using synonyms that are not accurate)?
- Did you miss out any information?
- What changes can you make now?
- Review your use of relative clauses and prepositions of time – can you identify and fix any problems?

Homework

Before the next lesson, try to write an answer to the following question from Cambridge IELTS 10 (Page 54):

*The tables below give information about sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas in 1999 and 2004 in five European countries.*

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

Write at least 150 words.

Sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas (1999 & 2004)

Coffee	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
UK	1.5	20
Switzerland	3	6
Denmark	1.8	2
Belgium	1	1.7
Sweden	0.8	1

Bananas **1999 (millions of euros)** **2004 (millions of euros)**

Switzerland	15	47
UK	1	5.5
Belgium	0.6	4
Sweden	1.8	1
Denmark	2	0.9

*Fairtrade: a category of products for which farmers from developing countries have been paid an officially agreed price.

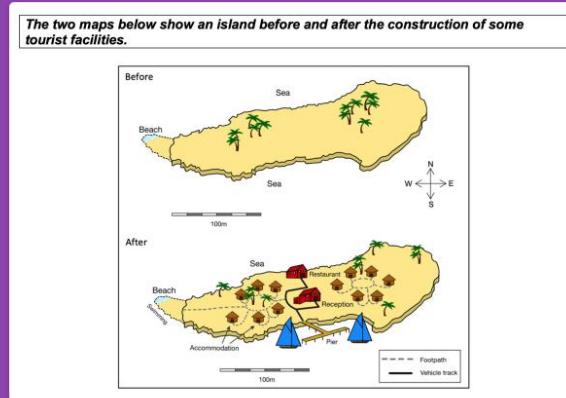
QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in the table with useful synonyms to use in map or plan tasks.

Verb	Noun	Meaning
to build		make something using materials such as bricks or wood etc.
to construct		build something or put pieces together
to improve		make something better
	development	change a (usually wild or untouched) place so that it becomes more advanced / habitable / useable
	refurbishment	make a building look new again by painting, repairing, decorating etc.
to renovate		repair and improve something a building to make it 'new' again
to redevelop		change an area of a town by replacing old buildings with new ones

QUESTION 2

Paraphrase the following test question using the ideas from this lesson. When you have finished, click on 'show answers' to see my suggestions.



Show answers

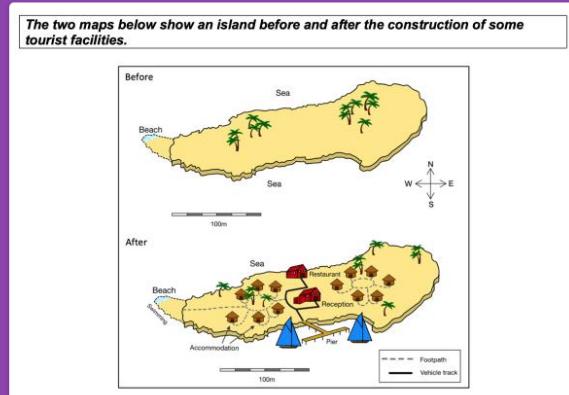
QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in the table with useful synonyms to use in map or plan tasks.

Verb	Noun	Meaning
to build	(building)	make something using materials such as bricks or wood etc.
to construct	(construction)	build something or put pieces together
to improve	(improvement)	make something better
(to develop)	development	change a (usually wild or untouched) place so that it becomes more advanced / habitable / useable
(to refurbish)	refurbishment	make a building look new again by painting, repairing, decorating etc.
to renovate	(renovation)	repair and improve something a building to make it 'new' again
to redevelop	(redevelopment)	change an area of a town by replacing old buildings with new ones

QUESTION 2

Paraphrase the following test question using the ideas from this lesson. When you have finished, click on 'show answers' to see my suggestions.



Some possible answers are:

- The maps show an island prior to and following the building of some facilities for tourists.
- The maps show changes on an island following the building of some facilities for tourists.
- The maps show changes made to an island after tourist facilities were constructed.
- The maps show how an island changed after some tourist facilities were constructed (on it).

All done !

to change an area of a town by replacing old buildings
with new ones

to redevelop

noun form of 'to construct'

construction

two verbs that mean 'to make a building look new again
by repairing, decorating etc.'

1) to renovate 2) to refurbish

noun form of 'to improve'

improvement

noun form of 'to build'

building

noun form of 'to develop'

development

to make something better

to improve

to change a (usually wild or untouched) place so that it becomes more advanced / habitable / useable

to develop

noun form of 'to renovate'

renovation

noun form of 'to redevelop'

redevelopment

noun form of 'to refurbish'

refurbishment

two verbs that mean 'to make something using materials such as bricks or wood etc.'

1) build 2) construct

how frequently
people x

how often x is
done

the length of
time

a ten-year-
period

x was built

how much x is
sold

the inhabitants
of x

the
construction of
x

people living in
x

from 1995 to
2005

how much x is
used/eaten

the total
number of
minutes

the
consumption
of x

sales of x

how frequently
people x

how often x is
done

the length of
time

a ten-year-
period

x was built

how much x is
sold

the importance
of x

the
construction of
x

people living in
x

from 1995 to
2005

how much x is
used/eaten

the total
number of
minutes

the
consumption
of x

sales of x

LESSON 5 - The Overview and Highlighting Key features

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 5.1 The overview
- 5.2 Writing a clear overview
- 5.3 Presenting and highlighting key features

5.1 The overview

In this lesson, we will focus again on a chart or table task, producing our first complete model answer. First, you need to understand two elements of your answer that need to be very clear: the overview and the key features. While these concepts are explained in this lesson, you may find that it will take several more lessons before you feel able to produce them effectively yourself, so we will continue to practise these throughout the book.

We will be working on the homework task from lesson 4. Here is a reminder of the task, which is from Cambridge IELTS 10 (page 54):

*The tables below give information about sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas in 1999 and 2004 in five European countries.*

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

Sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas (1999 & 2004)		
Coffee	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
UK	1.5	20
Switzerland	3	6
Denmark	1.8	2
Belgium	1	1.7
Sweden	0.8	1

Sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas (1999 & 2004)		
Bananas	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
Switzerland	15	47
UK	1	5.5
Belgium	0.6	4
Sweden	1.8	1
Denmark	2	0.9

*Fairtrade: a category of products for which farmers from developing countries have been paid an officially agreed price.

After writing my introductory sentence, the next part of the answer that I write is the overview. As we have seen, the overview and the key features are very important in Task achievement.

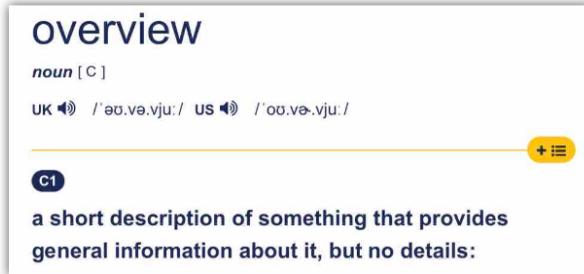
Band	Task Achievement
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clearly presents a fully developed response
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Presents, highlights, and illustrates key features clearly and appropriately
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Presents a clear overview of main trends, differences or stagesClearly presents and highlights key features but could be more fully extended
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Presents an overview with information appropriately selectedPresents and adequately highlights key features
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recounts detail mechanically, with no clear overviewPresents but inadequately covers key features, there may be a tendency to focus on details
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">does not cover all key featuresMay confuse key features with detail

The above extracts make it clear that you cannot achieve Band 6 if you do not include an overview and if you do not adequately cover the key features. You cannot achieve Band 7 unless your overview is '**a clear overview of the main trends, differences or stages**', and unless you **clearly highlight key features**. In our models, we are going to aim for Band 8 and 9, where we will **present, highlight, and illustrate the key features clearly** (Band 8) and **develop our response fully** (Band 9).

It is important to remember that we cannot separate 'function' from the language needed to achieve this function. For example, if we want to 'make a comparison' we need to use the language of comparison. If you want to learn how to present an overview, you need to first think about the type of language needed to do this.

The function of an overview

Your overview should present a brief summary of the key features (the main trends, differences or stages). The following definition from the Cambridge online dictionary tells us another important feature:



As this definition shows, the information should be general and **should not contain any details**. The most common problems I see are overviews that are not 'clear' or that contain too much detail.

Language typically used in an overview

The language we typically use when giving general information about trends includes:

Overall, generally, in general,

Although I sometimes use 'generally' or 'in general' in my overview, I **always** begin with the word **Overall**. This signals very clearly that I am about to give my overview. It is important to remember that it isn't enough to write this word at the beginning of your sentence – what follows must be an overview, **with no details**.

KEY IDEA: Signal your overview very clearly by starting with the word 'Overall,'. The most common problems are: overviews that are not 'clear' and overviews that do actually not give an overview because they include too many details.

Collocation

We can use the verbs **experience**, **see** and **witness** with the word 'trend', and the following adjectives can be used to describe a trend:

a **rising** trend, a **falling** trend, an **upward** trend, a **downward** trend, a **clear** trend, a **global** trend, the **opposite** trend

Vocabulary note: A **trend** is an overall or general pattern. This means that, a **rising trend** is one that rises overall (the final figure is larger than the first figure). It doesn't mean that the figures **always** rose. Similarly, in a **falling trend**, the final figure is lower than the first figure, but may have risen at times during this period.

When summing up figures, it is important to keep in mind what these represent. For example, if you are summarising something that represents an increase in value, such as 'sales', then you can refer to 'gains' or 'losses', but these words are not always appropriate (e.g. if the figures show changes in the use of energy). So you need to think about whether something is actually being 'gained' or 'lost'.

When talking about 'sales' of goods, the following words and phrases can be useful:

marginal gains, significant gains, marginal losses, significant losses, mixed success, mixed results

So we might say:

- Several of these countries **experienced a rising trend**...
- Book sales in most countries **saw a falling trend**...
- **Only one of these countries witnessed a downward trend**...
- Banana sales **had mixed success**...
- Sales of one product **rose continually, while the other experienced the opposite trend**.

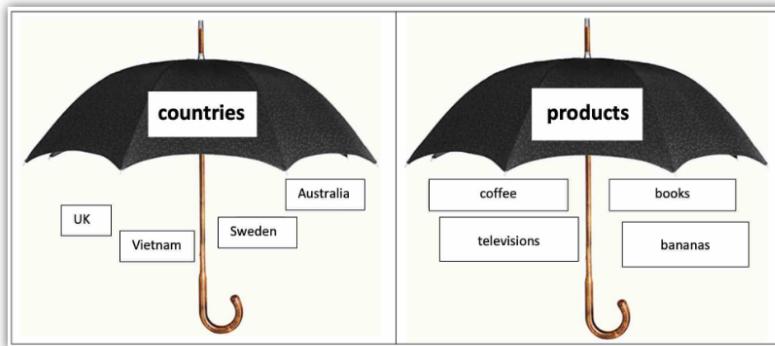
Look at the examples carefully. How did I avoid giving specific details here?

[Click here to see the answer:](#)

See The Answer

Umbrella terms

Umbrella terms are used to refer to a whole group. These can be very useful in an overview, especially when it comes to avoiding giving too much detail.



Practice

The following exercises will help you practise using umbrella terms.

Click Here to Practise

How did I avoid giving specific details in some of these examples?

- *Several of these countries experienced a rising trend...*
- *Book sales in most countries saw a falling trend...*
- *Only one of these countries witnessed a downward trend*
- *Banana sales had mixed success*
- *Sales of one product rose continually, while the other experienced the opposite trend.*

Answer

I avoided giving details through

- 1) the use of determiners (several of these, most of these, only one of these, one..the other) and
- 2) the use of umbrella terms (countries, products)

QUESTION 1

Match the umbrella terms at the top to the specific details by dragging and dropping them into the correct box.

types of energy dairy products types of media fields of study types of transport community services amenities

different genders physical activities regions of the world

South Asia, Latin America, Oceania

education, psychology, architecture

hospitals, police, fire brigade

males, females

wind, solar, coal, oil

cheese, milk, yoghurt

cycling, swimming, running

television, radio, podcast

bus, train, plane

shopping centre, restaurant, cinema

QUESTION 2

Now fill in the gaps with the correct umbrella term from the previous exercise.

- 1) South Asia, Latin America, Oceania - these are all _____
- 2) Education, psychology, architecture - these are all _____
- 3) Hospitals, police, fire brigade - these are all _____
- 4) Males, females - these are _____
- 5) Wind, solar, coal, oil - these are _____
- 6) Cheese, milk, yoghurt- these are all _____
- 7) Cycling, swimming, running - these are all _____
- 8) Television, radio, podcast - these are all _____
- 9) Bus, train, plane - these are all _____
- 10) Shopping centre, restaurant, cinema - these are _____

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Match the umbrella terms at the top to the specific details by dragging and dropping them into the correct box.

South Asia, Latin America, Oceania

regions of the world ✓

education, psychology, architecture

fields of study ✓

hospitals, police, fire brigade

community services ✓

males, females

different genders ✓

wind, solar, coal, oil

types of energy ✓

cheese, milk, yoghurt

dairy products ✓

cycling, swimming, running

physical activities ✓

television, radio, podcast

types of media ✓

bus, train, plane

types of transport ✓

shopping centre, restaurant, cinema

amenities ✓

QUESTION 2

Now fill in the gaps with the correct umbrella term from the previous exercise.

- 1) South Asia, Latin America, Oceania - these are all _____
- 2) Education, psychology, architecture - these are all _____
- 3) Hospitals, police, fire brigade - these are all _____
- 4) Males, females - these are _____
- 5) Wind, solar, coal, oil - these are _____
- 6) Cheese, milk, yoghurt- these are all _____
- 7) Cycling, swimming, running - these are all _____
- 8) Television, radio, podcast - these are all _____
- 9) Bus, train, plane - these are all _____
- 10) Shopping centre, restaurant, cinema - these are _____

The answer:

- 1) South Asia, Latin America, Oceania - these are all *regions of the world*
- 2) Education, psychology, architecture - these are all *fields of study*
- 3) Hospitals, police, fire brigade - these are all *community services*
- 4) Males, females - these are *different genders*
- 5) Wind, solar, coal, oil - these are *types of energy*
- 6) Cheese, milk, yoghurt- these are all *dairy products*
- 7) Cycling, swimming, running - these are all *physical activities*
- 8) Television, radio, podcast - these are all *types of media*
- 9) Bus, train, plane - these are all *types of transport*
- 10) Shopping centre, restaurant, cinema - these are *amenities*

All done !

5.2 Writing a clear overview

An overview can be 'unclear' if there are language problems but also if it does not provide a **complete** picture of the main **trends**. The most common problem I see is an overview that only mentions **one trend**. Most often, people only say who or what had 'the highest' or 'the lowest' figure, but this only gives a small part of the overall picture.

If we think of this in terms of describing a book or film then an unclear overview of Harry Potter would be:

Harry Potter is a best-selling book about a boy called Harry Potter.

This does not give us a complete or 'clear' picture of the book. A clearer overview would say:

Harry Potter is a best-selling book about a young wizard and his friends, who all attend a special school for wizards.

Common language problems

Language problems that can affect your overview often concern vocabulary. For example, using adjectives that do not accurately reflect the information you are given, or perhaps making a personal comment such as referring to a trend as **worrying**, or **exciting**.

Other common problems are connected to grammar. For example, not being clear about what exactly **who** or **what** experienced this trend, and **who** or **what** the trend was limited to. To do this, we need to use determiners like these:

all of, none of, some of, several of, only one of, not all of, every, each, both, neither

It is highly unlikely that all of the data you are given will behave in exactly the same way – if it did, there would be too little to write about. Thus, you will generally need to show contrast in your overview to explain how the trends were different. This means accurately using words and phrases such as these:

However, although, while, despite, in spite of

KEY IDEA: In your overview, make sure it is clear exactly what or who is affected by the trend you are describing. Be sure to give a 'clear' or complete picture of the main **trends** – if you only mention one trend, this is a good indicator that you are missing something out.

Practice

In this exercise, you will try to match three overview statements to the correct image.

**Click Here
to Practise**

Deciding what to include in your overview

When it comes to deciding what to include in your overview, we need to look back at the notes we made in Step 2 of the thinking stage. Here is a reminder of my notes:

Sales of *Fairtrade-labelled coffee and bananas (1999 & 2004)		
Coffee	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
UK	1.5	20 ↑↑↑
Switzerland	① * ③	* ⑥ ↑ × 2
Denmark	1.8	2 }
Belgium	1	1.7 }
Sweden	0.8	1

Bananas	1999 (millions of euros)	2004 (millions of euros)
Switzerland	① 15	47 ↑↑↑
UK	1	5.5 }
Belgium	0.6	4 }
Sweden	1.8	1 }
Denmark	2	0.9 } ↓!

*Fairtrade: a category of products for which farmers from developing countries have been paid an officially agreed price.

As you can see, I noticed at least 6 key features here. My overview will need to briefly summarise these to give a **clear** picture of the overall trends.

Practice

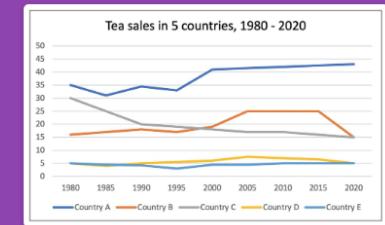
Try to identify the problems in each of these overviews and the one clear overview of the information in our test question. When you have finished, click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

Click Here
to Practise

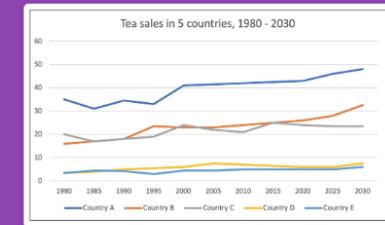
QUESTION 1

Can you match the overview to the correct image?

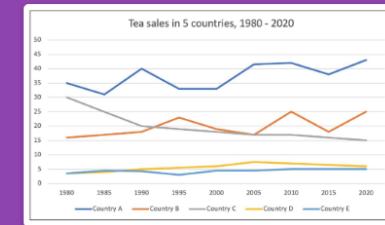
Overall, only one country experienced a clear rising trend, while sales in the other countries varied between relative stability and falling trends.



Overall, there was a clear rising trend in only two of these countries, which also experienced considerable fluctuations.



Overall, although all countries saw a rising trend in this period, sales remained relatively low in several of these.

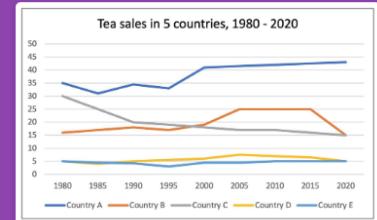


Show answers

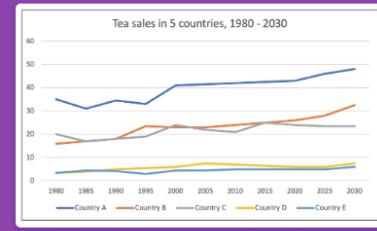
QUESTION 1

Can you match the overview to the correct image?

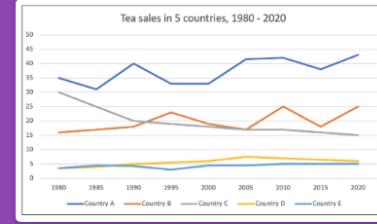
Overall, only one country experienced a clear rising trend, while sales in the other countries varied between relative stability and falling trends.



Overall, there was a clear rising trend in only two of these countries, which also experienced considerable fluctuations.



Overall, although all countries saw a rising trend in this period, sales remained relatively low in several of these.



All done !

QUESTION 1

Look at the following overviews. Which one is a clear overview? Can you identify the problems in the other overviews?

	a clear overview	the language is not accurate	the referencing is not clear	there is too much detail	this is not a complete overview
1) Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee increased most in the UK, and Fairtrade bananas increased most in Switzerland.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee saw a rising trend, while Fairtrade bananas experienced the opposite trend.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee increased in every country, while Fairtrade bananas only increased in Switzerland, the UK and Belgium and fell in Sweden and Denmark. The UK and Switzerland had the biggest sales in both categories at €20 million and €47 million respectively.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee increased in all five countries, while there was mixed success for similarly labelled bananas, and the leading country in each table had significantly higher sales than the rest.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5) Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee increased in these countries, Fairtrade bananas increased in Switzerland, the UK and Belgium and fell in Sweden and Denmark. The former had the biggest sales in both categories at €20 million and €47 million respectively.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Look at the following overviews. Which one is a clear overview? Can you identify the problems in the other overviews?

1) Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee increased most in the UK, and Fairtrade bananas increased most in Switzerland.

2) Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee saw a rising trend, while Fairtrade bananas experienced the opposite trend.

3) Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee increased in every country, while Fairtrade bananas only increased in Switzerland, the UK and Belgium and fell in Sweden and Denmark. The UK and Switzerland had the biggest sales in both categories at €20 million and €47 million respectively.

4) Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee increased in all five countries, while there was mixed success for similarly labelled bananas, and the leading country in each table had significantly higher sales than the rest.

5) Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee increased in these countries, Fairtrade bananas increased in Switzerland, the UK and Belgium and fell in Sweden and Denmark. The former had the biggest sales in both categories at €20 million and €47 million respectively.

	a clear overview	the language is not accurate	the referencing is not clear	there is too much detail	this is not a complete overview
1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1) This answer only gives part of the picture (the highest figures) and so it not a clear overview.

2) The language is not accurate - Fairtrade bananas did rise in some countries.

3) This is not an overview because it contains too much detail.

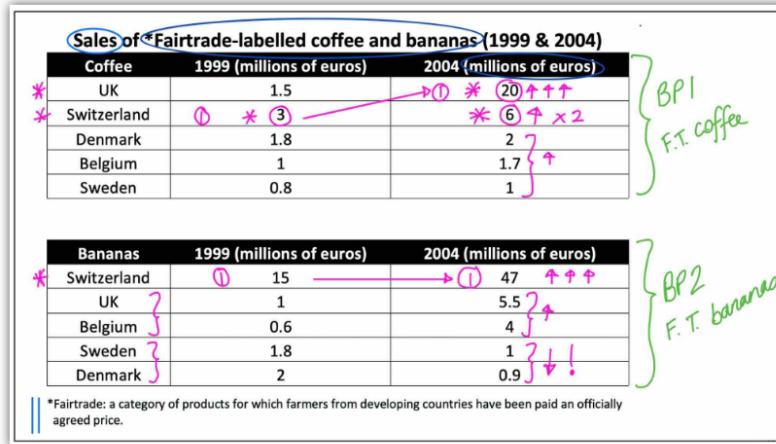
4) This is a good clear overview of the main features.

5) The referencing is unclear - we do not always know what is being referred to (e.g. these countries; the former)

All done !

5.3 Presenting and highlighting key features

Once we have our overview, we need to write our main paragraphs. While the overview gives a brief summary of the key features, your body paragraphs will present a more detailed picture. Notice that, in my notes, I have already 'selected' the main features I am going to summarise, and decided how to organise these into paragraphs.



Now, I need to 'present' these and highlight them. The easiest way to do this is *by pointing out what I noticed* about them. Doing this means I am showing the examiner why these are key or important enough to mention.

To demonstrate this, look at the following example:

With Fairtrade coffee, the UK had sales worth €1.5 million in 1999 and €20 million in 2004.

Although this sentence is factually correct, it is listing the information and presenting it like a minor detail. When reading Band 6 Task 1 answers, the most common question I have is, '*Why are you telling me this? Why is this important?*' This is because most people simply present the figures in the data instead of showing how the figures are important – why they are key features rather than minor details. This is the difference between **listing minor details** and **presenting and highlighting the key features**.

To present and highlight the above fact as a key feature, we need to write:

The UK had by far the biggest increase in Fairtrade coffee sales, rising from 1.5 million euros in 1999 to 20 million euros in 2004.

In this sentence, it is clear to the reader that this is **an important point** in the data. Effectively, you are making it clear that you are pointing out for a reason (because this was a significant increase / the biggest increase etc.).

KEY IDEA: Don't just list the figures or numbers in the chart you are given. Instead, show the examiner why the figures you have selected are important – help them understand why you took the time to point this out. If you have nothing to point out or say about a piece of data, perhaps it is a minor detail that should be left out.

Making comparisons

Notice that making a comparison helped me to highlight the key feature – remember, this is also part of the task instructions. This is why it is so important to make sure you are **making comparisons where relevant**. Here are the key features I want to explain in my body paragraphs – notice **the comparisons**:

Body paragraph 1

- Switzerland **was the biggest consumer of Fairtrade coffee in 1999 with €3 million in sales.**
- Swiss sales doubled in 2004, but the UK rose from €1.5 million to €20 and became the new leader.
- The UK sales **were much higher than in any other country.**
- Sales in the other three countries also increased, but the increases were only small (between 0.2 and 0.7 million euros).

Body paragraph 2

- With Fairtrade bananas, Switzerland was the leader **in both 1999 and 2004.**
- Swiss sales increased significantly from €15 million to €47 million – this is a very big figure!
- **Sales in the UK and Belgium were much lower** but they also increased.
- Sales in the UK and Belgium **Increased by 5 times their 1999 figures**, reaching €5.5 and €4 million respectively.
- Sales in Sweden and Denmark fell, and the 2004 figures (€1 million and €0.9 million) **were almost half of those of 1999.**
- **This is different to the other sales figures.**

Vocabulary note:

We use **respectively** to show you are referring back to something mentioned earlier and that the new facts apply '**in the same order**' as in the first mention. We use it to avoid repeating information. For example, instead of writing:

Sales in the UK and Belgium increased by 5 times their 1999 figures, reaching €5.5 in the UK and €4 million in Belgium.

I can write:

Sales in the UK and Belgium increased by 5 times their 1999 figures, reaching €5.5 and €4 million respectively.

Do I have to give data for every point?

This is a question I am often asked. The only mention of data is in the Band 5 Task achievement descriptor, which says: ***there may be no data to support the description***. We are also told that Band 8 candidates 'present, highlight and **illustrate key features**.' As we have seen, 'illustrate' means to explain the truth of something by giving examples.

illustrate verb [T] (EXPLAIN)

C1

to show the meaning or truth of something more clearly, especially by giving examples:

- *The lecturer illustrated his point with a diagram on the blackboard.*
- *This latest conflict further illustrates the weakness of the UN.*
- [+ question word] *The exhibition will illustrate how life evolved from water.*

A skilled native-speaker writer may be able to 'illustrate key features' without giving data for **every** point made. However, in the models in this book, I will support every point with the relevant piece of data. I have done this deliberately, to be sure to model the best way for you to write your own answers in the test and get the best score you can. I asked two examiners to assess my models to be sure that they meet the standards for Band 9.

Practice

In this exercise, you can listen to my model answer and study the language I used to give my overview and to present and highlight the key features.

**Click Here
to Practise**

Points to notice

- I signalled my overview very clearly by beginning with '**Overall**'.
- In my overview, I did not include any details.
- I presented and highlighted the key features and I gave specific details as evidence to support these points. Notice that I sometimes just gave the information in brackets.
- I made the organisation of my paragraphs very clear by beginning my paragraphs as follows:

Sales of Fairtrade coffee ...

With Fairtrade bananas,...

- As well as this clear signalling, I also made sure that I only discussed these topics within the two paragraphs.

Extra practice

- Look back at your answer to the test question from this unit and compare it to mine.
- Did you give a clear (complete) overview?
- Look back at the overview in your previous answers.
- Did you only mention **one trend** or did you give **a clear picture of the main trends**?
- Did you include details?
- What changes can you make – e.g. can you use an umbrella term?
- Did you make any contrast clear?

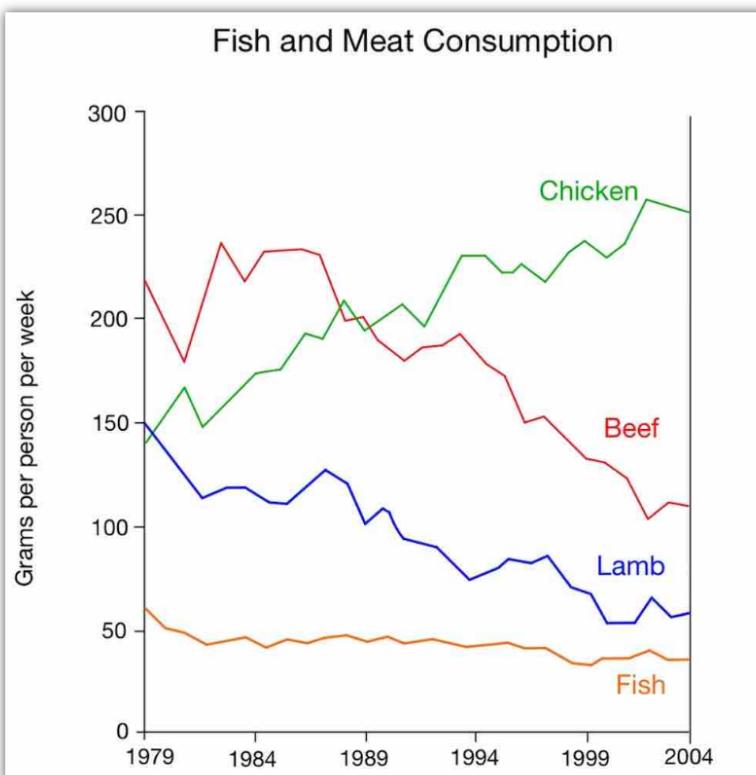
- In your body paragraphs, did you make comparisons?
- If not, how did you highlight the key features (or make it clear why you were mentioning these features)?
- Can you add some comparisons to fix this problem?
- How did you begin each paragraph? Is it clear what the main topic in each paragraph is?

Homework

Before the next lesson, try to write an answer to the following question, which is from Cambridge IELTS 7:

The graph below shows the consumption of fish and different kinds of meat in a European country between 1979 and 2004.

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



QUESTION 1

Listen to the recording of my model answer, then listen again and fill in the blanks as you listen.



The tables compare the sales figures for two Fairtrade products in the UK, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, and Sweden in two separate years. Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee [REDACTED], while [REDACTED] for similarly labelled bananas, and [REDACTED] in each table had [REDACTED].

Sales of Fairtrade coffee were [REDACTED] in 1999, and Switzerland was [REDACTED] with €3 million in sales. Despite this figure [REDACTED], the UK [REDACTED] (with €1.5 million) to [REDACTED] with €20 million worth of sales in the same year. A figure that was [REDACTED]. Although the three remaining countries [REDACTED], these were [REDACTED] with gains of between 0.2 and 0.7 million euros.

With Fairtrade bananas, Switzerland [REDACTED] in 1999 and [REDACTED] with sales increasing from €15 million to [REDACTED] €47 million. Although [REDACTED], the UK and Belgium saw [REDACTED] in this category, increasing by [REDACTED] their 1999 figures to reach €5.5 and €4 million respectively. In contrast, Sweden and Denmark [REDACTED], with the 2004 figures (€1 million and € 0.9 million) [REDACTED] 5 years earlier.

QUESTION 2

To focus on the language I used in my model, without listening again, try to fill in each gap with TWO WORDS. Fill in as many as you can, then listen again to check your answers.



The tables compare the sales figures [REDACTED] Fairtrade products [REDACTED] UK, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, and Sweden [REDACTED] separate years. Overall, [REDACTED] Fairtrade coffee [REDACTED] countries, while [REDACTED] mixed success for similarly labelled bananas, and [REDACTED] country [REDACTED] table [REDACTED] higher sales [REDACTED] rest.

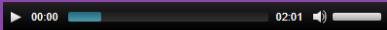
Sales of Fairtrade coffee [REDACTED] modest in 1999, and Switzerland was [REDACTED] consumer with €3 million [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] figure doubling in 2004, the UK [REDACTED] third place (with €1.5 million) to lead the table with €20 million [REDACTED] sales in [REDACTED] year. A figure [REDACTED] considerably [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] country. Although [REDACTED] remaining countries also saw increases, [REDACTED] marginal with gains [REDACTED] 0.2 and 0.7 million euros.

With Fairtrade bananas, Switzerland [REDACTED] the leader in 1999 and dominated this table [REDACTED] years with sales [REDACTED] €15 million [REDACTED] striking €47 million. [REDACTED] lower, the UK and Belgium [REDACTED] growths [REDACTED] category, [REDACTED] just over 5 times their 1999 figures [REDACTED] €5.5 and €4 million respectively. [REDACTED], Sweden and Denmark experienced [REDACTED] in sales, with the 2004 figures (€1 million and € 0.9 million) almost [REDACTED] those of 5 [REDACTED].

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Listen to the recording of my model answer, then listen again and fill in the blanks as you listen.



The tables compare the sales figures for two Fairtrade products in the UK, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, and Sweden in two separate years. Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee _____, while _____ for similarly labelled bananas, and _____ in each table had _____.

Sales of Fairtrade coffee were _____ in 1999, and Switzerland was _____ with €3 million in sales. Despite this figure _____, the UK _____ (with €1.5 million) to _____ with €20 million worth of sales in the same year. A figure that was _____. Although the three remaining countries _____, these were _____ with gains of between 0.2 and 0.7 million euros.

With Fairtrade bananas, Switzerland _____ in 1999 and _____ with sales increasing from €15 million to _____. €47 million. Although _____, the UK and Belgium saw _____ in this category, increasing by _____ their 1999 figures to reach €5.5 and €4 million respectively. In contrast, Sweden and Denmark _____, with the 2004 figures (€1 million and €0.9 million) _____ 5 years earlier.

The answer:

The tables compare the sales figures for two Fairtrade products in the UK, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, and Sweden in two separate years. Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee *increased in all five countries*, while *there was mixed success* for similarly labelled bananas, and *the leading country in each table had significantly higher sales than the rest*.

Sales of Fairtrade coffee were *relatively modest* in 1999, and Switzerland was *the largest consumer* with €3 million in sales. Despite this figure *doubling in 2004*, the UK *rose from third place* (with €1.5 million) to *lead the table* with €20 million worth of sales in the same year. A figure that was *considerably higher than in any other country*. Although the three remaining countries *also saw increases*, these were *marginal* with gains of between 0.2 and 0.7 million euros.

With Fairtrade bananas, Switzerland *was again the leader* in 1999 and *dominated this table in both years* with sales increasing from €15 million to a *striking* €47 million. Although *considerably lower*, the UK and Belgium saw *similar growths* in this category, increasing by *just over 5 times* their 1999 figures to reach €5.5 and €4 million respectively. In contrast, Sweden and Denmark *experienced a drop in sales*, with the 2004 figures (€1 million and €0.9 million) *almost half of those* of 5 years earlier.

QUESTION 2

To focus on the language I used in my model, without listening again, try to fill in each gap with TWO WORDS. Fill in as many as you can, then listen again to check your answers.



The tables compare the sales figures _____ Fairtrade products _____ UK, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, and Sweden

separate years. Overall, _____ Fairtrade coffee _____ countries, while _____ mixed success for similarly labelled bananas, and _____ country _____ table _____ higher sales rest.

Sales of Fairtrade coffee _____ modest in 1999, and Switzerland was _____ consumer with €3 million _____.

figure doubling in 2004, the UK _____ third place (with €1.5 million) to lead the table with €20 million _____ sales in _____ year. A figure _____ considerably _____ in _____ country. Although _____ remaining countries also saw increases, _____ marginal with gains _____ 0.2 and 0.7 million euros.

With Fairtrade bananas, Switzerland _____ the leader in 1999 and dominated this table _____ years with sales _____ €15 million _____ striking €47 million. _____ lower, the UK and Belgium _____ growths _____ category, just over 5 times their 1999 figures _____ €5.5 and €4 million respectively. _____, Sweden and Denmark experienced _____ in sales, with the 2004 figures (€1 million and €0.9 million) almost _____ those of 5 _____.

The answer:

The tables compare the sales figures for two Fairtrade products in the UK, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, and Sweden in two separate years. Overall, sales of Fairtrade coffee increased in all five countries, while there was mixed success for similarly labelled bananas, and the leading country in each table had significantly higher sales than the rest.

Sales of Fairtrade coffee were relatively modest in 1999, and Switzerland was the largest consumer with €3 million in sales. Despite this figure doubling in 2004, the UK rose from third place (with €1.5 million) to lead the table with €20 million worth of sales in the same year. A figure that was considerably higher than in any other country. Although the three remaining countries also saw increases, these were marginal with gains of between 0.2 and 0.7 million euros.

With Fairtrade bananas, Switzerland was again the leader in 1999 and dominated this table in both years with sales increasing from €15 million to a striking €47 million. Although considerably lower, the UK and Belgium saw similar growths in this category, increasing by just over 5 times their 1999 figures to reach €5.5 and €4 million respectively. In contrast, Sweden and Denmark experienced a drop in sales, with the 2004 figures (€1 million and €0.9 million) almost half of those of 5 years earlier.

All done !

LESSON 6 - Line Graphs

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 6.1 Understanding line graphs
- 6.2 Addressing Band 6 problems
- 6.3 Model answer

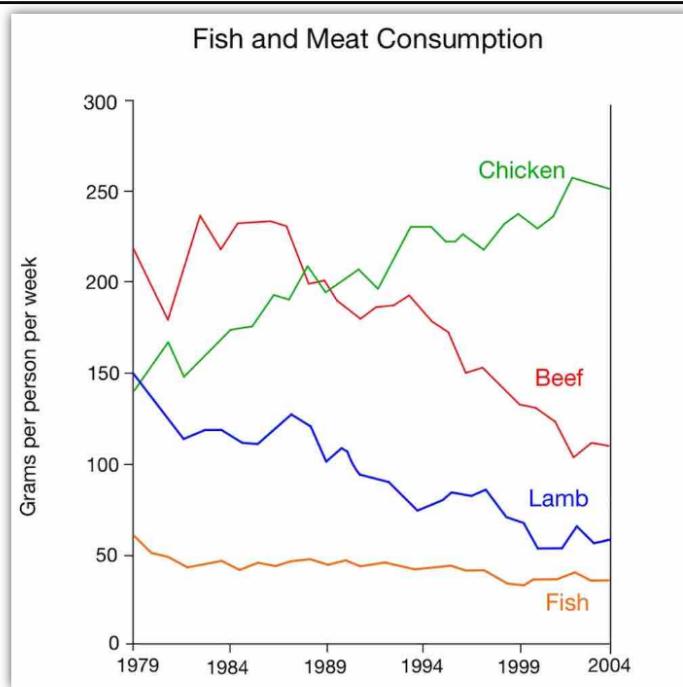
6.1 Understanding line graphs

In this lesson, we will apply what we have learned about charts to a line graph using the homework task from Lesson 5. We will also look at some Band 6 problems to help you review your own answer. We will return to this type of task again in later lessons to discuss other problems when dealing with different types of charts.

Here is a reminder of our writing task question:

The graph below shows the consumption of fish and different kinds of meat in a European country between 1979 and 2004.

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



This question is based on a line graph, which gives information very differently to a table and so presents different challenges. The following points will help you to think about these.

Points to notice

- A line graph is used to show changes over time. While our previous task compared two specific years, line graphs cover either a much longer period of time, or they might show a shorter period of time broken down into short intervals, such as the 12 months of a year, or 24 hours in a day.
- There tend to be more data points in a line graph, this means that there are more minor details to ignore, and you have to be more selective in choosing what to write about.
- When you write about a line graph like this, it can help to think about the 'intervals' (the gap between each year in the x axis (the horizontal line along the bottom of the graph).
- Unlike a table, or pie chart, you need to read the line graph to get the data yourself. You may also need to estimate figures or dates.
- Line graphs sometimes present predicted data for a time in the future – we will deal with these in later lessons.
- Whenever there are issues with time, there are also issues with using the correct tense. If we are linking two different times, we need to think about whether to use a simple present / past tense (do / did) or a perfect tense (have done / had done).

KEY IDEA: With a line graph, you need to be very careful in your use of tenses. Line graphs generally also have more minor details, so you need to be more selective in choosing what to write about.

Estimating

To show we are estimating (making a good guess), we can use the following words and phrases:

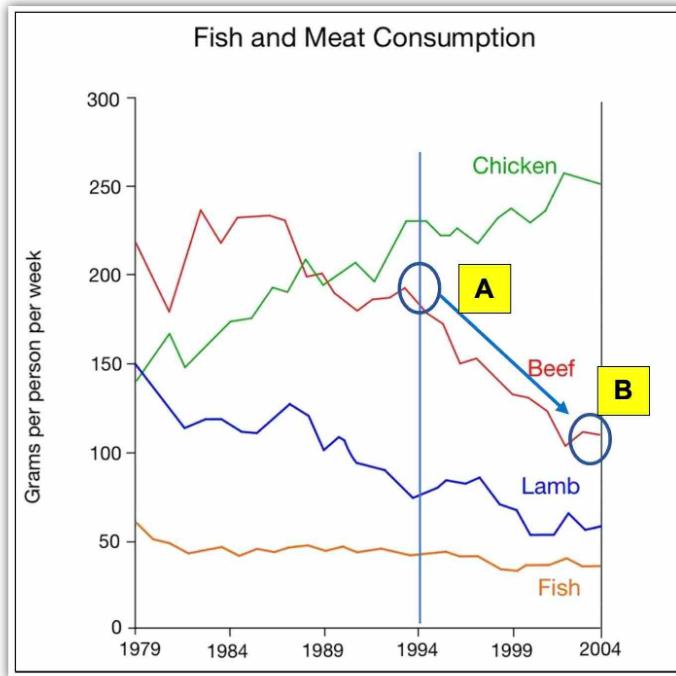
about, almost, approximately, around, close to, just under, just over, nearly, roughly

The past perfect

A line graph like this one provides a nice opportunity to use the past perfect tense. You do not need to do this many times – once is enough to show a range of grammatical points and to vary the structure of your sentences. Here is a reminder of the main points about the past perfect:

- It is formed by using the past tense of had + the past participle (e.g. had done)*
- It is used to show a link between two different times in the past.*
- It is often used with the preposition 'by' + a specific time (e.g. a year)*

Think about how to describe what happened with the consumption of beef between the two points (A and B) in the image below:



To describe this change, we can use the simple past:

Beef consumption fell from just under 200 grams in 1994 to approximately 120 grams in 2004.

Or we can use the past perfect and write:

Beef consumption began to fall in 1994 and by 2004 it had fallen from just under 200 grams to approximately 120 grams.

You need to be careful to use this tense accurately. Can you correct the problems in this sentence?

Although the amount of lamb consumed weekly was up to 150 grams in the first year, it had experienced a dramatic drop, and reached over 50 grams in the final year.

The main issue here is that the past perfect tense has been used (**had experienced**) but only one time is mentioned (**in the final year**), so this should be the simple past:

Although the amount of lamb consumed weekly was approximately 150 grams in the first year, it experienced a dramatic drop, and reached over 50 grams in the final year.

To use the past perfect, we would need to say:

Although the amount of lamb consumed weekly was approximately 150 grams in the first year, by the final year it had experienced a dramatic drop, falling to close to 50 grams.

Notice the vocabulary changes I made to support this point (that this is '**a dramatic drop**'). I used '**close to**' instead of '**over**' because '**over**' suggests an increase, and I used '**fall**' instead of '**reach**' because reach is generally used to mean that something **reached a higher level**.

reach verb (LEVEL)

B2 [T]

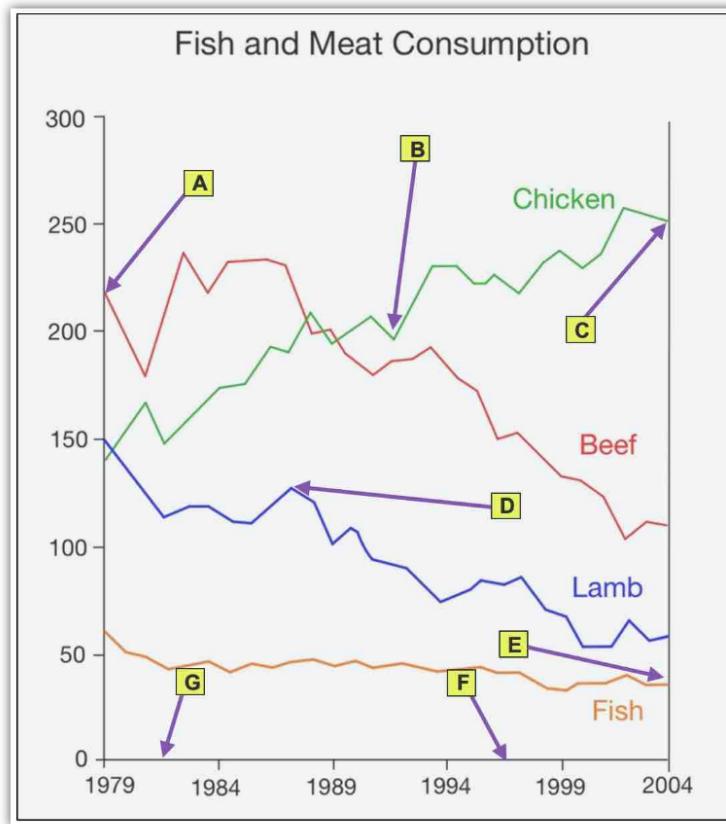
to get to a particular level, especially a high one:

- The temperature is expected to reach 30°C today.

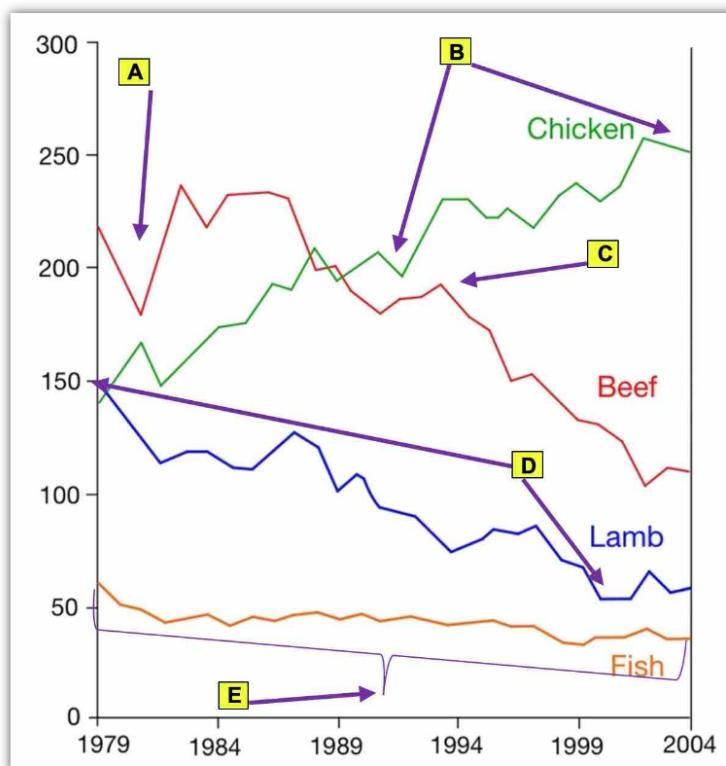
Cambridge Online Dictionary

Practice

Look at the image below and think about how you would refer to the different points, A - G:



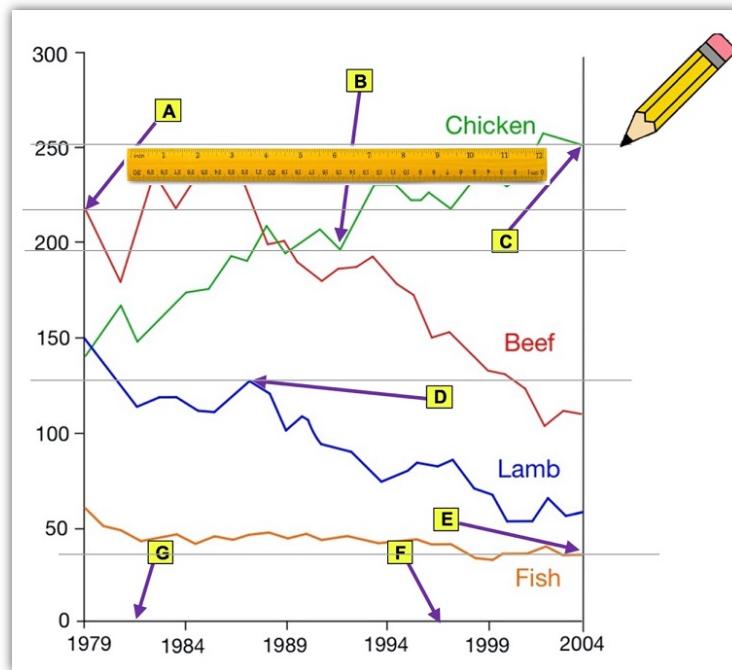
How would you describe the key points (A - E) below?



Now open the exercise below to practise and see the answers.

**Click Here
to Practise**

It can be helpful to draw lines across the graph to help you estimate data more accurately.



Use the information in the question

Many people see the opening sentence in the question like this: '*That's the sentence I need to paraphrase at the start of my answer.*' As a result, they often miss important information and even help in terms of language, such as whether or not you need to use 'the' with a specific country.

This test question says:

The graph below shows the consumption of fish and different kinds of meat in a European country between 1979 and 2004.

Can you see a problem in the following extracts from answers?

Overall, the lowest consumption of meat was fish....

Chicken was the only one that was eaten more in 2004 than in 1979 among four types of meat.

The test question refers to '**fish and three kinds of meat**'. This tells us that fish is *not a kind of meat*, so 'meat' can't be used as an umbrella term here.

- What change did the writer of the second extract make to help in paraphrasing the word 'consumption'?
- What umbrella term/s could be used here?

(You will see the answers in the next exercise).

A further problem with these sentences is that they are looking at the highest and lowest figures instead of describing the trends. With a line graph, it is very important to describe the overall trends in your overview.

KEY IDEA: With a line graph, it is very important to describe the trends in your overview – don't just look at the biggest or smallest data.

Practice

Use the following exercises to help make corrections to these sentences and practise writing an overview.

**Click Here
to Practise**

Common problems with overviews:

Look at the following overviews from sample answers to this question. Which do you think is the best (the clearest and most complete) overview? Can you identify any problems in the others?

1. Overall, people consumed chicken and beef more than lamb and fish during the 25-year period.
2. Overall, although beef was the most popular type of meat at the beginning, it was overtaken by chicken in the first half of this period. Moreover, the consumption of lamb and fish decreased over this time.
3. To sum up, while the residents of this country relied mainly on red meats initially, they preferred chicken more compared to other items at the end of this period.
4. Overall, it is clear that Chicken is the only food that experienced an increase in its administration over the whole time frame.

Click here to read my comments.

Click Here
to Practise

QUESTION 1

What figure or year do the arrows A to G point to?

Drag and drop the labels into the correct point on the graph.

250 grams

approximately 220 grams

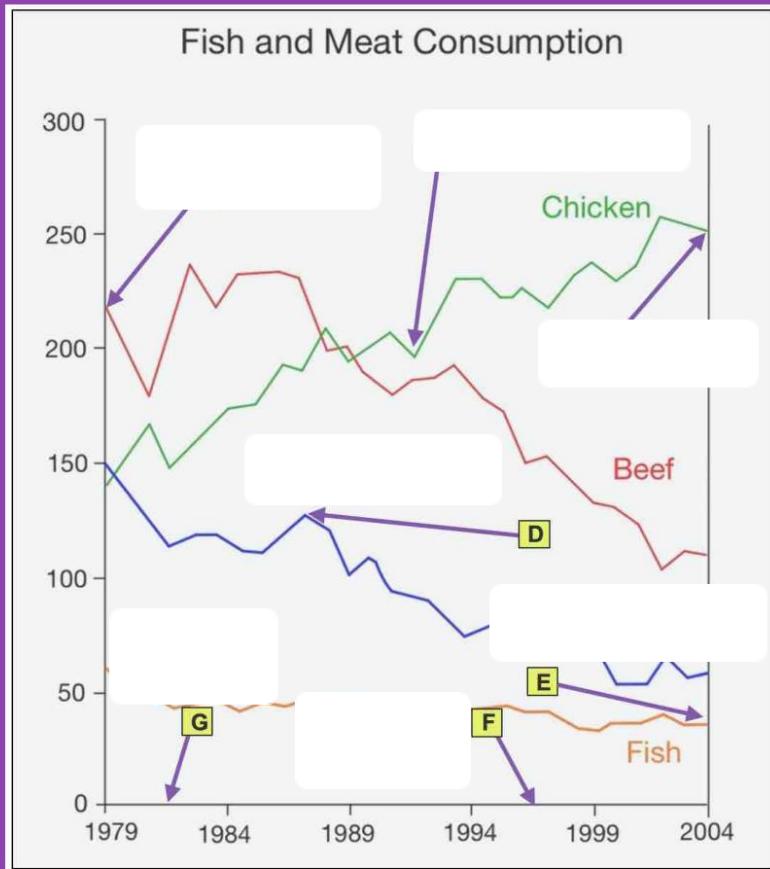
below 50 grams

the early 1980s

about 130 grams

just under 200 grams

the late 1990s

**QUESTION 2**

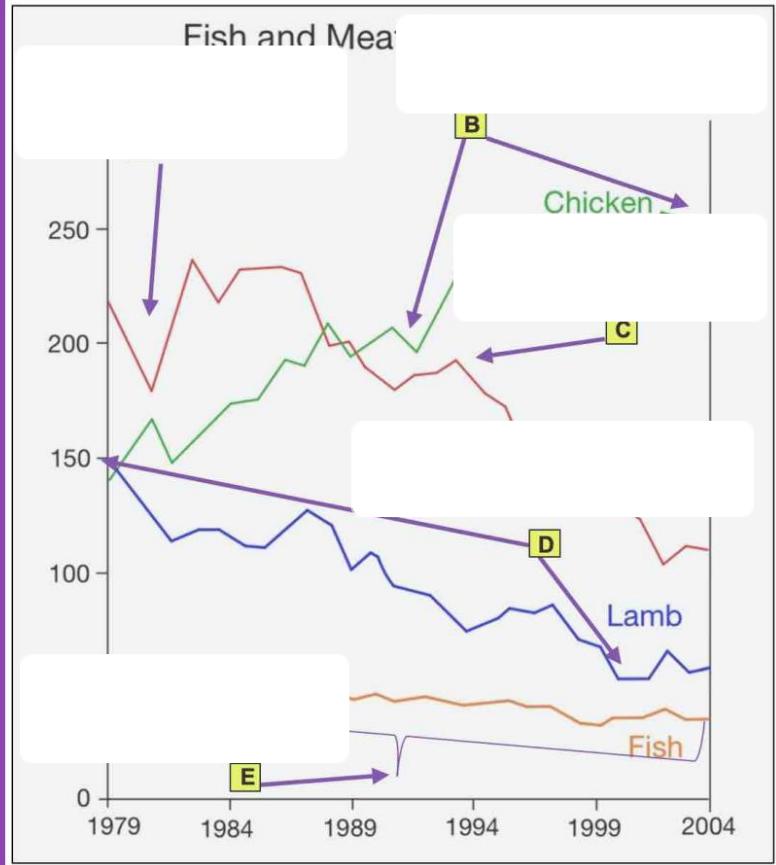
Now drag and drop the labels into the correct point on the graph.

although there was a slight increase in 1994, the downward trend continued

despite falling in the early 1990s, by 2004 it had reached 250 grams within 20 years it had fallen to almost 50 grams per week

it fell sharply initially then briefly recovered

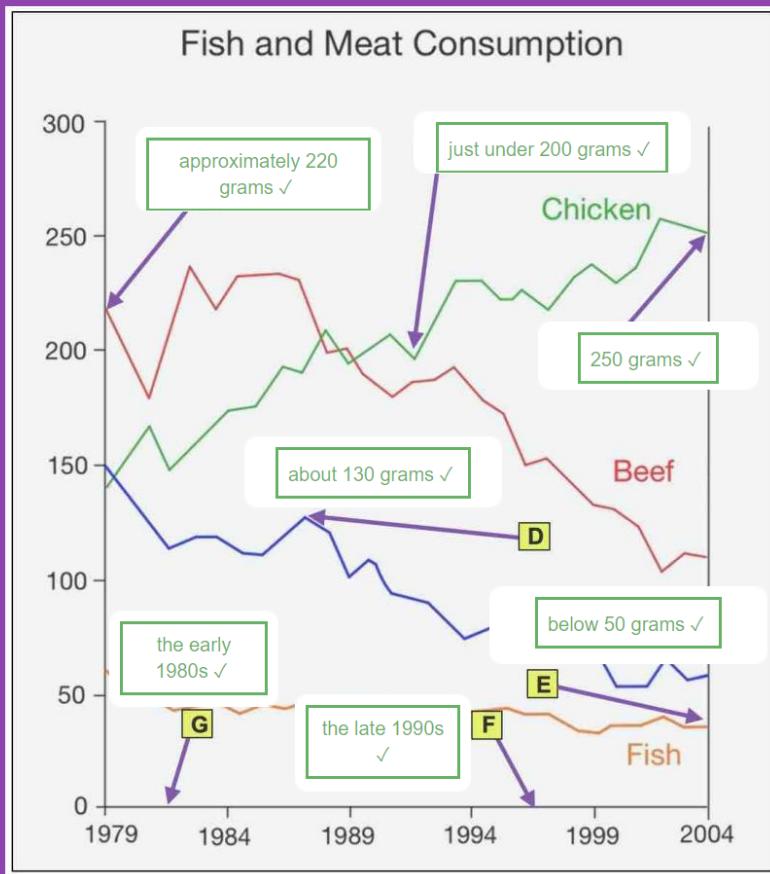
the figures remained relatively stable, despite slight fluctuations



Show answers

QUESTION 1

What figure or year do the arrows A to G point to?
Drag and drop the labels into the correct point on the graph.

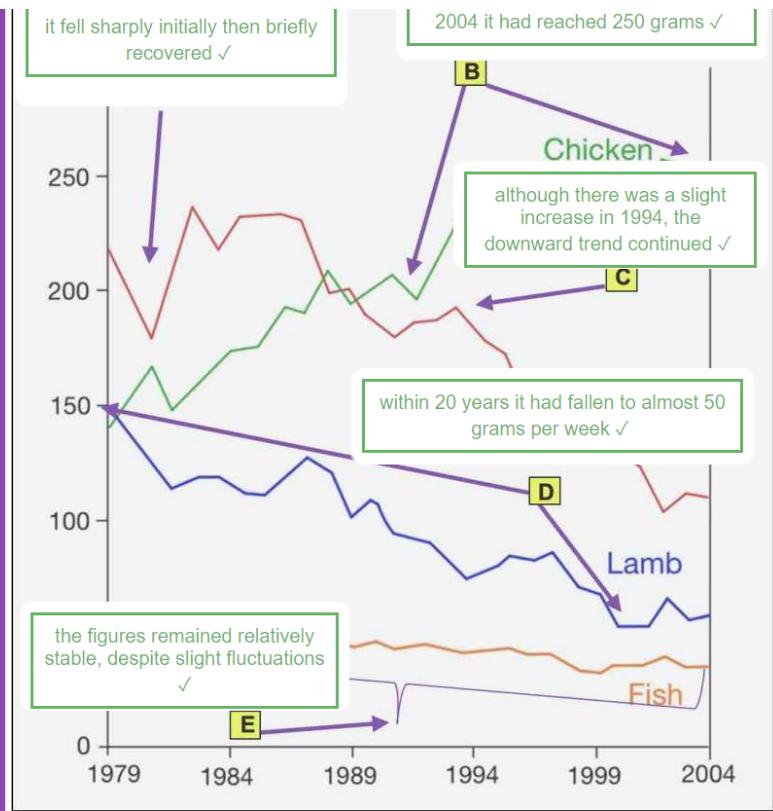


QUESTION 2

Now drag and drop the labels into the correct point on the graph.

Fish and Mea

despite falling in the early 1990s, by



All done !

QUESTION 1

"Chicken was the only one that was eaten more in 2004 than in 1979 among four types of meat."

1) What change did this writer make to help in paraphrasing the word 'consumption'?

2) What umbrella term/s could be used here instead of 'meat'?



QUESTION 2

Complete the overview sentence by dragging and dropping the words in the box into the correct place. NB There are some extra words that you do not need to use. If you find it too difficult, press the 'hint' button.

chicken one the experienced consumed this fish foods meat least the consistently upward among food trend downward listed
an period

Overall, of [] four [] [], [] was [] only [] that [] [] [] [] over [] [], and the [] that was [] [] the [] was [].

Show hint

Show answers

QUESTION 1

"Chicken was the only one that was eaten more in 2004 than in 1979 among four types of meat."

- 1) What change did this writer make to help in paraphrasing the word 'consumption'?
- 2) What umbrella term/s could be used here instead of 'meat'?



Answers:

1) The writer changed the noun form (consumption) to a verb and then used a synonym (eat --> eaten).

2) Suitable umbrella terms would be: categories, foods, types of food, animal proteins.

QUESTION 2

Complete the overview sentence by dragging and dropping the words in the box into the correct place. NB There are some extra words that you do not need to use. If you find it too difficult, press the 'hint' button.

chicken one the experienced consumed this fish foods meat least the consistently upward among food trend downward listed
an period

Overall, of **X** four **X**, **X**, **X**, **X** was **X** only **X** that **X**, **X**, **X**, **X** over **X**, **X**, and the **X** that was **X**, **X**, the **X** was **X**.

Show hint

The answer:

Overall, of the four foods listed, chicken was the only one that experienced an upward trend over this period, and the food that was consistently consumed the least was fish.

All done !

Look at the overview statements below then read my comments opposite. Which is the best overview?

- 1) Overall, people consumed chicken and beef more than lamb and fish during the 25-year period.
- 2) Overall, although beef was the most popular type of meat at the beginning, it was overtaken by chicken in the first half of this period. Moreover, the consumption of lamb and fish decreased over this time.
- 3) To sum up, while the residents of this country relied mainly on red meats initially, they preferred chicken more compared to other items at the end of this period.
- 4) Overall, it is clear that Chicken is the only food that experienced an increase in its administration over the whole time frame.

My comments

- 1) Although this is accurate, this overview is incomplete. It does not mention any of the trends (i.e. that beef and lamb fell while chicken rose), which is crucial in a line graph.
- 2) This is a good Band 7 overview, although some changes are needed (beef's declining trend is not mentioned, and the word 'Moreover' is not used appropriately here.)
- 3) This was a conclusion presented at the end of the answer containing overview number 2. The candidate had watched a video stating that "you must give a conclusion to reach a high band." This is not true – notice the language problems it created as the candidate had to try not to repeat the same language as in number 2. Doing this introduced several problems (we cannot accurately say that they 'relied on' or 'preferred' any of these foods - this information is not given in the data), so this sentence contains inaccurate or irrelevant information. Rather than 'boosting' their score, adding this sentence at the end of their answer is likely to lower it.
- 4) Although this overview does mention a clear trend, there is only one mentioned and so it does not give a complete or clear picture of the main trends in the graph. The word 'administration' also causes confusion here - it is not an accurate synonym for 'consumption'.

Overall, the best overview here is number 2, so it is a pity that this person also included number 3 in their answer.

6.2 Addressing Band 6 problems

Read through the following sample answer. I have highlighted the language problems, try to identify the error and think of a correction if you can.

The line graph demonstrates the average weekly consumption of fish and meat in a European country from 1979 to 2004. Overall, people consumed chicken and beef more than lamb and fish during the 25-year period.

Prior to 1989, citizens ingested beef the most among all, starting from 220 grams in 1979 and finishing at 200 grams, whereas fish was the least welcome with a slight (corresponding) decrease from 60 grams in 1979 to 50 grams in 1989. The consumption of chicken and lamb changed in opposite ways. These two figures commenced at similar quantities around 150 grams, with chicken consumption fluctuating to 190 grams in 1989 and lamb consumption oscillating to 105 grams.

After 1989, the tendency of these four food intakes remained. The amount of chicken being eaten increased to 250 grams in 2004 as opposed to the dwindling beef ingestion of 110 grams in 2004. Although the figure of lamb saw few increments during this period, it fell to 60 grams in 2004. Meanwhile, after tiny ebbs and flows, the consumption of fish remained stable.

Read through my notes to help.

Introduction

The line graph ¹demonstrates the average weekly consumption of fish and meat in a European country from 1979 to 2004. Overall, people ²consumed chicken and beef more than lamb ³and fish during the 25-year period.

Introduction notes

- 1) A line graph can't 'demonstrate' (review this in lesson 4).
- 2) This would need to be 'consumed chicken and beef more often...' which is not accurate – we are told 'how much' not 'how often'.
- 3) Using 'and' suggests these are eaten together, 'or' is better here.

Body paragraph 1

⁴Prior to 1989, ⁵citizens ingested beef ⁶the most among all, ⁷starting from 220 grams in 1979 and ⁽⁷⁾finishing at ⁸200 grams, whereas fish was ⁹the least welcome ¹⁰with a slight (corresponding) decrease from 60 grams in 1979 to 50 grams in 1989. The consumption of chicken and lamb changed ¹¹in opposite ways. ¹²These two figures commenced at similar ¹³quantities around 150 grams, ¹⁴with chicken consumption ¹⁵fluctuating to 190 grams in 1989 ⁽¹⁴⁾and lamb consumption ⁽¹⁵⁾oscillating to 105 grams.

Body paragraph 1 notes

- 4) This sentence combines too much information and is organised in a confusing way (Why begin with 1989?). Split the information into two sentences.
- 5) 'Citizens' is only used when we are talking about government. 'Ingested' would be appropriate in the context of a biology assignment.
- 6) How do we compare one thing to all of the other things?
- 7) 'starting' and 'finishing' are reduced relative clauses here, but the subject is 'the people' (not beef). What verb can be used instead of 'start' and 'finish'?
- 8) We need to specify that this is 'per week', especially as this is the first mention.
- 9) The meaning of 'the least welcome' is unclear – if it means 'the least popular', then we cannot accurately say this (people may have eaten fish less because it was very expensive – we do not know.)
- 10) We can only say that there was 'a slight decrease' in one year (or one point of time). To refer to a decrease in numbers between two time periods, we need to say 'it decreased / fell / dropped slightly from 60 grams to 50 grams between 1979 and 1989.' However, this does not accurately explain what happened with fish between these dates. The word corresponding should not be in brackets but also does not fit here.
- 11) There is a collocation problem here (we can say 'different ways' but not 'opposite ways').

- 12) The reference is confusing – it is referring back to 'chicken and lamb' but no figures have been given.
- 13) 'of' is missing here
- 14) We can only use 'with' if it is adding extra information (e.g. 'Both commenced at similar levels with chicken starting at 150 grams and....'). Here, the writer is making a new point about what happened after this, and we need to know this is a new contrasting point.
- 15) These words are not being used accurately – the meaning is wrong – don't try to use high-level words, use the right words to match your meaning.

Body paragraph 2

After 1989, the ¹⁶tendency of these four food ¹⁶intakes ¹⁷remained. The amount of chicken being eaten ¹⁸increased to 250 grams in 2004. ¹⁹as opposed to the ²⁰dwindling beef ingestion of 110 grams ⁽¹⁸⁾in 2004. Although ²¹the figure of lamb ²²saw few increments during this period, ²³it fell to 60 grams in 2004. Meanwhile, ²⁴after ²⁵tiny ebbs and flows, the consumption of fish ²⁶remained stable.

Body paragraph 2 notes

- 16) Again, the word 'tendency' and 'intake' are not accurate here.
- 17) The sentence is not complete at the moment – we need more information following the verb 'remain' (e.g. 'remained steady', 'remained the same' etc.) Or we can use 'continues'. NB Is this true?
- 18) This does not accurately describe the data – the figures did not increase *in 2004* – they reached this level over a period of time. Can you use a past perfect tense here and avoid repeating 2004?
- 19) 'as opposed to' is not appropriate here (review this in lesson 2).
- 20) again the words 'dwindling' and 'ingestion' are not being used accurately.
- 21) We need the plural of 'figures' as there is more than one figure within this period of time. Of is incorrect.
- 22) 'Saw few increments' does not collocate but also does not accurately reflect the data.
- 23) The reference is unclear. We need to be clear what the subject of the verb 'fell' is – if we write 'they' (to refer back to 'the figures') the meaning is not clear - these figures did not fall, the consumption fell.
- 24) 'after' is not accurate - the fluctuations were *throughout* the period.
- 25) only a tide (e.g. the ocean tide) can 'ebb and flow' – these are slight fluctuations.
- 26) As there were fluctuations (changes) throughout, we cannot say this is 'stable'. Adding 'relatively' helps as it shows we are comparing fish to the 3 meats, which all changed considerably.

My version

Now look at my version of the corrections and think about the problems that still remain. Look at the areas in red and think about: the overview and the organisation of information.

The line graph shows the average weekly consumption of fish and meat in a European country from 1979 to 2004. Overall, people consumed more chicken and beef than lamb or fish during the 25-year period.

From 1979 to 1989, people this country ate more beef than any of the other foods listed, consuming 220 grams per week, whereas fish was consumed the least at only 60 grams. However, beef consumption fell from 1989 onwards. The consumption of chicken and lamb experienced trends that were almost the exact opposite of each other. Both commenced at similar quantities of around 150 grams, but chicken consumption increased to 190 grams in 1989, while lamb consumption fell to 105 grams.

After 1989, the trends in the consumption of these four foods generally continued. The amount of chicken being eaten had reached 250 grams by 2004, while beef consumption had fallen to 110 grams. Although the figures for lamb increased several times during this period, consumption fell to 60 grams in 2004. Meanwhile, despite slight fluctuations, the consumption of fish remained relatively stable.

KEY IDEA: Remember, don't use 'high-level' vocabulary to try to boost your score - doing that will keep you stuck at band 6. Instead, choose a word because it will help to make your meaning very clear.

My comments

The overview:

Combining chicken and beef is not a good idea as they followed very different trends - this overview does not clearly describe the main trends and should include the idea that the data changed over time.

Organisation:

The writer has organised the information into the following paragraphs:

- BP 1) 1979 to 1989 (in the original sample this was 1989 to 1979)
- BP 2) 1989 to 2004

There is no clear or logical reason for this - at the beginning of the second body paragraph, the writer states that 'the trends' just continued in the same way (NB I added 'generally' here to show that this was not always the case).

Organising the information in this way has led to several problems:

1. it has meant that the writer did not make many comparisons.
2. it has forced the writer to mention what happened in each category from 1979 to 1989 - this led to a confusing opening sentence - why include details about 'fish' here? The point about fish being consistently the lowest in the graph is a key feature, but it is more logical to discuss fish separately as it followed a completely different trend to the others.
3. If 'the trends' are the same in the second body paragraph, then the same ideas will be repeated, making the writing repetitive.

Notice that the problems that remain (especially with organisation) are more difficult to fix **after** the answer is written. This shows the importance of thinking about your overview and how to logically organise your answer **before** you begin writing.

KEY IDEA: Before you begin writing, think about:

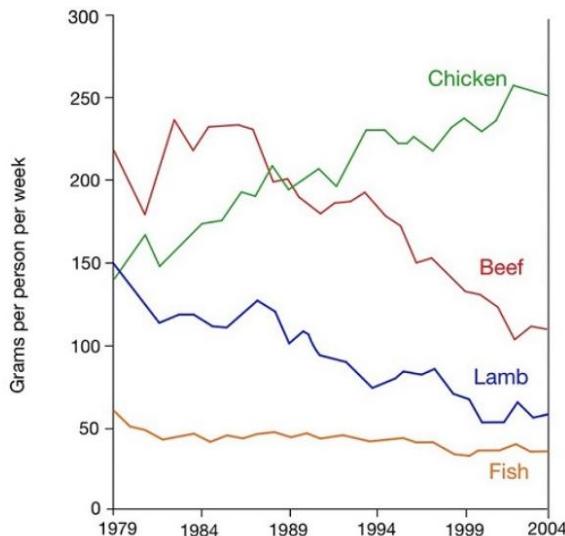
- the key trends so that you can summarise them **all** in your overview
- how to organise your ideas logically.

6.3 Producing a model answer

Before we look at my model answer, think about the notes you made before writing your answer. If you didn't do this, make notes now using the three steps from lesson 3. You can make your notes directly on the image below:

Make notes on the task below based on the three thinking steps from lesson 3. ≡

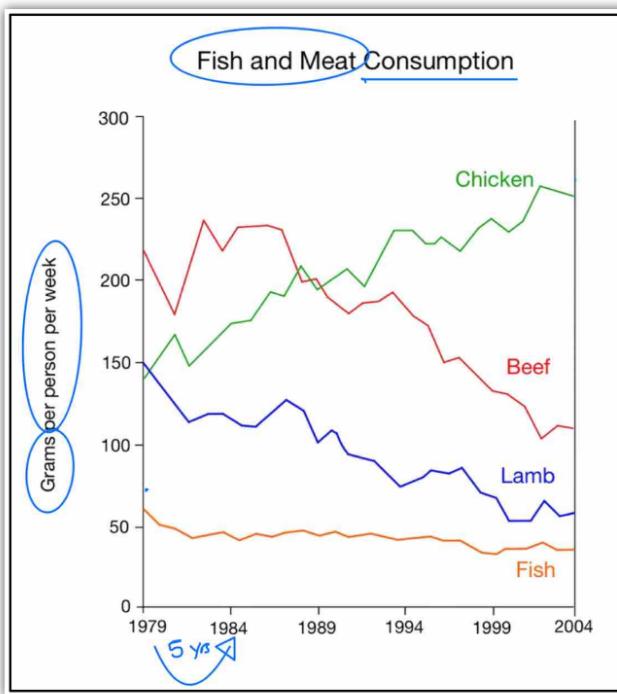
Fish and Meat Consumption



In the following images, you can see the thinking and planning I did before writing my model answer to this question. Compare my notes to the notes you made.

Step 1 – noticing details

These are the details I noticed:

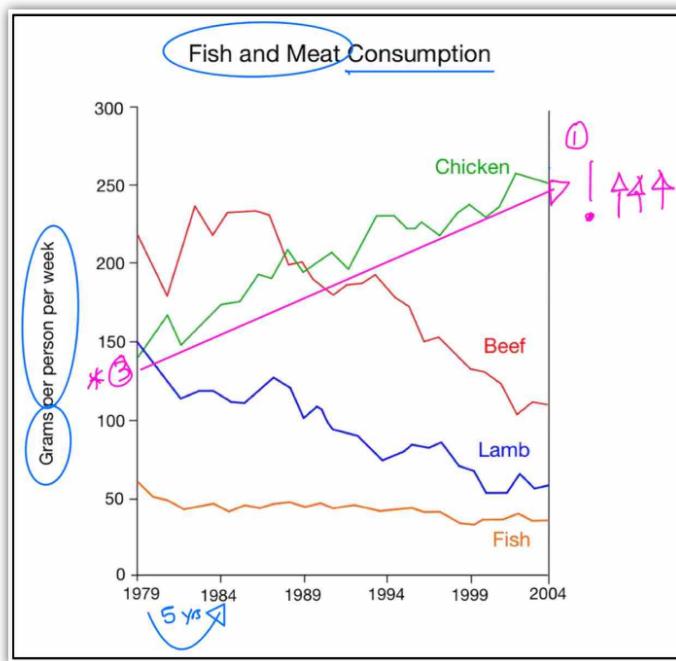


I noted that the amounts are measured in grams per person per week. Another way to say 'per week' is 'a week', 'each week' or 'weekly'. I also noted that the interval between the years in the X axis (the horizontal one) was 5 years. Sometimes this can be useful when writing your answer.

Step 2 – Identifying key features

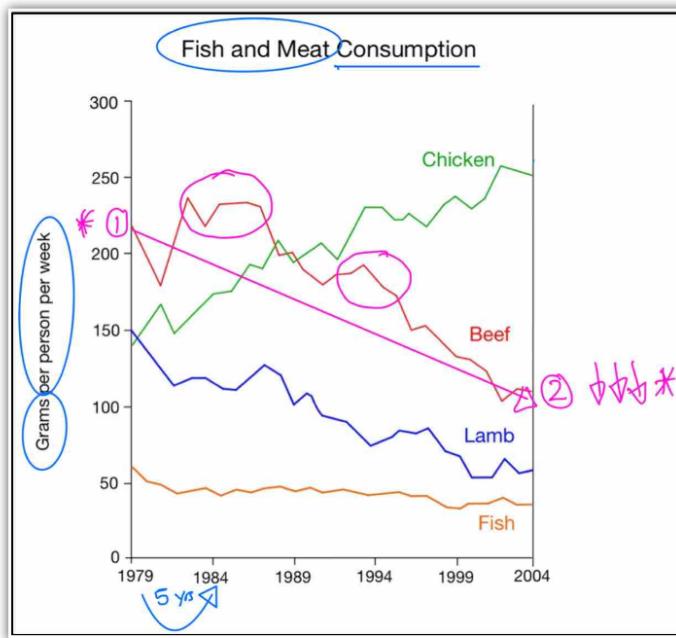
These are the key features I noticed about each of the categories. As you look at the images, try to think about how you might write about the key features I noticed.

- 1) Chicken



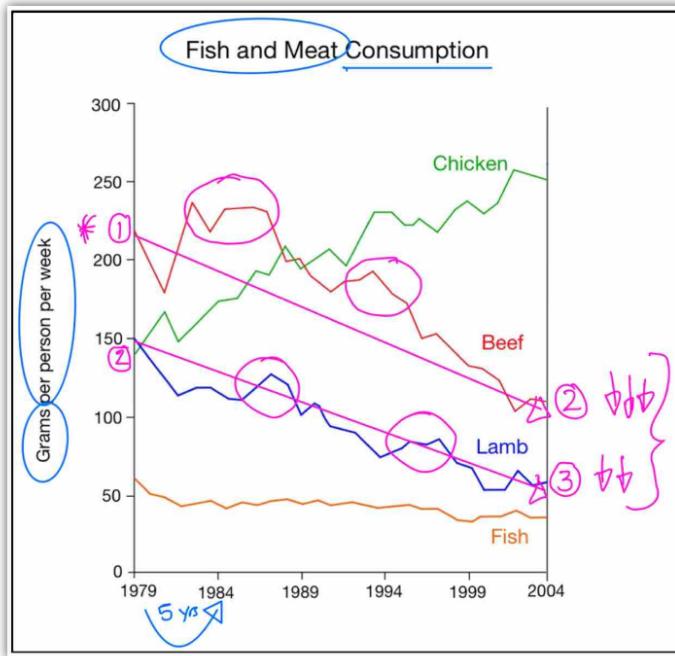
2) Beef

This is what I noticed about beef:



3) Lamb

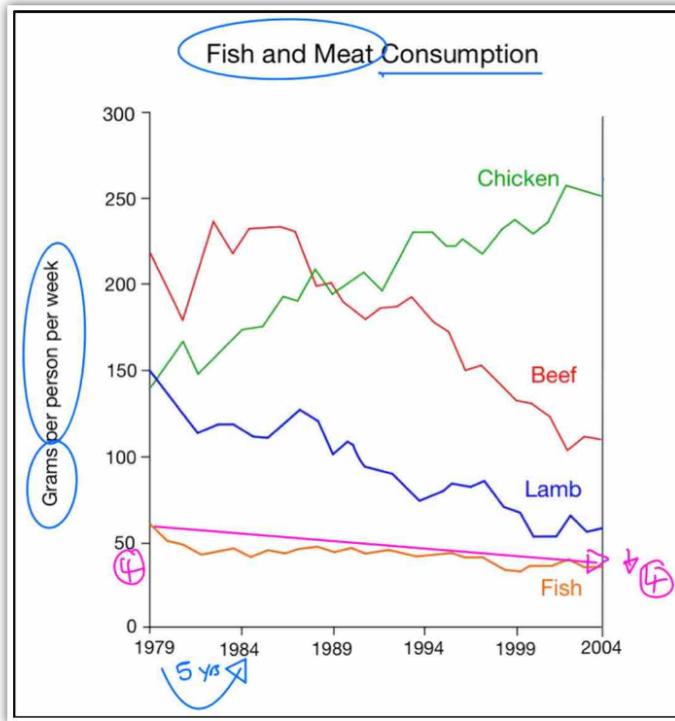
And I noticed that lamb followed a very similar pattern to beef:



Notice that, in spite of some increases, these are both **downward trends** because the end point is lower than the beginning point.

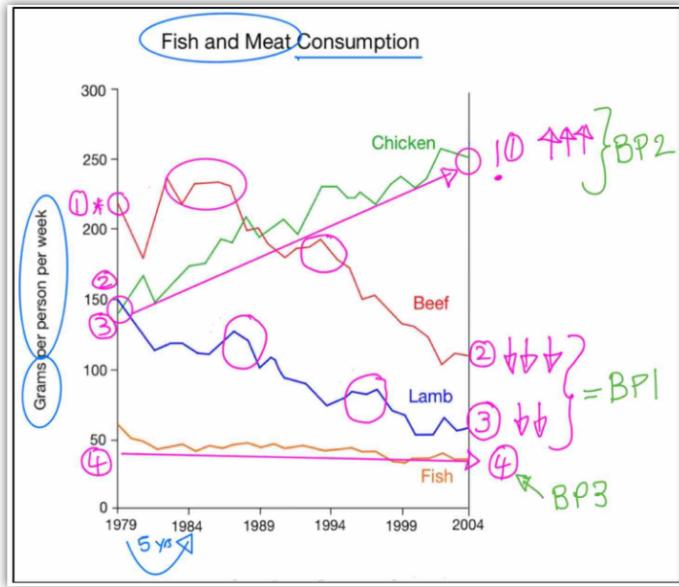
4) Fish

This is what I noticed about fish:



Step 3 – Organising information

I decided that three body paragraphs would be better for my answer. This is how I decided to organise the information:



Practice

Listen to the recording of my model answer. You can use the recording and the exercises to help you practise in several ways:

1. Listen and read the model at the same time.
2. Listen and fill in the gaps to practise grammar and vocabulary.
3. Listen and write – do this in stages, pausing the recording as often as you need to.

Click Here
to Practise

Points to notice

- In my overview, I included the following trends: 1) there were fluctuations, 2) the people in this country consistently ate more meat than fish 3) the general trend was to move away from beef and lamb and towards chicken 4) chicken became the dominant food in this category. See my further comments on this below.
- In my organisation, I grouped beef and lamb together because they followed similar declining trends. I began with these because they were the highest at the beginning of the graph – this allowed me to describe the information in *chronological order, which is the easiest to write about and is also the most logical (and clearest).
- I wrote about chicken and fish in separate paragraphs. I chose to do this because their trends were very different to the others.
- Notice that each paragraph only contains one main topic (e.g. I only wrote about beef and lamb in my first body paragraph, only chicken in my second body paragraph, and only fish in my final paragraph).
- I referred to 'grams per week' the first time I gave a specific figure, but I did not need to repeat this each time.
- I mentioned each category but I did not mention every detail – I only selected the main features and included these, making comparisons where relevant.
- Notice the way that I used the words 'mirrored' and 'corresponded'.

*Vocabulary note: '**Chronological order**' means in the same order in which they happened. This is the most logical order to use and is also the easiest to write about.

KEY IDEA: With a line graph, group similar categories together to organise the information in your paragraphs and be sure to write about the information chronologically.

My overview

This was one of the first samples I wrote for this book. Initially, I would write an overview and then use that to write a shorter version. Here is the first version of my overview:

Although there were fluctuations, overall, lamb and beef experienced a declining trend, while chicken rose considerably overtaking beef to become by far the most consumed of these foods by the end of this period; fish declined somewhat though remained the lowest in terms of consumption throughout.

As you can see, it is much longer. I used this first version to think again about these trends and find a simpler and more concise way to express these ideas. Compare this to the second version:

Although there were fluctuations, overall, people in this country consistently ate more meat than fish, and the general trend was to move away from beef and lamb as chicken became the dominant food in this category.

The benefit of producing a broader picture like this is that I am now less likely to repeat the key features in my body paragraphs. While you are practising, try doing this yourself. However, don't worry if you do not have time (either now or in your test), or if you feel you do not have the skills to do this yet. I asked both examiners who reviewed my models to assess both overviews and they agreed that they are both Band 9. Remember, we are not aiming for a polished 'invisible Band 10', we are aiming to do enough to reach the highest score possible in the test.

KEY IDEA: In your practice, it can help to write an overview of the main trends and then think about how to say this in a broader, more concise way.

Extra practice

Look back at the answer you wrote to this question and think about the following:

The overview:

- Did you refer to trends or did you focus on the highest / lowest figures?
- Did you include all of the main trends or only one?
- What changes can you now make to improve your overview?

Your body paragraphs

- How did you organise your body paragraphs? Was there a logic to your organisation?
- Did you write about the information in chronological order?

Key features

- Did you write about key features or did you mention minor details?
- Are there any key features that you missed? (compare the features you wrote about to those in my answer). You may have mentioned different features – just be sure they are key (important) and worth pointing out – how did you make this clear?
- Did you support each point with the relevant data?
- Did you make any errors in your data?

Language (grammar and vocabulary)

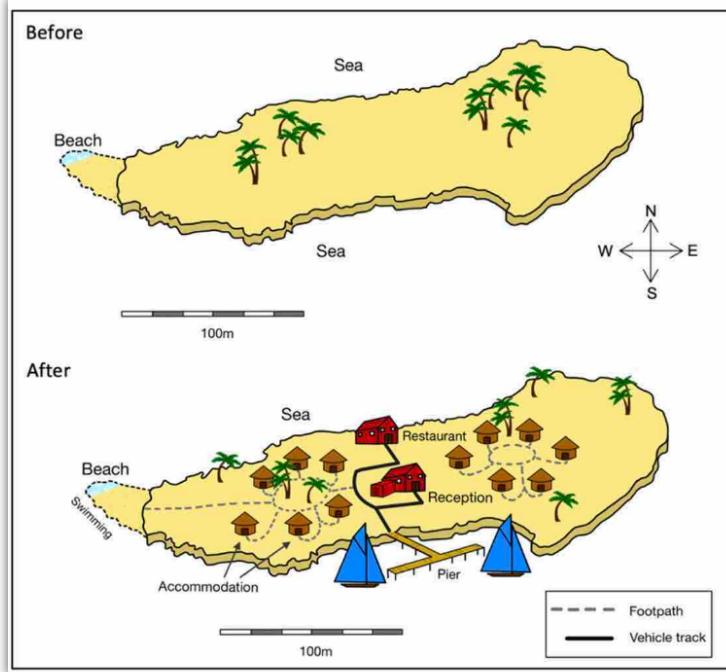
- Read your answer aloud – do you think you used a range of grammatical structures or it is repetitive at times?
- Did you only use the simple past or did you use a past perfect tense? (If not, try to rewrite one or two sentences to practise using the past perfect tense).
- Did you use the past perfect accurately? (e.g. with 'by + year')
- Can you make any changes to improve your grammatical range?
- Did you use vocabulary with an awareness of style (i.e. knowing this is the correct word to use in this context)?
- Did you make it clear that your figures were estimates?
- What changes can you make to improve the language in your answer?

Homework

In the next few lessons, we will move on to look at map and plan tasks. For homework, write an answer to the following question, which is adapted from Cambridge IELTS 9 (page 30):

The two maps show an island before and after the construction of some tourist facilities.

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



Write at least 150 words.

Read through the model answer then complete the listening task below.

The line graph shows variations in the weekly consumption of fish and three types of meat in one European country from 1979 to 2004. Although there were fluctuations, overall, people in this country consistently ate more meat than fish, and the general trend was to move away from beef and lamb as chicken became the dominant food in this category.

In the first decade, beef was consumed in significantly higher quantities than the other foods listed. Despite an initial sharp fall to approximately 175 grams, it then recovered reaching a high of close to 240 grams per week. However, from 1989 onwards, beef consumption fell almost continually, and by 2004 had almost halved. Lamb almost exactly mirrored this fluctuating trend, falling from second highest initially (at 150 grams) to approximately 60 grams per week by the end of the period.

In contrast, chicken climbed from less than 150 grams in 1979 and took the lead from around 1990 onwards. Interestingly, the increases in chicken corresponded with the declines in beef and lamb, and by 2002 chicken consumption had exceeded all previous rates, reaching approximately 260 grams a week, although this peak was not maintained.

Fish was consistently eaten the least, beginning at around 60 grams per week then dropping to below 50 grams. While it was the lowest, it remained relatively stable for the majority of the period.

QUESTION 1

Now listen and try to fill in as many of the gaps below as you can. You will need to write TWO WORDS in each gap.



The [redacted] shows [redacted] the weekly consumption of fish and three [redacted] meat in one European country from 1979 to 2004. Although there [redacted], overall, people in this country [redacted] more meat [redacted], and the [redacted] was to move [redacted] beef and lamb as chicken became [redacted] food in this category.

In the first decade, beef was consumed in [redacted] quantities than [redacted] foods listed. Despite an [redacted] fall to approximately 175 grams, it then [redacted] a high of close to 240 grams per week. However, from 1989 onwards, beef consumption fell [redacted], and by 2004 [redacted] halved. Lamb [redacted] mirrored this fluctuating trend, falling from [redacted] initially (at 150 grams) to [redacted] grams per week by the end of [redacted].

In contrast, chicken [redacted] less than 150 grams in 1979 and took [redacted] from around [redacted]. Interestingly, [redacted] in chicken [redacted] the [redacted] beef and lamb, and by 2002 chicken consumption [redacted] all previous rates, reaching approximately 260 grams a week, although [redacted] was [redacted].

Fish was [redacted] the least, beginning at around 60 grams per week then [redacted] below 50 grams. While it was the lowest, it remained [redacted] for the [redacted] the period.

Show answers

Read through the model answer then complete the listening task below.

The line graph shows variations in the weekly consumption of fish and three types of meat in one European country from 1979 to 2004. Although there were fluctuations, overall, people in this country consistently ate more meat than fish, and the general trend was to move away from beef and lamb as chicken became the dominant food in this category.

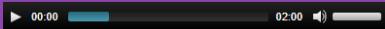
In the first decade, beef was consumed in significantly higher quantities than the other foods listed. Despite an initial sharp fall to approximately 175 grams, it then recovered reaching a high of close to 240 grams per week. However, from 1989 onwards, beef consumption fell almost continually, and by 2004 had almost halved. Lamb almost exactly mirrored this fluctuating trend, falling from second highest initially (at 150 grams) to approximately 60 grams per week by the end of the period.

In contrast, chicken climbed from less than 150 grams in 1979 and took the lead from around 1990 onwards. Interestingly, the increases in chicken corresponded with the declines in beef and lamb, and by 2002 chicken consumption had exceeded all previous rates, reaching approximately 260 grams a week, although this peak was not maintained.

Fish was consistently eaten the least, beginning at around 60 grams per week then dropping to below 50 grams. While it was the lowest, it remained relatively stable for the majority of the period.

QUESTION 1

Now listen and try to fill in as many of the gaps below as you can. You will need to write TWO WORDS in each gap.



The [redacted] shows [redacted] the weekly consumption of fish and three [redacted] meat in one European country from 1979 to 2004.

Although there [redacted], overall, people in this country [redacted] more meat [redacted], and the [redacted] was to move [redacted] beef and lamb as chicken became [redacted] food in this category.

In the first decade, beef was consumed in [redacted] quantities than [redacted] foods listed. Despite an [redacted] fall to approximately 175 grams, it then [redacted] a high of close to 240 grams per week. However, from 1989 onwards, beef consumption fell [redacted], and by 2004 [redacted] halved. Lamb [redacted] mirrored this fluctuating trend, falling from [redacted] initially (at 150 grams) to [redacted] grams per week by the end of [redacted].

In contrast, chicken [redacted] less than 150 grams in 1979 and took [redacted] from around [redacted]. Interestingly, [redacted] in chicken [redacted] the [redacted] beef and lamb, and by 2002 chicken consumption [redacted] all previous rates, reaching approximately 260 grams a week, although [redacted] was [redacted].

Fish was [redacted] the least, beginning at around 60 grams per week then [redacted] below 50 grams. While it was the lowest, it remained [redacted] for the [redacted] the period.

The answer:

The **line graph** shows **variations in** the weekly consumption of fish and three **types of meat** in one European country from 1979 to 2004. Although there **were fluctuations**, overall, people in this country **consistently ate** more meat **than fish**, and the **general trend** was to move **away from** beef and lamb as chicken became the **dominant** food in this category.

In the first decade, beef was consumed in **significantly higher** quantities than **the other** foods listed. Despite an **initial sharp** fall to approximately 175 grams, it then **recovered reaching** a high of close to 240 grams per week. However, from 1989 onwards, beef consumption fell **almost continually**, and by 2004 **had almost** halved. Lamb **almost exactly** mirrored this fluctuating trend, falling from **second highest** initially (at 150 grams) to **approximately 60** grams per week by the end of **the period**.

In contrast, chicken **climbed from** less than 150 grams in 1979 and took **the lead** from around **1990 onwards**. Interestingly, **the increases** in chicken **corresponded with** the **declines** in beef and lamb, and by 2002 chicken consumption **had exceeded** all previous rates, reaching approximately 260 grams a week, although **this peak was not maintained**.

Fish was **consistently eaten** the least, beginning at around 60 grams per week then **dropping to** below 50 grams. While it was the lowest, it remained **relatively stable** for the **majority of** the period.

All done !

LESSON 7 - Map Tasks

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 7.1 How map tasks are different
- 7.2 Common problems in map tasks
- 7.3 My model answer

7.1 How map tasks are different

Language

1: Tenses

With chart tasks, we often use verbs actively, and there are few occasions when we can use the passive. For example, we could have written:

In 1999 more Fairtrade coffee was sold in Switzerland than in any of the other countries in the table.

However, with map and plan tasks, the passive can be more common. This means that you might describe what **was done**, or what **has been done**.

2: Vocabulary

There are also changes in the type of vocabulary you are likely to need. Our current task shows an island, but you may also be shown planned changes to a small building. This means you may need to write about:

Common topics in map tasks

- Natural features
- Types of Buildings or structures
- Parts of a building
- Indoor spaces or areas
- Outdoor spaces or areas
- Facilities
- Transport
- Furniture
- Building materials

The terms in the list above can be useful to use as umbrella terms in your overview, or when you want to highlight a key feature. For example:

'Several changes were made to the **outdoor areas, such as the addition of parking spaces.'**

Here, an umbrella term (**outdoor areas**) is used to make a point about a detail the writer noticed (parking spaces were added).

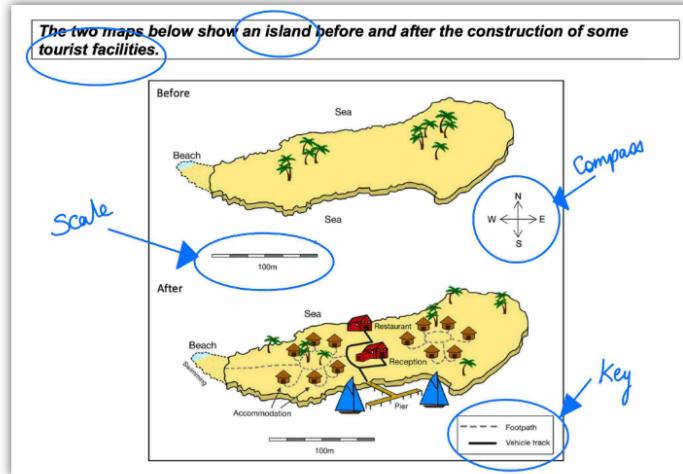
Practice

Can you group the words together under the correct umbrella term?

**Click Here
to Practise**

Step 1: Noticing details

There are also different types of details to notice with a map task. Here are the details I noticed:



As you can see, I noticed details in the question, which tells us that:

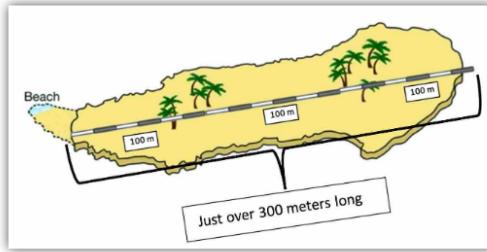
1. this is an island
2. the construction was done to provide tourist facilities

Map tasks also often have a '**Key**', which is a box explaining the meaning of any special drawings or marks on the map. Here, a dotted line ----- is used to indicate a footpath, and a thicker, solid line _____ shows where vehicle tracks have been created.

There is also a scale, which tells us the approximate size of the island. It tells us that this represents 100 metres:



We can use this to get an estimate of the size of the island, like this:



There is also a compass shown on the map, which we can use to explain the position or location of something. (NB The compass is not in the Cambridge IELTS 9 version and the island in my image is also bigger than in the original).

Step 2 Key features

Another difference with a map or plan task involves the key features. In a chart, numbers or data can *increase*, *decrease*, or *remain the same*. These same ideas can be applied to a map task, but there are also some new features to look for: something being *added* or *removed*.

This means that, with a chart, you need to look for:

- big changes in the data
- the highest and lowest points
- any similarities
- anything that stayed the same

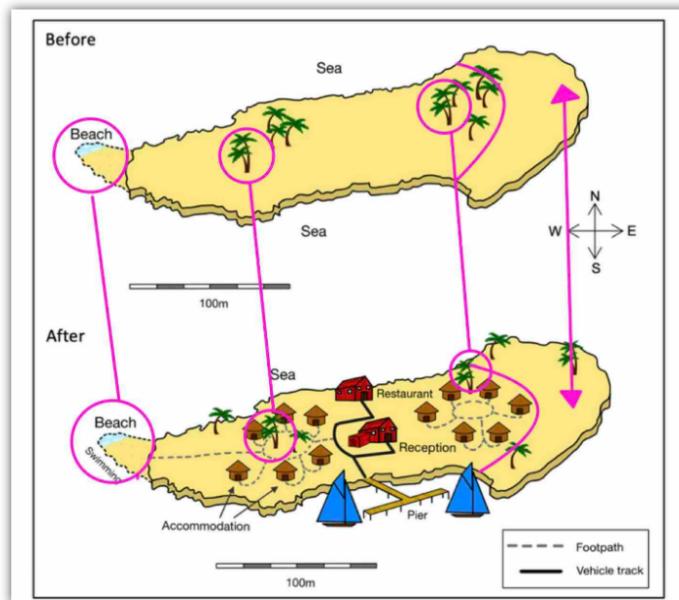
And with a plan or map task, you need to look for:

Key features to look for in map tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>key changes in the structures or features indicated on the map or plan</i>• <i>anything that has been made bigger</i>• <i>anything that has been made smaller</i>• <i>anything that has been improved or changed in some other way</i>• <i>anything that has been removed</i>• <i>anything that has been replaced with something new</i>• <i>anything new that has been added</i>• <i>any similarities – what has been kept the same?</i>

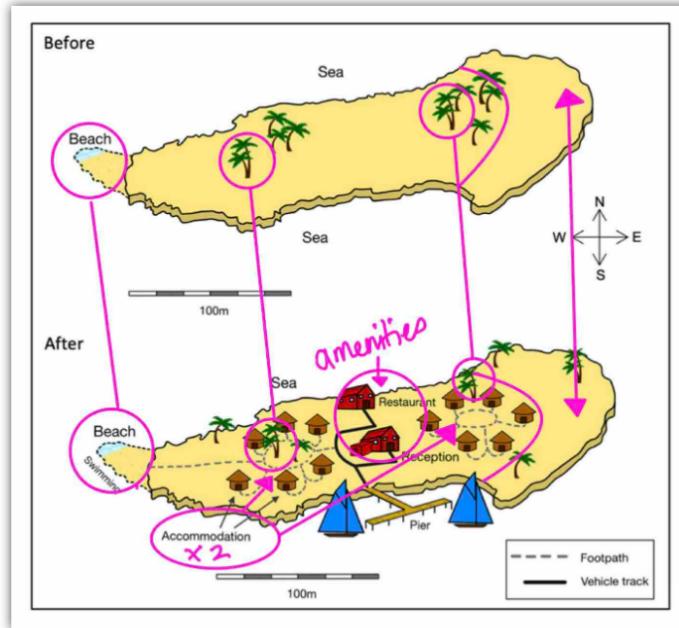
Notice the passive structures I have used in this list.

KEY IDEA: When describing a chart, your verbs will mainly be active, explaining when and by how much figures *increased*, *decreased*, or *remained stable*. However, in map or plan tasks you also need to think about the passive, as you may need to describe what *was done* or *what has been done*.

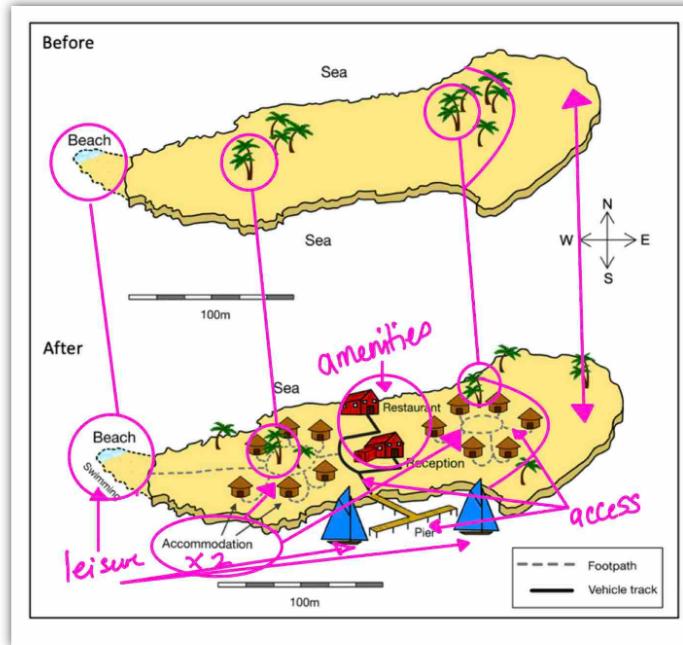
Our current task is a little unusual because, before the development took place, the island had no buildings on it at all, so there is relatively little to 'remain the same'. Nevertheless, there are some features worth noting. Below are my initial notes on this. I looked at the natural features and vegetation on the island before any work was done and then looked at the second map to see if any parts had remained the same:



Next, I looked at the new development, and I could see that it can be divided into several key areas: amenities and accommodation...



...and leisure facilities, and access:



Step 3 - Organisation

In lesson 3 we decided that the best way to organise paragraphs for a task like this is to have one paragraph about the island 'Before' and a second paragraph 'After' or following the construction work. As these images show, there is not a great deal to write about the island before construction. Because of this, in my answer, I decided to also mention what has been retained in this paragraph.

As we saw earlier, the umbrella terms above (**accommodation**, **amenities**, **leisure facilities**, and **access**) can be useful for your overview, allowing you to show the main changes without mentioning any specific details. They can also be useful for highlighting a point and when it comes to the logical organisation of the information **within** your paragraphs.

In some answers I have seen, candidates divide the map or plan into North, South, East and West and then use this for their organisation. However, this creates a list-like description of what the island looks like rather than a summary of the main features, so it is not something I recommend.

QUESTION 1

Group the words together by dragging them on to the correct umbrella term (in capitals). For example, 'table' is a type of furniture, so you need to drag this word onto the word 'FURNITURE'.

BUILDING MATERIALS

shed

stairway

concrete

FURNITURE

footpath

toilets

PARTS OF A BUILDING

roof

cupboard

EXTERNAL FEATURES OF A BUILDING

cafe

corridor

FACILITIES

stone

entrance

table

chair

vegetation

desk

TYPES OF BUILDINGS

driveway

block of flats

beach

wood

changing rooms

NATURAL FEATURES

garden

lake

cliff

hut

car park

glass

restaurant

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Group the words together by dragging them on to the correct umbrella term (in capitals). For example, 'table' is a type of furniture, so you need to drag this word onto the word 'FURNITURE'.



The answer:

NATURAL FEATURES
lake
cliff
beach
vegetation

PARTS OF A BUILDING
entrance
corridor
roof
stairway

TYPES OF BUILDINGS
shed
hut
block of flats

EXTERNAL FEATURES OF A BUILDING
garden
driveway
footpath
car park

BUILDING MATERIALS
glass
concrete
stone
wood

FURNITURE
desk
cupboard
chair
table

FACILITIES
toilets
cafe
changing rooms
restaurant

All done !

7.2 Common problems in map tasks

The is / there are

We use **there + to be** when we are saying that something exists. It can be singular or plural and can be used in any tense. These are some examples:

- **There is, there are**
- **There was, there were**
- **There has been, there have been**

In your answer, you need to show that what you are pointing out is a key feature and not a minor detail. This issue can occur when people present the details they noticed as though they are describing a picture. Compare the following examples:

- **A: There were some trees on the island.**
- **B: Before the development, there were only trees on the island. However, following construction...**

In example A, the candidate is simply listing details – describing what they can see. In example B, we understand the context for this detail (**Before the development**), and we can see that it is important to include in a summary of the key changes that have been made (**there were only trees on the island** but this later changed).

KEY IDEA: In map or plan tasks, don't just list the things you can see in each diagram. Help the reader to see that the things you are pointing out are key features and worth noting.

The passive

As we saw earlier, the passive is more common in map tasks. The passive is formed by the verb **to be + the past participle** of a verb (**is done / was done** etc.) We use the passive to omit the subject of the verb and focus on the object. Compare the following:

- **Active: They built a restaurant. (subject, active verb, object)**
- **Passive: A restaurant was built. (object, passive verb)**

Notice the word order - in the passive, the object comes **before** the verb. When we need to change the tense, we only change the auxiliary verb (the verb **to be**):

- **A restaurant is being built.**
- **A restaurant was built.**
- **A restaurant has been built.**

KEY IDEA: In map tasks, if you are using the subject pronoun '**they...**' (e.g. **they built**) this is a good sign that you need to use the passive.

A common problem with the passive is missing out the auxiliary verb. If it is used with '**there is / there are**', word order can also cause problems. Can you correct the mistake in the following extract?

There has built a restaurant in the centre of the island.

(Answer: **A restaurant has been built....**)

Tenses – showing a range

A further common problem with map or plan tasks is using only one tense. Doing this means you are not showing a range of structures, which may lower your Grammatical range and accuracy score (Band 5 'uses only a limited range of structures'). This problem often occurs when a candidate describes the features that can be seen in the first map, and then the features that can be seen in the second map. Look at the following example:

The first map shows an island before development. There are some trees here and there, and there is a beach on the west coast.

The second map shows the island after development. There are two blocks of accommodation and there is a reception and a restaurant between them. The restaurant is connected to a pier by a vehicle track.

Although there are no grammatical mistakes here, there is also no range (everything is in the simple present tense). A further problem is that this answer describes each map and detail separately, as though there is no connection between them. This means that the writer is not summarising the main changes, highlighting the key features, and making comparisons where relevant, which lowers the Task achievement score as well as the Grammatical range and accuracy score.

KEY IDEA: Don't describe each diagram separately – summarise the changes that these maps are helping to illustrate. Making comparisons and using a range of tenses can help you to do this.

Notice the changes I have made below and how they help to highlight and summarise the main changes:

Before:

The first map shows an island before **development**. **There are** some trees here and there, and **there is** a beach on the west coast.

The second map shows the island after development. **There are** two blocks of accommodation and **there is** a reception and a restaurant between them. The restaurant **is connected** to a pier by a vehicle track.

After:

The first map shows an island before **it was developed**. **There were** no structures on the island, only trees, and **there was** a beach on the west coast.

The second map shows the island after development. Two blocks of accommodation **have been built** so that tourists **can now stay** on the island, and **there is** also a reception and a restaurant **for them to use**. The restaurant **is connected** to a pier by a vehicle track, **making the building more accessible**.

Notice also that I did not need to add lots of 'high-level' structures to improve the score here. Doing this does not help your reader and often makes language complicated and difficult to follow – it is enough to **vary** your structures.

If your map task answers mainly use the simple present, you need to change the thinking that you do in Step 2, when you are identifying the key features. Using only the simple present is a sign that you are describing what you can see instead of thinking about what has changed. The questions below can help with this:

Ask yourself questions this to help vary your tenses:

- What **did** it look like before?
- What **does** it look like now?
- What **has changed**?
- What **has stayed the same**?
- What **has been added**?
- What **has been removed**?
- What **has been extended / made bigger**?

Notice the **different tenses** in the questions.

KEY IDEA: Remember, writing is thinking we can see. If your map task answers mainly use the simple present, this reflects your thinking - change your thinking to change your writing.

Change from '**What can I see?**' to '**What has changed? What has been done?**'

Vocabulary problems and irrelevant information

In lesson 1, we saw that you must not give your own personal thoughts or conclusions in task 1. With map or plan tasks, this means that you need to be careful about the adjectives you use to describe any changes.

Look at the following extract and try to spot any language that shows the writer's personal opinion. What changes need to be made here to ensure you only present the facts?

After the advanced development, the island became well established and well civilised. The remarkable number of buildings, restaurants, reception, pier, accommodations, beach and greeneries have enhanced the island's beauty in very enormous ways. It could be said that these facilities will amuse the tourists. They must enjoy sailing and delight in eating in the restaurant as well as swimming.

Practice

In this exercise, identify the problem words and phrases in the paragraph above and then look at the changes I made.

**Click Here
to Practise**

After the **advanced** development, the island **became well established and well civilised**. The **remarkable number** of buildings, restaurants, reception, pier, accommodations, beach and greeneries **have enhanced the island's beauty in very enormous ways**. It could be said that these facilities **will amuse the tourists. They must enjoy sailing and delight in restaurant as well as swimming.**

The parts in red are examples of the writer's personal opinion rather than objective facts shown on the maps. Making subjective comments like this will significantly lower your Task achievement score. You need to be particularly careful of this in your overview statement. Avoid using more extreme adjectives such as **amazing, drastic, fascinating, remarkable**.

The overview

The paragraph above was originally an overview paragraph from a sample answer. Although the sentences are now accurate, and could be used within an answer, they are too detailed to be part of an overview, which is why I separated them in my answer. As with all task 1 answers, it is important not to include details in your overview. The following are just two other examples I have seen:

- Overall, it is evident that more houses have been built, and a restaurant with reception added around the center of the town. A Pier has also been added connecting from the yacht to the restaurant. At the western area, the beach has been modified to include a swimming pool.
- Overall, it is clear that a restaurant and houses were built along with footpath and vehicle track to provide food, accommodation and easy access for visitors.

Remember, using umbrella terms can help you to avoid this:

Overall, it is clear that changes that have been made to the island to provide food, accommodation and easy access for visitors.

Coherence and cohesion problems

In lesson 2 we saw that you need to be careful in your choice of connecting words and phrases.

I have corrected the language errors in the following sample answer. What problem can you identify with the cohesive devices in red? Can you spot any of the other problems we have discussed?

Firstly, they preserved all of the trees on the island. **On the contrary**, they built a new beautiful pier where ships can land. A vehicle path runs from the pier to the reception which is located centrally. A huge pretty restaurant lies behind the reception. Houses are wonderfully constructed to the right and left of the reception with a footpath connecting them. **Lastly**, there is a spectacular beach with a safe swimming area.

Click here to see the answers and my comments.

See The
Answers

KEY IDEA: I have seen this combination of '**Firstly**,.... **On the contrary**,.... **Lastly**,....' used as cohesive devices several times in Task 1. This suggests these are being learned to use as a template for paragraph writing. This is not a good idea - read my free book **The Key to IELTS Success** to understand this idea.

QUESTION 1

Click on the parts of the sample answer below that make a personal comment. Think about changes you would need to make, then click on 'show answers' to see my new version.

[CLEAR](#)[personal comment](#)

After the advanced development, the island became well established and well civilised. The remarkable number of buildings, restaurants, reception, pier, accommodations, beach and greeneries have enhanced the island's beauty in very enormous ways. It could be said that these facilities will amuse the tourists. They must enjoy sailing and delight in eating in the restaurant as well as swimming.

[Show answers](#)

QUESTION 1

Click on the parts of the sample answer below that make a personal comment. Think about changes you would need to make, then click on 'show answers' to see my new version.

[CLEAR](#)[personal comment](#)

After the advanced X development, the island became well established and well civilised X . The remarkable X number of buildings, restaurants, reception, pier, accommodations, beach and greeneries have enhanced the island's beauty in very enormous ways X . It could be said that these facilities will amuse X the tourists. They must enjoy X sailing and delight in X eating in the restaurant as well as swimming.

The answer:

After the advanced development, the island became well established and well civilised. The remarkable number of buildings, restaurants, reception, pier, accommodations, beach and greeneries have enhanced the island's beauty in very enormous ways. It could be said that these facilities will amuse the tourists. They must enjoy sailing and delight in eating in the restaurant as well as swimming.

Changes to make the language accurate and objective:

- 1) After the development, the island became a tourist destination.
- 2) The new buildings, which include a restaurant, a reception, a pier, and accommodation, have changed the island significantly.
- 3) Tourists visiting the island can now go sailing, eat in the restaurant, or go swimming.

All done !

Sample:

A) *Firstly*, they preserved all of the trees on the island. **B)** *On the contrary*, they built a new beautiful pier where ships can land. A vehicle path runs from the pier to the reception which is located centrally. A huge pretty restaurant lies behind the reception. Houses are wonderfully constructed to the right and left of the reception with a footpath connecting them. **C)** *Lastly*, there is a spectacular beach with a safe swimming area.

QUESTION 1

What problem/s can you identify with the cohesive devices (A-C) used in the sample answer?

Can you spot any of the other problems we have discussed?
(Think about whether the facts are accurate, and whether the words and tenses are being used appropriately or not.)

Click on 'show answers' when you have finished.



Show answers

QUESTION 1

What problem/s can you identify with the cohesive devices (A-C) used in the sample answer?

Can you spot any of the other problems we have discussed?
(Think about whether the facts are accurate, and whether the words and tenses are being used appropriately or not.)

Click on 'show answers' when you have finished.



Problems:

A) Firstly, 1) they preserved all of the trees on the island. B) On the contrary, 2) they built a new 3) beautiful pier where ships can dock. 4) A vehicle path runs from the pier to the reception, which is located centrally. A 5) huge pretty restaurant 6) lies behind the reception. Houses 7) are wonderfully constructed to the right and left of the reception with a footpath connecting them. C) Lastly, there is a 8) spectacular beach with a 9) safe swimming area.

My Comments:

Cohesive devices:

- A) This is used to describe the first step in a process and is not appropriate here
- B) This is used to correct a mistaken idea and is not appropriate here
- C) This is used to present the final step in a process and is not appropriate here

There is an under-use of cohesive devices in the remaining sentences - it is not clear how these sentences are all linked.

Vocabulary problems:

- 1 - this is not accurate, some trees have been removed
- 2 - the passive is needed here
- 3 - the word 'beautiful' is inappropriate (this is a personal comment and cannot be seen on the map)

4 and 6 - these are presented as minor details - it is not clear why they are being mentioned here - what is the key feature? (e.g. that facilities have been added).

5, 7, 8, 9 the words huge, pretty, wonderfully, spectacular, and safe are personal comments and are not shown in the map.

All done !

7.3 My model answer

We will use my model answer to focus on vocabulary and verb tenses. It is important to note that, although we can use the passive in map and plan tasks, we do not need to use it for every verb – you show a range of structures by varying the tenses that you use. In my model, I have used the simple past, the simple present, and the present perfect, and I have used the passive form five times. Before you begin working on my model, think about when and why I might have used each of these different tenses.

Practice

The following exercises focus on building your vocabulary and using a range of tenses accurately. In the first exercise, you will fill in the gaps in my model with the correct tense of the verbs given in brackets as well as any adverbs. Make sure to think about:

- 1) whether you need to use the active or the passive
- 2) the tense that is needed
- 3) whether you need to add 'there' (i.e. there is / there are)
- 4) verb subject agreement

Click Here
to Practise

Points to notice

1) There are no dates given in this task. I decided to see the second map as 'the island as it is now'. This meant using perfect tenses at times. If you decided to use the simple past instead, that is fine. If the map task had dates showing that these changes were made in the past, then I would need to use the simple past and / or past perfect in my answer.

2) I used a range of tenses in my answer. We can break these different tenses down as follows:

The simple Past – used to describe the island before development

- Overall, most development **took place** on ...
- Prior to development, this relatively small island **was** uninhabited.
- In terms of its natural features, **there was** a beach area
- ...some vegetation, which **was** more dense on the eastern part of the island.

Perfect tenses – linking the past to the present:

- ... a small number of tourist amenities **have been built**, while the eastern part **has been left** in its natural state.
- ... this vegetation **has largely been retained**
- While tracks **have been created** for vehicles, **these are** limited
- Access to the island **has been made easier** with the addition of a pier

The simple present – used to describe the island as it is now

- Following construction, the island **is** now ...
- ... the building style **is** generally sympathetic to...
- the main structures **are** a central reception building...
- Visitors **can stay** in hut-style accommodation
- However, **there are** footpaths linking...
- ...which also **allows** for sailing.

Notice that the tenses were used because they fitted what I wanted to write about – I didn't choose a tense I wanted to use then write a sentence. Trying to force a specific grammar point into your writing often does not work.

3) Notice the different phrases I used to show the logical organisation of the information and to help the reader follow any changes in topic or focus:

- *The two maps*
- *Overall, ...*
- *Prior to development,...*
- *As part of the development programme,*
- *Following construction,*
- *In terms of access,*

KEY IDEA: Use phrases such as '*In terms of....*' + an umbrella terms to signal a change in topic in Task 1.

For example:

- *In terms of accommodation...*
- *In terms of transport...*
- *In terms of leisure facilities...*

Extra practice

Look back at the answer you wrote to this question and think about the following:

The overview:

- Did you refer to the main changes to the island?
- Did you leave out the minor details?
- What changes can you now make to improve your overview – e.g. can you replace any minor (or specific) details with an umbrella term?

Your body paragraphs

- How did you organise your body paragraphs?
- Is this organisation clear? Which phrases in your answer show this?
- How did you connect your sentences? Did you use the appropriate cohesive devices? How did you signal a change in topic or focus?
- What changes can you make now to help the reader to follow your ideas and improve your Coherence and cohesion score? (E.g. can you add '*In terms of...*' + an umbrella term?)

Key features

- Did you only describe what you can see in the maps or did you make the key changes clear?
- Are there any key features that you missed? (compare the features you wrote about to those in my answer). You may have mentioned different features – just be sure they are key (important) and worth pointing out – how did you make this clear?

Language (grammar and vocabulary)

Underline or circle each of the verbs you used and think about the following:

- Did you use a range of tenses?
- Did you have a good reason to use each tense? (e.g. using the simple past to describe the island before etc.)
- Did you use any passives? Can you change any of your verbs to the passive (e.g. to remove 'they')
- Did you mainly use the simple present? If so, think again about the key features using the question in lesson 7.2 and then write your answer again using a range of tenses.
- Did you use vocabulary accurately and appropriately or did you make personal comments?
- What changes can you make to improve the language in your answer?

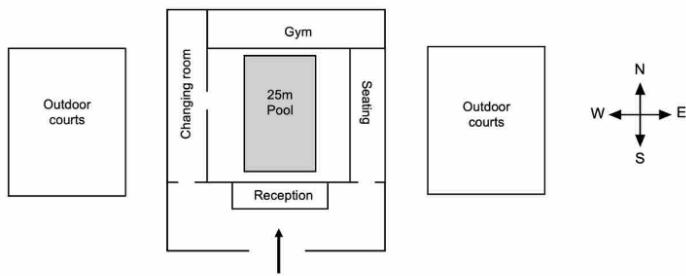
Homework

In the next lesson, we will look at a plan task. For homework, write an answer to the following question, which is adapted from Cambridge IELTS 13 (page 94):

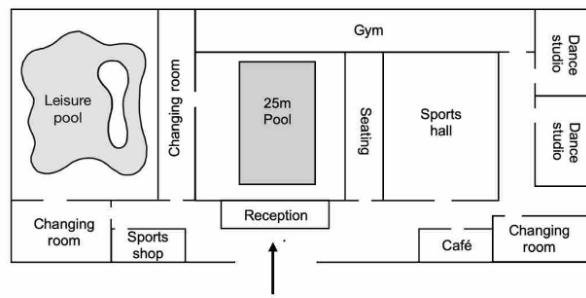
The plans below show the layout of a university's sports centre now, and how it will look after redevelopment.

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

UNIVERSITY SPORTS CENTRE (present)



UNIVERSITY SPORTS CENTRE (future plans)



Write at least 150 words.

QUESTION 1

Fill in the gaps in my model with the correct tense of the verbs in brackets as well as any other words. Make sure to think about:

1. whether you need to use the active or the passive
2. the tense that is needed
3. whether you need to add 'there' (i.e. there is / there are)
4. verb subject agreement

The two maps show an island both before and after it (to develop) as a tourist destination. Overall, most development (to take place) on the western and central areas of the island, where a small number of tourist amenities (to build), while the eastern coast (to leave) in its natural state.

Prior to development, this relatively small island was uninhabited. In terms of its natural features, (to be) a beach area on the west coast, and some vegetation, which (to be) more dense on the eastern part of the island. As part of the development programme, this vegetation (to retain, largely), with some building work fitting around existing trees.

Following construction, although the island (to be) now more developed, the style of the buildings (to be, generally) sympathetic to the natural environment, with relatively simple, single-storey accommodation and only two larger, two-storey buildings. The main structures (to be) a central reception building and a restaurant just north of this. Visitors (to stay) in hut-style accommodation, which is grouped on either side of the reception. In terms of access, while tracks (to create) for vehicles, these are limited to the main buildings. However, (to be) footpaths linking the accommodation to the swimming beach and other facilities. Reaching the island (to make) easier with the addition of a pier on the south coast, which also allows for sailing.

QUESTION 2**Vocabulary**

Find a word in the model that means the same as the definitions below and fill in the gaps with one or two words.

a place tourists go to = a

unchanged = in its

in the west =

in the east =

in the centre =

before =

no one was living there =

features produced by nature =

plants and greenery =

close together, thick =

already there =

showing an understanding of =

having one storey or level =

having two storeys or levels =

building =

restricted =

connecting =

a structure linking the land and sea where boats can land = a

QUESTION 3

Now fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase. Write no more than two words in each space.

The two maps show an island both before and after it was developed as a . Overall, most development took place on the and areas of the island, where a small number of tourist have been built, while the coast has been left in its .

 development, this relatively small island was . In terms of its , there was a beach area on the west coast, and some , which was more on the part of the island. As part of the development programme, this has largely been retained, with some building work fitting around trees.

Following construction, although the island is now more developed, the style of the buildings is generally to the natural environment, with relatively simple, accommodation and only two larger, buildings. The main are a reception building and a restaurant just north of this. Visitors can stay in hut-style accommodation, which is grouped on of the reception. In terms of , while tracks have been created for vehicles, these are to the main buildings. However, there are footpaths the accommodation to the swimming beach and other facilities. Reaching the island has been made easier with the addition of a on the south coast, which also allows for sailing.

[Show answers](#)

QUESTION 1

Fill in the gaps in my model with the correct tense of the verbs in brackets as well as any other words. Make sure to think about:

1. whether you need to use the active or the passive
2. the tense that is needed
3. whether you need to add 'there' (i.e. there is / there are)
4. verb subject agreement

The two maps show an island both before and after it (to develop) as a tourist destination. Overall, most development (to take place) on the western and central areas of the island, where a small number of tourist amenities (to build), while the eastern coast (to leave) in its natural state.

Prior to development, this relatively small island was uninhabited. In terms of its natural features, (to be) a beach area on the west coast, and some vegetation, which (to be) more dense on the eastern part of the island. As part of the development programme, this vegetation (to retain, largely), with some building work fitting around existing trees.

Following construction, although the island (to be) now more developed, the style of the buildings (to be, generally) sympathetic to the natural environment, with relatively simple, single-storey accommodation and only two larger, two-storey buildings. The main structures (to be) a central reception building and a restaurant just north of this. Visitors (to stay) in hut-style accommodation, which is grouped on either side of the reception. In terms of access, while tracks (to create) for vehicles, these are limited to the main buildings. However, (to be) footpaths linking the accommodation to the swimming beach and other facilities. Reaching the island (to make) easier with the addition of a pier on the south coast, which also allows for sailing.

The answer:

The two maps show an island both before and after it **was developed** (to develop) as a tourist destination. Overall, most development **took place** (to take place) on the western and central areas of the island, where a small number of tourist amenities **were built / have been built** (to build), while the eastern coast **was left / has been left** (to leave) in its natural state.

Prior to development, this relatively small island was uninhabited. In terms of its natural features, **there was** (to be) a beach area on the west coast, and some vegetation, which **was** (to be) more dense on the eastern part of the island. As part of the development programme, this vegetation **has largely been retained / has been largely retained** (to retain, largely), with some building work fitting around existing trees.

Following construction, although the island **is** (to be) now more developed, the style of the buildings **is generally** (to be, generally) sympathetic to the natural environment, with relatively simple, single-storey accommodation and only two larger, two-storey buildings. The main structures **are** (to be) a central reception building and a restaurant just north of this. Visitors **can stay / stay** (to stay) in hut-style accommodation, which is grouped on either side of the reception. In terms of access, while tracks **have been created** (to create) for vehicles, these are limited to the main buildings. However, **there are** (to be) footpaths linking the accommodation to the swimming beach and other facilities. Reaching the island **has been made** (to make) easier with the addition of a pier on the south coast, which also allows for sailing.

Complete model:

The two maps show an island both before and after it **was developed** as a tourist destination. Overall, most development **took place** on the western and central areas of the island, where a small number of tourist amenities **have been built**, while the eastern coast **has been left** in its natural state.

Prior to development, this relatively small island was uninhabited. In terms of its natural features, **there was** a beach area on the west coast, and some vegetation, which **was** more dense on the eastern part of the island. As part of the development programme, this vegetation **has largely been retained**, with some building work fitting around existing trees.

Following construction, although the island **is now more developed**, the style of the buildings **is generally sympathetic to the natural environment**, with relatively simple, single-storey accommodation and only two larger, two-storey buildings. The main structures **are a central reception building and a restaurant just north of this**. Visitors **can stay in hut-style accommodation**, which is grouped on either side of the reception. In terms of access, while tracks **have been created** for vehicles, these are limited to the main buildings. However, **there are footpaths linking the accommodation to the swimming beach and other facilities**. Reaching the island **has been made easier** with the addition of a pier on the south coast, which also allows for sailing.

QUESTION 2**Vocabulary**

Find a word in the model that means the same as the definitions below and fill in the gaps with one or two words.

- a place tourists go to =
- unchanged = in its
- in the west =
- in the east =
- in the centre =
- before =
- no one was living there =
- features produced by nature =
- plants and greenery =
- close together, thick =
- already there =
- showing an understanding of =
- having one storey or level =
- having two storeys or levels =
- building =

restricted =

connecting =

a structure linking the land and sea where boats can land = a

The answer:

a place tourists go to = a *tourist destination*

unchanged = in its *natural state*

in the west = *western*

in the east = *eastern*

in the centre = *central*

before = *prior to*

no one was living there = *uninhabited*

features produced by nature = *natural features*

plants and greenery = *vegetation*

close together, thick = *dense*

already there = *existing*

showing an understanding of = *sympathetic*

having one storey or level = *single-storey*

having two storeys or levels = *two-storey*

building = *structure*

restricted = *limited*

connecting = *linking*

a structure linking the land and sea where boats can land = a *pier*

QUESTION 3

Now fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase. Write no more than two words in each space.

The two maps show an island both before and after it was developed as a . Overall, most development took place on the and areas of the island, where a small number of tourist have been built, while the coast has been left in its .

Prior to development, this relatively small island was . In terms of its , there was a beach area on the west coast, and some , which was more on the part of the island. As part of the development programme, this has largely been retained, with some building work fitting around trees.

Following construction, although the island is now more developed, the style of the buildings is generally to the natural environment, with relatively simple, accommodation and only two larger, buildings. The main are a reception building and a restaurant just north of this. Visitors can stay in hut-style accommodation, which is grouped on of the reception. In terms of , while tracks have been created for vehicles, these are to the main buildings. However, there are footpaths the accommodation to the swimming beach and other facilities. Reaching the island has been made easier with the addition of a on the south coast, which also allows for sailing.

The answer:

The two maps show an island both before and after it was developed as a *tourist destination*. Overall, most development took place on the *western* and *central* areas of the island, where a small number of tourist *amenities* have been built, while the *eastern* coast has been left in its *natural state*.

Prior to development, this relatively small island was *uninhabited*. In terms of its *natural features*, there was a beach area on the west coast, and some *vegetation*, which was more *dense* on the *eastern* part of the island. As part of the development programme, this *vegetation* has largely been retained, with some building work fitting around *existing* trees.

Following construction, although the island is now more developed, the style of the buildings is generally *sympathetic* to the natural environment, with relatively simple, *single-storey* accommodation and only two larger, *two-storey* buildings. The main *structures* are a *central* reception building and a restaurant just north of this. Visitors can stay in hut-style accommodation, which is grouped on *either side* of the reception. In terms of *access*, while tracks have been created for vehicles, these are *limited* to the main buildings. However, there are footpaths *linking* the accommodation to the swimming beach and other facilities. Reaching the island has been made easier with the addition of a *pier* on the south coast, which also allows for sailing.

All done !

LESSON 8 - Being precise in map and plan tasks

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 8.1 Common language problems
- 8.2 Addressing band 6 problems
- 8.3 My model answer

8.1 Being precise in map and plan tasks

In this lesson, we will focus on being precise with your language when describing a map or plan, and writing about the future. We will also work on a band 6.5 sample answer and turn it into a band 8+ sample before looking at my own answer.

Here is a reminder of our question, which is adapted from Cambridge IELTS 13 (page 94):

The plans below show the layout of a university's sports centre now, and how it will look after redevelopment.

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

UNIVERSITY SPORTS CENTRE (present)

UNIVERSITY SPORTS CENTRE (future plans)

Talking about future plans

Our writing task makes it clear that the changes have not been made yet, so this is our first task where we need to write about the future. This means we need to compare the sports centre now with the sports centre in the future, and write about changes that **will take place** or that **will be carried out**.

As we saw in Lesson 7, if you are using the passive, only the verb **to be** needs to change:

- The sports centre **is going to be made** bigger.
- The sports centre **will be made** bigger.
- The sports centre **will be expanded**.

Be careful when talking about '**future plans**'. We use this phrase when asking about someone's 'plans for the future' (e.g. **What are your future plans?**). Look at the following example:

The maps illustrate the present scheme of a university's sport complex and its future plans for renovation.

In task 1, we are presented with current or existing plans - it is the **renovation** or **redevelopment** that will occur in the future. So this should say:

The plans show the present layout of a university's sport complex and plans for its future renovation.

Writing about location: When, why

In many Task 1 answers based on maps and plans, candidates describe the exact location of almost every detail they mention. Effectively, this highlights the location in a way that can seem odd. Look at the following examples:

1. **A leisure pool will be constructed to the left of the changing room, on the left of the sports centre.**
2. **A café and a sports shop are going to be built next to the east and west of the changing rooms.**

Remember, you should **select** key information to include in your summary. Mentioning the precise location for every element not only makes your writing repetitive, but also makes it difficult to separate the key information from the minor details. Notice also that these details are not presented logically. The changing rooms mentioned in the first example only exist because there is a pool and users of the pool will need one, so it is more logical to say that '*some changing rooms have been built next to the pool*'. The referencing in this sentence is also unclear – we do not know what is '*on the left of the sports centre*' – does this refer to the changing room or the leisure pool?

Similarly, sentence number 2 suggests the location of these changing rooms is linked to the café and sports shop in some way. Problems like this occur when you describe the plans as though they are a picture rather than thinking about what the images actually represent. Thinking about how people will use this space can help you to be more logical in your summary of it – you can see an example of this in lesson 8.2.

KEY IDEA: With a map or plan task, think about what the images in the diagram represent and how the different parts work together, or how people might use this space. This will help you to write about it in a more logical way.

Remember, you don't need to give the precise location of every detail – only do this if you can see a reason for it. For example, if it helps to highlight a change (that a new facility has been built in the same location as something that has now been removed), or to explain a change of location.

How to write about location

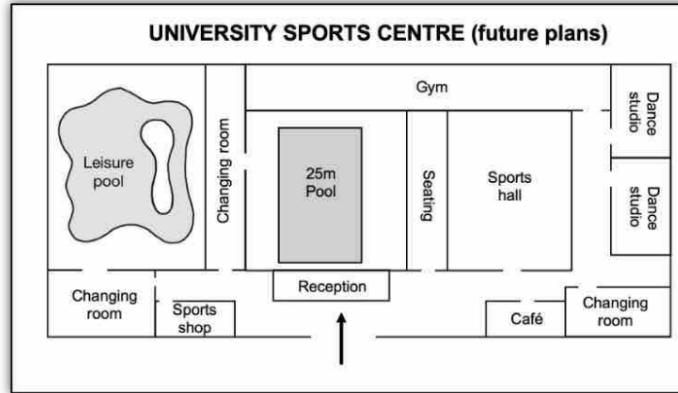
There are several ways to explain the location of something. Here are some examples:

- *Explain the location in relation to something else: there is a changing room next to the pool*
- *Use the compass: The outdoor courts on the east and west of the building have been removed.*
- *Refer to parts of the plan or the building: the entrance is at the front of the building*

Practice

Look at the plan below and try to think of a short sentence using the following words and phrases:

at the front of, at the back of, behind, between, in front of, opposite, next to, on the right of



Now click here to practice:

**Click Here
to Practise**

Vocabulary note: Notice that we say **X is opposite Y** (not X is opposite to Y).

Some do's and don'ts

- Only explain the location of one element at a time (i.e. don't say: *to the left of the changing room, on the left of the sports centre*.)
- Only use the points of a compass to refer to larger areas (for example, *the northern side of the building; on the east coast*) and only use words with an awareness of their style. Look at the following example:

The gym will be expanded to the east, in the neighborhood of which two dance studios will be built.

It is true that the gym will be expanded (made bigger), but adding '*to the east*' is odd here for a relatively small space within a building. The phrase '*in the neighborhood of*' can be used literally to mean 'in a specific area of the town / city', but I think this writer was trying to use this phrase with its idiomatic meaning of '*close to*' or '*about*'. For example, '*I was hoping to pay in the neighborhood of \$250,000 for the house*.' However, this is a little too informal for a writing test, and you should aim to be **literal** when giving precise details of location, so the style and meaning are not appropriate here. NB, I deliberately kept the US spelling here ('**neighborhood**' instead

of '**neighbourhood**' because it is not a word I would use in this way).

The verb form of the adjective '**long**' can be useful here: **to lengthen**.

The gym will be lengthened and two dance studios will be built.

Here are some other useful verbs like this:

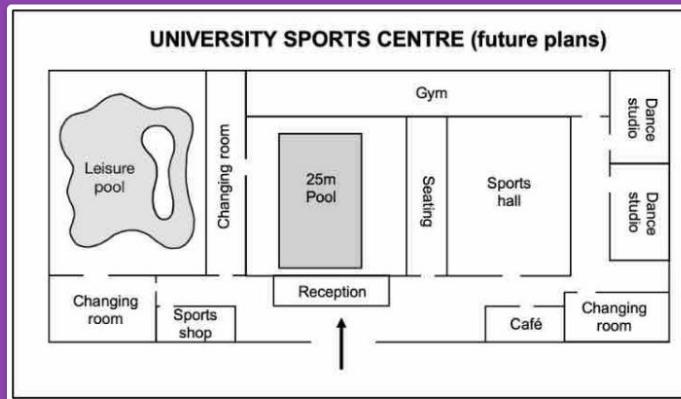
Useful words to learn		
Adjective	Noun	Verb
deep	depth	To deepen / to make something deeper
long	length	To lengthen something / to make something longer
wide	width	To widen something / to make something wider
tall	height	To make something taller
short		To shorten something / to make something shorter
high		To make something higher
low		To lower something / to make something lower

Notice that **tall**, **short**, **high** and **low** do not have a specific noun form (when we measure the **height** of something, it may be **tall**, **short**, **high**, or **low**,) and **tall** and **high** do not have a specific verb form (the verb 'to heighten' means 'to increase the amount of something' and is used with abstract ideas (e.g. **to heighten awareness**; **to heighten tension**).

Practice

Practise using the verbs above in the following exercise and review the vocabulary from Lesson 4.

Click Here
to Practise



QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in the sentences using the correct word or phrase below. Try to use each one once only.

Words and phrases to use:

at the front of, at the back of, behind, between, in front of, opposite, next to, on the right of

The reception is _____ the building.

The sports shop is _____ the leisure pool.

The café is _____ the sports hall.

The seating area is _____ the pool and the sports hall.

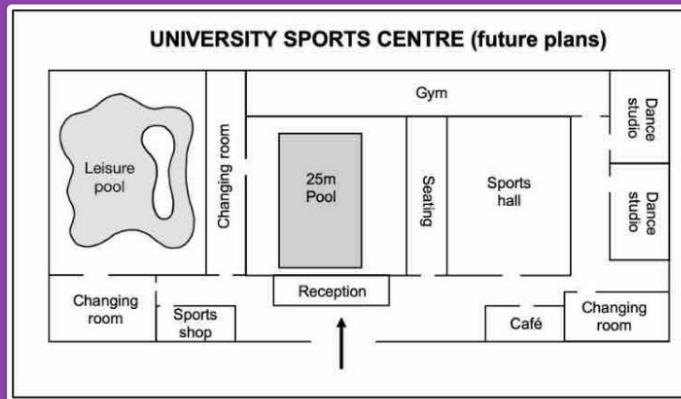
The gym is _____ the pool.

The gym is _____ the building.

The dance studio is _____ the gym.

The dance studios are _____ the sports hall.

[Show answers](#)



QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in the sentences using the correct word or phrase below. Try to use each one once only.

Words and phrases to use:

at the front of, at the back of, behind, between, in front of, opposite, next to, on the right of

The reception is _____ the building.

The sports shop is _____ the leisure pool.

The café is _____ the sports hall.

The seating area is _____ the pool and the sports hall.

The gym is _____ the pool.

The gym is _____ the building.

The dance studio is _____ the gym.

The dance studios are _____ the sports hall.

The answer:

The reception is *at the front of* the building.

The sports shop is *opposite / in front of* the leisure pool.

The café is *opposite / in front of* the sports hall.

The seating area is *between* the pool and the sports hall.

The gym is *behind* the pool.

The gym is *at the back of* the building.

The dance studio is *next to* the gym.

The dance studios are *to the right of / on the right of* the sports hall.

All done !

QUESTION 1

Change the following sentences from active to passive and replace the verbs with a verb from this lesson (e.g. to widen etc). Pay careful attention to the tense you need to use.

Active: They have made the pool deeper.

Passive: The pool

Active: They will make the gym longer.

Passive: The gym

Active: They made the entrance wider.

Passive: The entrance

Active: They have made the bridge lower.

Passive: The bridge

Active: They are going to make the road shorter.

Passive: The road

QUESTION 2

Test yourself and review the language from lesson 4.

Fill in the blanks in the table with useful synonyms to use in map or plan tasks.

Verb	Noun	Meaning
to build		make something using materials such as bricks or wood etc.
to construct		build something or put pieces together
to improve		make something better
	development	change a (usually wild or untouched) place so that it becomes more advanced / habitable / useable
	refurbishment	make a building look new again by painting, repairing, decorating etc.
to renovate		repair and improve something a building to make it 'new' again
to redevelop		change an area of a town by replacing old buildings with new ones

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Change the following sentences from active to passive and replace the verbs with a verb from this lesson (e.g. to widen etc). Pay careful attention to the tense you need to use.

Active: They have made the pool deeper.

Passive: The pool .

Active: They will make the gym longer.

Passive: The gym .

Active: They made the entrance wider.

Passive: The entrance .

Active: They have made the bridge lower.

Passive: The bridge .

Active: They are going to make the road shorter.

Passive: The road .

The answer:

Active: They have made the pool deeper.
Passive: The pool *has been deepened*.

Active: They will make the gym longer.
Passive: The gym *will be lengthened*.

Active: They made the entrance wider.
Passive: The entrance *was widened*.

Active: They have made the bridge lower.
Passive: The bridge *has been lowered*.

Active: They are going to make the road shorter.
Passive: The road *is going to be shortened*.

QUESTION 2

Test yourself and review the language from lesson 4.

Fill in the blanks in the table with useful synonyms to use in map or plan tasks.

Verb	Noun	Meaning
to build	(building)	make something using materials such as bricks or wood etc.
to construct	(construction)	build something or put pieces together
to improve	(improvement)	make something better
(to develop)	development	change a (usually wild or untouched) place so that it becomes more advanced / habitable / useable
(to refurbish)	refurbishment	make a building look new again by painting, repairing, decorating etc.
to renovate	(renovation)	repair and improve something a building to make it 'new' again
to redevelop	(redevelopment)	change an area of a town by replacing old buildings with new ones

All done !

8.2 Addressing Band 6 problems

Below is a band 6.5 sample answer to this question. We will address the language problems first then go on to fix any problems with Coherence and cohesion, then Task achievement.

Read the sample answer and see if you can find any language problems. Think about:

- vocabulary
- how to describe location
- the use of articles

Band 6.5 sample answer

The two plans illustrate the main changes which will take place in a university sports center.

Overall, although the central area will be largely retained, the total area of the sports centre will be extended, and more facilities will be added.

In the current plan, the sports centre's functions are limited. Within the building, there are two main sports facilities, one of which is the 25-meter pool in the center, and another is the gym in the north of the area. To serve their functions well, the changing room is constructed in the west of them, and the auditorium is on the eastern of the construction. As for the reception, it is the exact opposite of the entrance. In terms of the outdoor areas, courts are on either side of the building.

According to the future plans, sports centre will become versatile after some changes. Courts in the open space will be removed, while much more facilities will be added, from recreational facilities such as café on the right of the entrance, and the sports shops on the left, to the sports facilities, like leisure pool in the western areas, and two dance studios on the northeast corner of the building. Existing facilities are also going to be expanded including the gym, seating area, changing room and reception. The swimming pool is the only one which will remain the same in the future.

Think about how to correct the highlighted language problems in red. Use my comments below to help.

The two plans illustrate the main changes ***which** will take place in a university sports center.

Overall, although the central area will be largely retained, the total area of the sports centre will be extended, and more facilities will be added.

In the current plan, the sports centre's ***functions** are limited. Within the building, there are two main sports facilities, one of which is ***the** 25-meter pool in the center, and another is ***the** gym ***in the north of the area**. To serve their functions well, ***the** changing room ***is constructed** ***in the west of them**, and ***the** ***auditorium** is on the eastern side of the construction. As for the reception, it is ***the exact opposite of** the entrance. In terms of the outdoor areas, ***courts** are on either side of the building.

According to the future plans, ***sports centre** will become ***versatile** after some changes. ***Courts** in ***the open space** will be removed, while ***much more facilities** will be added, from recreational facilities such as ***café** on the right of the entrance, and ***the** sports shops on the left, to sports facilities, ***like** ***leisure pool** in ***the western areas**, and two dance studios ***on** the northeast corner of the building. ***Existing** facilities are also going to be expanded including the gym, seating area, changing room and reception. The swimming pool is the only one ***which** will remain the same in the future.

Language problems

- 1) This is a defining relative clause, so 'that' can also be used here. We can't leave it out because this is the subject of the verbs 'to take place' and 'remain' (in the final sentence). I find 'which' is often overused, so I have changed it to 'that' in later versions.
- 2) We know about the sports centres facilities, but we don't know its functions.
- 3) The direct article (the) is used to refer to something already mentioned, but this is the first mention, so we need the indefinite article (a)
- 4) 'in the north of' and (below) 'In the west of' would be used with a larger area (e.g. in the north of the island). Think about how to describe where the gym and the changing rooms are located – NB, they are located within the building not 'the area'.
- 5) There is a vocabulary problem here - why use the verb 'constructed'? The changing room 'is located' there now and 'was constructed' at some time in the past. Similarly with 'construction' below ('the building' is better).
- 6) It isn't clear what the 'auditorium' refers to – perhaps the 'seating'?
- 7) 'opposite' has a different meaning when it is used like this – it refers to the characteristics of someone or something (e.g. 'My sister likes parties but I am the exact opposite.') With location, we can say that something is 'directly opposite' something else.
- 8) We omit the article when we are referring to something in general or 'all' (e.g. all people, all courts etc.). We need an article (e.g. a/the) or determiner here (Some courts, two courts etc.)
- 9) We need a comparative here (e.g. it will become more versatile).
- 10) There is a vocabulary problem here – it is better to refer to these as 'The two outdoor courts' or 'The two courts on the outside of the building'
- 11) 'much' is used with uncountable nouns ('how much sugar?' etc.) 'many' is used with countable nouns (e.g. facilities). Is this true?
- 12) 'like' is too informal – 'such as' or 'including' are better here
- 13) it isn't clear what these 'areas' are – 'side' is better and we need more information ('the western side' of what?)
- 14) This should be 'in' the corner ('on the corner' is used for outside (e.g. on the corner of a street

Addressing Coherence and cohesion problems

In the next image, you can see the language changes I made in blue. Coherence and cohesion are generally managed well in this answer. I have highlighted five problem areas where the ideas are difficult to follow, where referencing is not clear, or where the information could be more logically organised. Can you identify the problems and suggest a way to fix them? Again, use my comments below to help.

The two plans illustrate the main changes that will take place in a university sports center.

Overall, although the central area will be largely retained, the total area of the sports centre will be extended, and more facilities will be added.

In the current plan, the sports centre's facilities are limited. Within the building, there are two main facilities, one of which is a 25-meter pool in the center, and another is a gym at the back of the building. ¹To serve their functions well, a changing room is located on the left ²of them, and a seating area on the eastern side of the building. ³As for the reception, it is directly opposite the entrance. In terms of the outdoor areas, there are courts on either side of the building.

According to the future plans, the sports centre will become more versatile after some changes are made. ⁴The outdoor courts will be removed, while many more facilities will be added, from recreational facilities such as a café on the right of the entrance, and a sports shop on the left, to sports facilities, including a leisure pool on the western side of the centre, and two dance studios in the northeast corner of the building. The existing facilities are also going to be expanded including the gym, seating area, changing room and reception. The swimming pool is the only ⁵one that will remain the same in the future.

Coherence and cohesion comments

- 1) This is difficult to follow and appears to be going too far and making a comment not supported by the data (to + the infinitive tells us the reason something was done - but we have no idea why the current plan is organised like this). It would be better to think about the people who will use these facilities and begin: 'Visitors have access to...'
- 2) the reference is not clear here – on the left of what? This is too far away from the mention of the pool and the gym.
- 3) 'As for the reception' suggests that we have already had some information about the reception and are returning to this topic. We don't need a change in topic as this is still explaining what is 'Within the building', and the next sentence nicely changes the topic to what is outside the building ('In terms of the outdoor areas...'). This sentence would just introduce the current reception: 'There is a'
- 4) There is too much information included in this sentence, which makes it difficult to follow. The order of the information is not as logical as it could be – it often helps the reader if you mirror the order of the information in the first paragraph. The writer has tried to separate the information into 'recreational facilities' and 'sports facilities', but it does seem that all of these facilities are 'recreational'. Can you think of another umbrella term to use instead of 'recreational facilities'?
- 5) Again, the reference here is a little unclear 'one of' what? (Think about what this refers back to).

Task achievement problems

Now read through the answer after most of these changes have been made and consider Task achievement. Think in particular about the following:

- Does the sample **present a clear overview of the main changes** (Band 7)?
- Does it **present and highlight the key features** (the main changes) (Band 7)?
- Does it 'cover the requirements of the task' (**summarising the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and making comparisons where relevant**) (Band 7)
- Are there any key features missing? Are there details that are inaccurate? (Band 6)
- What improvements can you suggest to improve this answer?

The two plans illustrate the main changes that will take place in a university sports center.

Overall, although the central area will be largely retained, the total area of the sports centre will be extended, and more facilities will be added.

In the current plan, the sports centre's facilities are limited. Within the building, there are two main facilities, one of which is a 25-meter pool in the center, and another is a gym at the back of the building. **Visitors have access to** a changing room located on the left **of the swimming pool** and a seating area on the eastern side of the building. **There is a reception** directly opposite the entrance. In terms of the outdoor areas, there are courts on either side of the building.

According to the future plans, the sports centre will become more versatile after some changes are made. The outdoor courts will be removed, while many more facilities will be added, from recreational facilities such as a café on the right of the entrance, and a sports shop on the left, to sports facilities, including a leisure pool on the western side of the centre, and two dance studios in the northeast corner of the building. The existing facilities are also going to be expanded including the gym, seating area, changing room and reception. The swimming pool is the only **facility** that will remain the same in the future.

One of the main problems in this answer is that the first body paragraph looks in detail at the current plan, and the second body paragraph seems to rush through and list the main changes, which means they are not highlighted. As our task is to highlight the main changes, logically, there should be more information about the second plan than the first.

KEY IDEA: Your second paragraph should work together with your first paragraph to present a clear picture of the main changes. Don't see them as completely separate. This is particularly true for map and plan tasks.

Use these questions to help you think about how to improve the Task achievement score in this answer:

The two plans illustrate the main changes that will take place in a university sports center.

Overall, although the central area will be largely retained, the total area of the sports centre will be extended, and more facilities will be added.

In the current plan, the sports centre's facilities are limited. Within the building, there are two main facilities: one which is a 25-meter pool in the center, and another is a gym at the back of the building. Visitors have access to a changing room located on the left of the swimming pool and a seating area on the eastern side of the building. There is a reception directly opposite the entrance. In terms of the outdoor areas, there are courts on either side of the building.

According to the future plans, the sports centre will become more versatile after some changes are made. The outdoor courts will be removed, while many more facilities will be added, from recreational facilities such as a cafe on the right of the entrance, and a sports shop on the left, to sports facilities, including a leisure pool on the western side of the centre, and two dance studios in the northeast corner of the building. The existing facilities are also going to be expanded including the gym, seating area, changing room and reception. The swimming pool is the only facility that will remain the same in the future.

Are these final sentences accurate?

This is quite a clear overview but it isn't really complete - one key element is missing - can you improve it?
Is this clear on the plan and supported in the paragraph? Can you soften this?

This is very wordy for a summary - can you shorten it?
Why do we need to know these precise locations? Are they minor details?

This seems like an overview - it is not necessary here (could have been added to the overview)
This is a very long sentence (59 words) and contains almost all of the key features. This means they are not highlighted - the focus is on where these things are rather than the changes that will be made. Can you split this information into 2 or 3 sentences and rewrite it to highlight these changes? NB It is more logical to begin with the sports facilities and mirror the order of the first paragraph.

When making your changes, think about the logical organisation of the information as well as how to move to a new topic.

You can see the changes I made below in blue :

The two plans illustrate the main changes that will take place in a university sports center.

Overall, although the central area will be largely retained, the total area of the sports centre will be extended, replacing the outdoor facilities, and more indoor facilities will be added.

In the current plan, the sports centre's facilities are quite limited. Within the building, there are two main facilities: a 25-meter pool in the center, and a gym at the back of the building. Visitors have access to a changing room and a seating area near the swimming pool. There is a small reception near the entrance. In terms of the outdoor areas, there are courts on either side of the building.

According to the future plans, the outdoor courts will be removed and the central building will be expanded. More indoor sports facilities will be added, such as a new leisure pool on the western side of the centre, a sports hall on the eastern side, and two dance studios in the northeast corner of the building. With the existing facilities, the gym is going to be made longer, but the swimming pool and other facilities will remain the same. In terms of the other amenities, the reception area will be in the same place but it will be wider than at present, and visitors to the new centre will be able to make use of a café and a sports shop, which will be located near the entrance.

Points to notice:

- The overview now contains all of the key information. With this question, the main changes needed for a clear overview are:
 - the new centre will be bigger
 - it will have more / a wider range of facilities
 - the outdoor facilities will be gone.
- Notice the order of the information. In the first paragraph, this writer logically began by describing the sports facilities (this is a sports centre so naturally these are the main facilities here). It is helpful to the reader and more logical to use the same order in the second paragraph.
- In rewriting some of the sentences, I thought about how people will use the facility (the visitors). Doing this gave me a new way to write about the changes and helped me to avoid repetition.
- I added more comparisons in the second body paragraph to highlight the main changes that will take place – remember, this is our task here.

KEY IDEA: Remember, your task is to highlight the main changes that will take place, so it is important to make comparisons to show these changes.

- This answer could still be improved – it is now quite long (246 words). This is because I had to add a reference to the location of the entrance and reception in paragraph 2 so that the same detail in the first paragraph makes sense or seems relevant. This shows that the information you include in your first paragraph has an effect on the information in your second paragraph – don't see them as separate – like the two plans you are given, they work together to present a clear picture of the changes.
- Changing the first paragraph so that the **location** of the reception is not highlighted (or made to seem important) helps:

The two plans illustrate the main changes that will take place in a university sports center.

Overall, although the central area will be largely retained, the total area of the sports centre will be extended, replacing the outdoor facilities, and more indoor facilities will be added.

In the current plan, the sports centre's facilities are quite limited. Within the building, there are two main facilities: a 25-meter pool in the center, and a gym at the back of the building. Visitors have access to a changing room and a seating area near the swimming pool and a small reception. In terms of the outdoor areas, there are courts on either side of the building.

According to the future plans, the outdoor courts will be removed and the central building will be expanded. More indoor sports facilities will be added, such as a new leisure pool on the western side of the centre, a sports hall and two dance studios on the eastern side. With the existing facilities, the gym is going to be made longer, but the swimming pool and other facilities will remain the same. In terms of the other amenities, the reception area will be made wider, and visitors to the new centre will be able to make use of a café and a sports shop, which will be located near the entrance.

KEY IDEA: Your body paragraphs work together to present a clear picture – don't see them as separate. This is particularly true for map and plan tasks.

8.3 My model answer

Look at my model answer and think about:

- **My overview**
- **The organisation – how do the paragraphs work together?**
- **Vocabulary (are there any special words I used that you need to learn?)**

Model answer

The plans show a university sports centre as it is now and the new layout following its redevelopment. Overall, while some outdoor facilities will be lost, the new centre will be significantly larger and will cater for a wider range of sports.

The sports centre currently consists of a relatively small central building with an outdoor court on each side. The building houses a 25-metre pool, with a seating area and changing room, and there is a gym to the rear and a reception area to the front.

Following the renovations, only the central pool and its facilities will remain the same. The building will be expanded to the east and west removing the outdoor courts and making way for more indoor facilities. These include a leisure pool on the western side, which will be slightly larger than the existing one and will have its own changing room, and on the eastern side, a new sports hall, and two dance studios. The current gym will be lengthened so that it is double its current size. The reception area will also be widened making it more spacious. On arrival, visitors to the new centre will benefit from a third changing room, a sports shop and a café, all located around the reception area.

Vocabulary note: Some useful vocabulary to learn:

- **to house** = to provide space for something (NB the pronunciation is different to the noun - the final sound is 'z' not 's').
- **to cater for** = to provide for (e.g. to provide food for / to provide facilities for)
- **more spacious** = having more space
- **the rear** = the back

Practice

Read through my model again then try to recreate it using the following as a guide (NB you will need to add articles, prepositions, and linking words, and you may need to change the form of some words).

My model answer

/ plans show / university sports centre / as / be / now / new layout / follow / redevelopment.
Overall, / some outdoor facilities / lose / new centre / significant / large / cater / wide / range / sports.

/ sports centre / current / consist / relative / small central building / outdoor court / each side.
/ building / house / 25-metre pool / seating area / changing room, / be / gym / rear / reception area / front.

Following / renovations, only / centre / pool / facilities /remain / same. / building / expand / to / east / west / remove / outdoor courts / make way / more indoor facilities. / include / leisure pool / west / side, / be / slight / large / existing one / and / have /own changing room, / east / side, / new sports hall, / two dance studios. / current gym / lengthen / so / be / double / current size. / reception area / also / widen, / make / more spacious. / arrive / visitors / new centre / benefit / third changing room, / sports shop / café, / all / locate / around / reception area.

Click here to write out your answers and see if you are correct:

Click Here
to Practise

Points to notice:

- Notice that the key features in my overview 'prove' or provide evidence for the overview statement. In this way, the whole answer works together and is 'fully developed'.
- I used the visitor experience of the new centre to vary my language: '**On arrival, visitors to the new centre...**'
- I only referred to location when I felt it was key information (e.g. I mentioned the outdoor courts on each side of the building in paragraph 1, then explained in paragraph 2 that these courts will be removed allowing the building to be expanded **to the east and west**. I also mentioned the new facilities that will be on the western and eastern sides of the building.

Extra practice

Look back at the answer you wrote to this question and think about the following:

The overview:

- Did you include the following key changes:
 - the new centre will be bigger**
 - it will have more / a wider range of facilities**
 - the outdoor facilities will be gone?**
- Did you remember **NOT** to include any minor or specific details?
- What changes can you now make to improve your overview – e.g. can you add something that is missing, or replace any minor details with an umbrella term?

Your body paragraphs

- Is your first body paragraph shorter than the second?
- How did you connect your sentences? Did you use the appropriate cohesive devices? How did you signal a change in topic?
- Do your body paragraphs work together to create a clear summary of the main changes?
- Did you mirror the organisation of the information in BP1 in BP2?
- What changes can you make now to improve your Coherence and cohesion score?

Key features

- Did you make the key changes clear or did you focus too much on **location**?
- Are there any key features that you missed? (compare the features you wrote about to those in my answer).

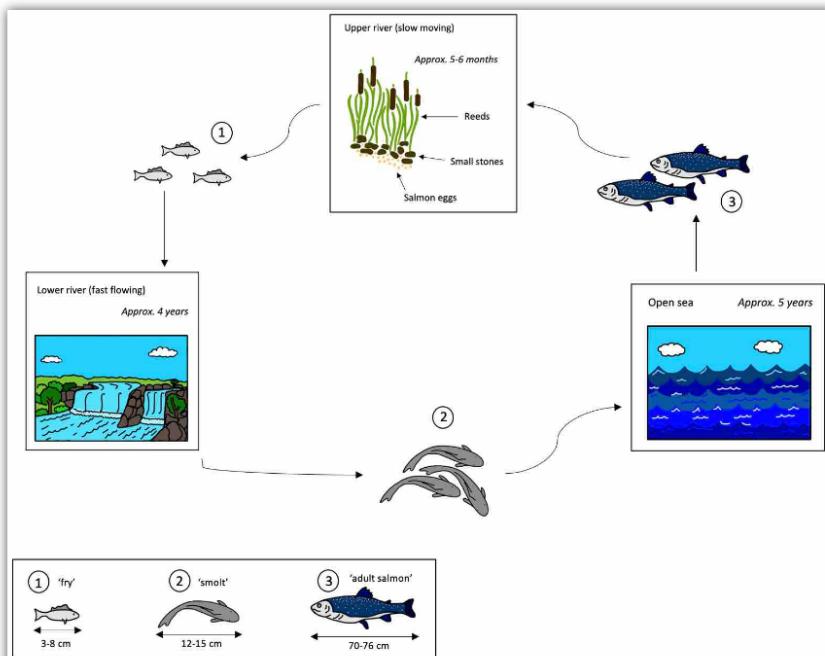
Language (grammar and vocabulary)

- Underline or circle each of the verbs you used and think about the following:
- Did you use the future tense when talking about the second plan?
- Did you use any passives? Can you change any of your verbs to the passive (e.g. to remove 'they')
- Can you use any of the verbs we learned in this lesson (e.g. lengthen, widen etc.)?

Homework

In the next two lessons, we will look at processes. Think about how to apply all of the ideas so far in a process task, then for homework, write an answer to the following question, which is adapted from Cambridge IELTS 10 (page 101):

The diagrams below show the life cycle of a species of large fish called the salmon.
Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.



Write at least 150 words.

QUESTION 1

Read through my model again then try to recreate it using the following as a guide (NB you will need to add articles, prepositions, and linking words, and you may need to change the form of some words).

/ plans show / university sports centre / as / be / now / new layout / follow / redevelopment. Overall, / some outdoor facilities / lose / new centre / significant / large / cater / wide / range / sports.

/ sports centre / current / consist / relative / small central building / outdoor court / each side. / building / house / 25-metre pool / seating area / changing room, / and / be / gym / rear / reception area / front.

Following / renovations, only / centre / pool / facilities / remain / same. / building / expand / to / east / west / remove / outdoor courts / make way / more indoor facilities. / include / leisure pool / west / side, / be / slight / large / existing one / and / have / own changing room, / east / side, / new sports hall, / two dance studios. / current gym / lengthen / so / be / double / current size. / reception area / also / widen, / make / more spacious. / arrive / visitors / new centre / benefit / third changing room, / sports shop / café, / all / locate / around / reception area.

Now fill in the gaps to recreate the model. Don't forget to add prepositions, linking words, and articles, or change words where necessary:

plans show	university sports centre	now	new layout following	
redevelopment. Overall,	some outdoor facilities	,	new centre	
	cater		range	
sports.				
sports centre	small central building	outdoor		
court	each side.	building	25-metre pool,	seating area
	changing room, and	gym	rear	reception area
front.				
Following	renovations, only	pool	facilities	remain
same.	building	to	east	west
outdoor courts	way		more indoor facilities.	include
leisure pool	side,			existing one and
own changing room,	side,	new sports hall,		two dance studios.
current gym	so		double	current size.
reception area		more spacious		visitors
centre	benefit	third changing room,	sports shop	café, all
around	reception area.			

Show answers

QUESTION 1

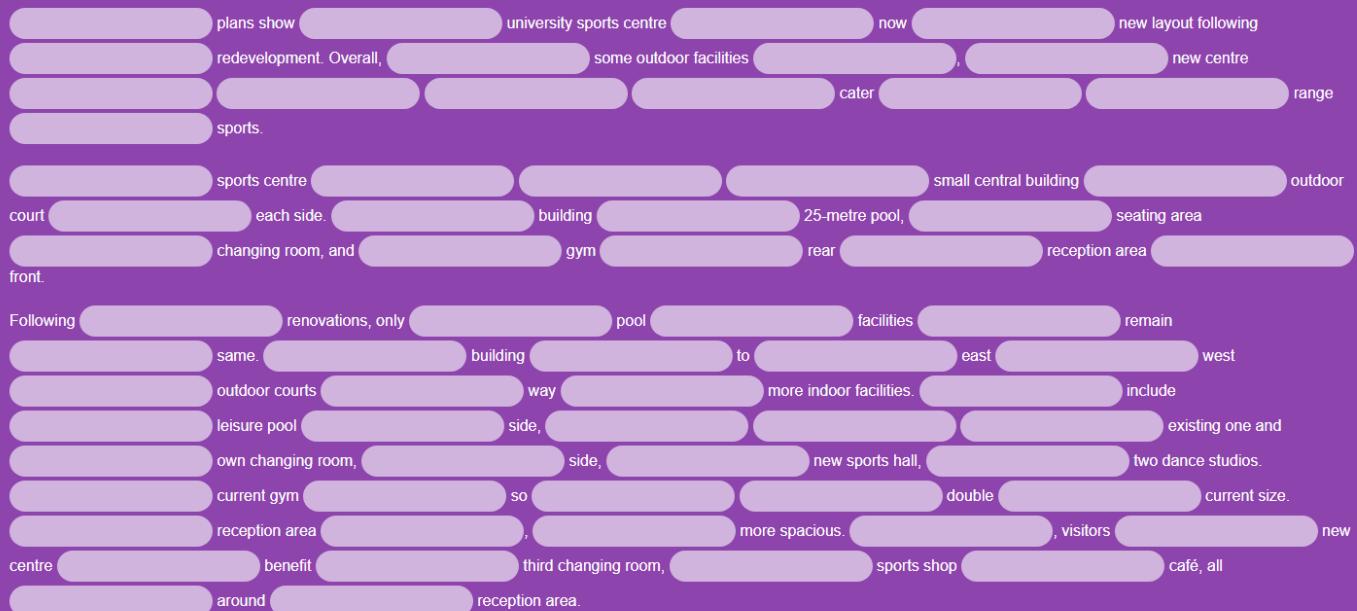
Read through my model again then try to recreate it using the following as a guide (NB you will need to add articles, prepositions, and linking words, and you may need to change the form of some words).

/ plans show / university sports centre / as / be / now / new layout / follow / redevelopment. Overall, / some outdoor facilities / lose / new centre / significant / large / cater / wide / range / sports.

/ sports centre / current / consist / relative / small central building / outdoor court / each side. / building / house / 25-metre pool / seating area / changing room, / and / be / gym / rear / reception area / front.

Following / renovations, only / centre / pool / facilities / remain / same. / building / expand / to / east / west / remove / outdoor courts / make way / more indoor facilities. / include / leisure pool / west / side, / be / slight / large / existing one / and / have / own changing room, / east / side, / new sports hall, / two dance studios. / current gym / lengthen / so / be / double / current size. / reception area / also / widen, / make / more spacious. / arrive / visitors / new centre / benefit / third changing room, / sports shop / café, / all / locate / around / reception area.

Now fill in the gaps to recreate the model. Don't forget to add prepositions, linking words, and articles, or change words where necessary:



The answer:

Now fill in the gaps to recreate the model. Don't forget to add prepositions, linking words, and articles, or change words where necessary:

The plans show a university sports centre as it is now and the new layout following its redevelopment. Overall, while some outdoor facilities will be lost, the new centre will be significantly larger and will cater for a wider range of sports.

The sports centre currently consists of a relatively small central building with an outdoor court on each side. The building houses a 25-metre pool, with a seating area and changing room, and there is a gym to the rear and a reception area to the front.

Following the renovations, only the central pool and its facilities will remain the same. The building will be expanded to the east and west removing the outdoor courts and making way for more indoor facilities. These include a leisure pool on the western side, which will be slightly larger than the existing one and will have its own changing room, and on the eastern side, a new sports hall, and two dance studios. The current gym will be lengthened so that it is double its current size. The reception area will also be widened, making it more spacious. On arrival, visitors to the new centre will benefit from a third changing room, a sports shop and a café, all located around the reception area.

All done !

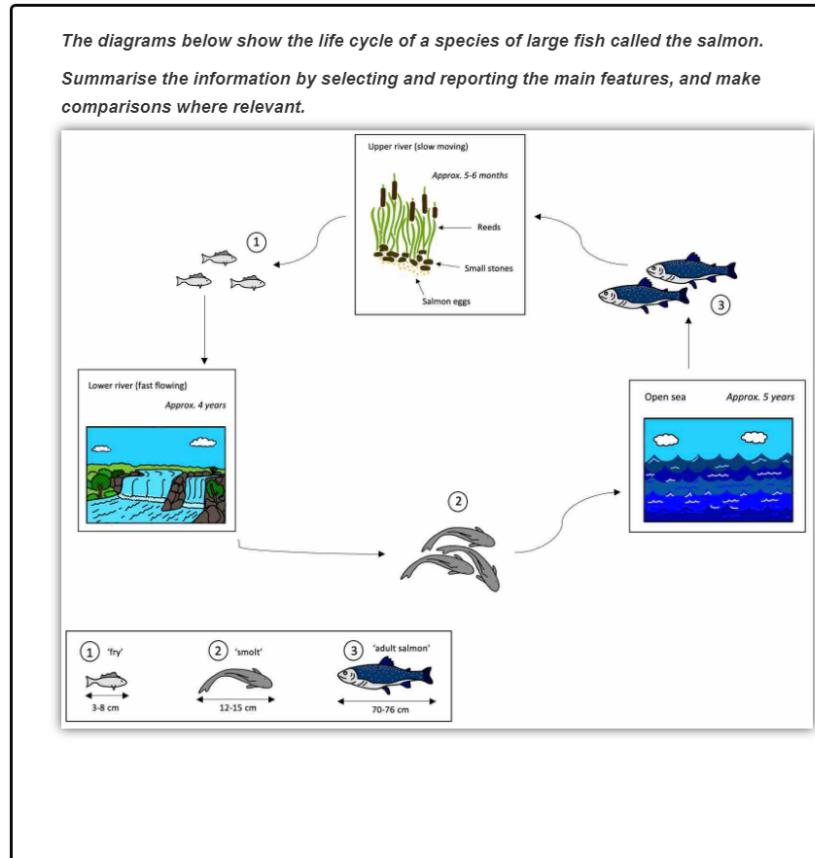
LESSON 9 - Process Tasks (1)

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 9.1 Language used in process tasks
- 9.2 Coherence and cohesion
- 9.3 Model answer and improving short answers

9.1 Language used in process tasks

Describing a process introduces a new element to your writing: the need to explain movement and physical changes. The issues connected to Coherence and cohesion are also different as we now need to organise the information step by step to explain how something is done or how something develops. We will look at the language involved in this in the context of this week's practice task. Here is a reminder of our question, which is adapted from Cambridge IELTS 10 (page 101):



Vocabulary note:

The word 'fish' is generally used as an uncountable noun (the plural 'fishes' is only used rarely to refer to different fish species.). This includes different types of fish such as tuna, salmon etc. So we can say '*the tuna swim*' not '*the tunas swim*'.

We can use the word to mean one fish: *the salmon swims* or several fish: *the salmon swim*.

NB Whales and dolphins are mammals and are countable nouns.

Language used in process tasks

There are several different types of language that are required in a process task. You may need to describe:

time, different stages, physical changes, movement,

Periods of time

Although we have written about time in previous tasks, in a process task we often need to write about it in a different way – often saying how long a stage or step in a process **takes** or **lasts**, or how much time is **spent** in a place. These verbs have different meanings and structures. Look at the following examples:

- *This stage lasts for four years.*
- *The fry spend four years in the upper river.*
- *It took five years to complete the renovations.*

With our current task, we cannot say: '*The salmon eggs take 5-6 months to break out of their eggs.*' because we do not know how long this specific process takes and it is unlikely to take up to 6 months for the fish to break out of their eggs.

Phase, **period**, **stage**, and **time** are useful synonyms to use here, but be careful with the prepositions **at** and **during**. **Phase** and **period** refer to **a length of time**, so we can use 'during' with these words. **Stage** and **time** can refer to either a length of time or a point in time, and so we can use both **during** and **at** with these:

- **During this phase** NOT **at this phase** (x)
- **During this period** NOT **at this period** (x)
- **During this stage, at this stage**
- **During this time, at this time**

Describing physical changes

We can use the following verbs to describe the physical changes that occur in a natural process:

Become, change, develop, grow, turn into

Again, they are used slightly differently. Look at the examples in the box below:

Describing physical change

Become is often used with a comparative: e.g. '**become bigger**', or to describe a change: e.g. 'the smolt **becomes** an adult salmon'.

Change has a broader meaning and can be used to introduce the idea: e.g. 'the fish then **changes** again and **becomes** ...' or 'the fish then **changes** again, **growing** bigger...' It can also be used with 'into': e.g. 'the fry **changes into** a smolt.' NB not **changes to** a smolt'

Develop and **grow** can be used with a specific feature: e.g. 'the egg hatches and the young fish **develops / grows** fins and a tail'. Or to describe a change: e.g. 'the smolt **develops into / grows into** an adult salmon.'

Turn into is a phrasal verb and is similar in meaning to 'change into' or 'become': e.g. 'the fry **turns into** a smolt.'

Some words to be careful with

We can't use the verb **evolve** to describe this type of natural change. When a species **evolves** it adapts to its environment and changes over a much longer period of time. Similarly, be careful with the verb '**transform**', which suggests a change into something completely new. For example, a caterpillar **transforms into** a butterfly, or: 'Following the renovation, the old shed was **transformed into** a modern restaurant.'

Make sure any adjectives or adverbs you use **accurately** describe what we are shown in the images. Can you see any problems in the following extracts?

The fish grow enormously in size during the final stage.

The huge salmon returns...

The fry migrate downstream to a highly turbulent water

At the end of this period, it turns into gigantic 'adult salmon'

The fully developed salmon now have unique color patterns on their back...

You can see the answers in the exercise below.

Practice

Use the following exercise to test your knowledge of vocabulary related to these words. In some of the exercises in this lesson, you need to use a text tool to write your answers onto an image or whiteboard. The images below show you how:

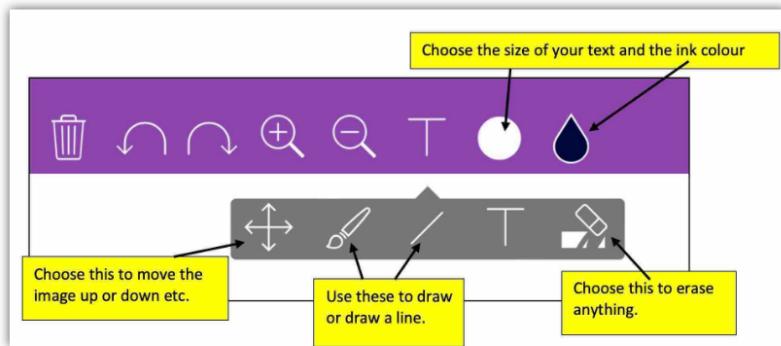
Lesson 9.1 Vocabulary practice

Collocation
Some of the verbs in exercise 1 can (or must) be used to describe a change. To complete the sentence, choose the correct verb in the table below, use the text tool to write any of the other words in the table, and then click the 'check' icon to check if your answer is correct. The first one has been done for you.

Choose from the following words:
along, at, away from, for, in, into, to, towards

In this exercise, you need to write your answers onto the table using the text tool. To begin, click on the paintbrush image and choose the 'T' for 'text tool'. See the other options below.

To last for
To continue
To stay
To flow



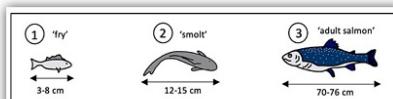
**Click Here
to Practise**

KEY IDEA: Make sure the language you use accurately describes the images in the diagram.
Pay particular attention to any adjectives and adverbs you use.

Numbers and Describing size

In process tasks you are more likely to be using small numbers. The general convention when writing numbers is to use the word form for the numbers one to ten and the numerals for numbers above ten. However, this is not a very important point to remember for the test and you will find native speaker writers (including myself!) often make slips like this when writing quickly.

Our writing task gives the following information about the size of the salmon in different stages of its life:



This gives us a minimum and maximum length measured in centimetres. You can use the abbreviation 'cm' as shown in the image, but using the full word gives a better impression of your writing ability. There are two possible spellings: **centimetres** (UK, Australia, New Zealand) and **centimeters** (US). Try to be consistent in your spelling. When it comes to writing measurements, this is something I always have to check in my own writing as, when I am writing quickly, I will often have a mixture of all three: *cm*, *centimeters*, *centimetres*!

There are several ways to describe the range of sizes above. Look at the following examples (notice the words in blue):

- *The fry is between three and eight centimetres long.*
- **The fry grows to between three and eight centimetres.*
- *The fry can grow to between three and eight centimetres in length.*
- *The fry can reach up to eight centimetres in length.*

*NB we can also say: *The fry grows to between three and eight centimetres in length.*

Can you correct the errors in the following sentences? Think about the type of relative clause you need to use to add extra information.

- 1) *The salmon eggs take approximately 5-6 months to break out of their eggs and develop into baby salmons called 'fry', with only 3-8 cm in length.*
- 2) *The little salmon can grow to more than three centimeters, less than eight in length.*
- 3) *Fry evolve into smolt that is 12-15 centimeters.*

Practice

Write your answers on the whiteboard below, then click on 'show answers.'

Lesson 9.1 corrections

QUESTION 1
Write your corrections below then click on 'show answers' to see my version.

>Delete Undo Redo B I S U ☰ ☱ ☲ ☳ ☴ ☵ ☶ ☷

Black Red Blue Green

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Drag and drop the verbs into the correct box. Click on the tick at the top to see the answers.

remain stay flow develop into spend grow into take last move travel migrate continue
change become leave transform turn into

Time

Movement or lack of movement

Physical changes

QUESTION 2**Collocation**

Some of the verbs in exercise 1 can (or must) be used together with an adverb or preposition. Next to each verb in the table below, use the text tool to write any of the words in the list that collocate with them. The first one has been done for you.

Choose from the following words:

along, at, away from, for, in, into, to, towards

**To last for****To continue****To stay****To flow****To remain****To move****To grow****To develop****To turn****To change****QUESTION 3**

Now correct any errors you can see in the following sentences by tapping on the problem word and changing or removing it. If you are using a mobile device, rotating your screen will help.

- 1) This stage lasts to six months.
- 2) The young fish moves away at the upper river.
- 3) The fry changes to a smolt.
- 4) The fry spends for at least five months here.
- 5) The smolt develops in an adult salmon.
- 6) The stage continues in five to six months.
- 7) The fry travels into the lower river.
- 8) In the open sea, the smolt develops to an adult salmon.
- 9) At this phase, the fish grows much bigger.
- 10) During this stage, the fish is only a few centimetres long.

QUESTION 4

In the space below, write any comments or changes you would make to the following extracts, then click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

- 1) The fish grow enormously in size during the final stage.
- 2) The huge salmon returns...
- 3) The fry migrate downstream to a highly turbulent water
- 4) At the end of this period, it turns into gigantic 'adult salmon'
- 5) The fully developed salmon now have unique color patterns on their back...

🖨️ ↵ ↷ B I S U ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Drag and drop the verbs into the correct box. Click on the tick at the top to see the answers.

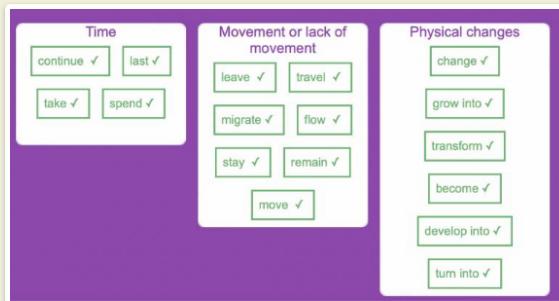
remain X stay X flow X develop into X spend X grow into X take X last X move X travel X
 migrate X continue X change X become X leave X transform X turn into X

Time

Movement or lack of movement

Physical changes

The words can be in any order in each list.



QUESTION 2
Collocation

Some of the verbs in exercise 1 can (or must) be used together with an adverb or preposition. Next to each verb in the table below, use the text tool to write any of the words in the list that collocate with them. The first one has been done for you.

Choose from the following words:

along, at, away from, for, in, into, to, towards

To last for
To continue
To stay
To flow
To remain
To move
To grow
To develop
To turn
To change

Collocation

To last for

To continue for

To remain in / at

To flow along / away from / to / towards

To move along / away from / to / towards

To grow into

To develop into

To turn into

To change into

QUESTION 3

Now correct any errors you can see in the following sentences by tapping on the problem word and changing or removing it. If you are using a mobile device, rotating your screen will help.

- 1) This stage lasts **to X** six months.
- 2) The young fish moves away **at X** the upper river.
- 3) The fry changes **to X** a smolt.
- 4) The fry spends **for X** at least five months here.
- 5) The smolt develops **in X** an adult salmon.
- 6) The stage continues **in X** five to six months.
- 7) The fry travels **into X** the lower river.
- 8) In the open sea, the smolt develops **to X** an adult salmon.
- 9) **At X** this phase, the fish grows much bigger.
- 10) **During X** this stage, the fish is only a few centimetres long.

The answer:

1) This stage lasts **for** six months. 2) The young fish moves away **from** the upper river. 3) The fry changes **into** a smolt. 4) The fry spends at least five months here. 5) The smolt develops **into** an adult salmon. 6) The stage continues **for** five to six months. 7) The fry travels **to##towards** the lower river. 8) In the open sea, the smolt develops **into** an adult salmon. 9) **During** this phase, the fish grows much bigger. 10 **At** this stage, the fish is only a few centimetres long.

QUESTION 4

In the space below, write any comments or changes you would make to the following extracts, then click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

- 1) The fish grow enormously in size during the final stage.
- 2) The huge salmon returns...
- 3) The fry migrate downstream to a highly turbulent water
- 4) At the end of this period, it turns into gigantic 'adult salmon'
- 5) The fully developed salmon now have unique color patterns on their back...



In sentences 1 - 4, the adverbs or adjectives are too strong. Here are my suggestions:

- 1) The fish grow significantly during the final stage.
- 2) The large fish returns... OR The adult salmon returns...Or The fully grown salmon returns...
- 3) The fry migrate downstream to the faster running water
- 4) At the end of this period, it turns into a large / fully grown 'adult salmon'

In sentence 5, we do not know if these patterns are 'unique' (other fish may have them and the diagram does not tell us this information) 'characteristic' or 'distinctive' are good words to use here:

- 5) The fully developed salmon now have distinctive color patterns on their back ...

All done !

QUESTION 1

Write your corrections below then click on 'show answers' to see my version.

¶ ∩ ∪ B I S U ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Write your corrections below then click on 'show answers' to see my version.

¶ ∩ ∩ B I S U ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡

Suggested corrections:

- 1) The salmon eggs take approximately 5-6 months to break out of their eggs and develop into baby salmon called 'fry', which are only 3-8 cm in length. (NB I used a non-defining relative clause to add the extra information about the length of the fry.).
- 2) The little salmon can grow to between three and eight centimeters in length.
- 3) Fry develop into / change into / turn into smolt, which are 12-15 centimeters in length / long. (Again, I needed to use a non-defining relative clause here - notice the comma before 'which').

All done !

9.2 Coherence and cohesion

Coherence and cohesion (connecting and organising ideas)

The first sentence in any paragraph should tell your reader the main topic of the paragraph. The sentences that follow should then expand on the first sentence, adding more information. When this doesn't happen the result is confusing to the reader and will lower your Coherence and cohesion score. To demonstrate this, look at the following first sentence and think about the questions below:

Firstly, in the upper river, the water moves slowly.

- 1) What does the word 'Firstly,' tell us?
- 2) As a reader, what do you expect to follow on from this?
- 3) What information in this sentence do you expect to learn more about?

The word 'Firstly,' tells us that this is the first step in the process, and as this is the first sentence in the paragraph, logically, when we read this sentence, we expect to learn more about the water or different parts of the river, like this:

Firstly, in the upper river, the water moves slowly. Then, as the water moves down the river, it flows faster.

But this candidate wrote:

Firstly, in the upper river, the water moves slowly. Salmon eggs are left below reeds and small stones before becoming young salmon called fry.

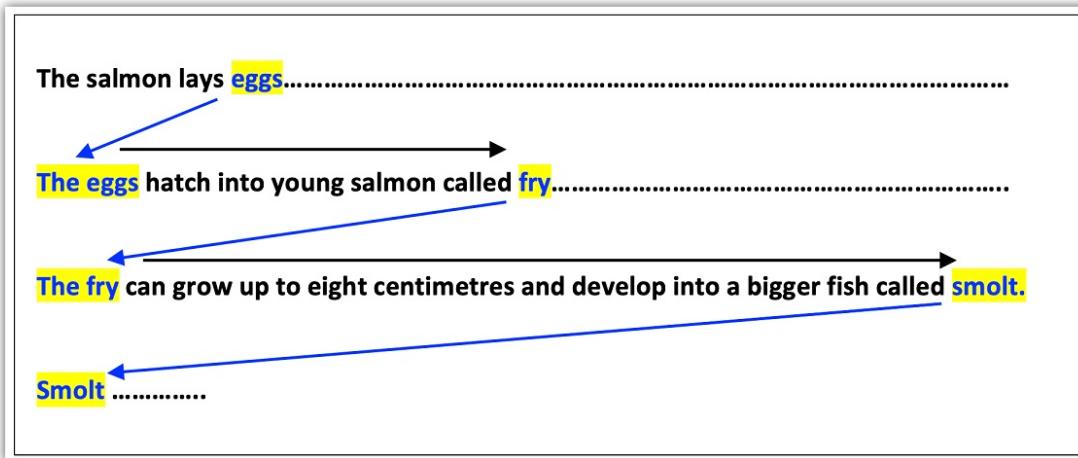
The information about the water in the upper river in the first sentence *is* important, but it is not the main idea or topic of the paragraph, and it is not the first step in the process. This is extra information about where the first step takes place (*the salmon eggs are left below reeds*). A relative clause will help here:

Firstly, salmon eggs are left below reeds and small stones in the upper river, where the water moves slowly.

In the extract in red above, the second step in the process is reduced to: '*before becoming young salmon called fry*'. This is too much information to add to our new sentence, so we need to find a way to refer back to the salmon eggs (which is where the young salmon come from):

Firstly, salmon eggs are left below reeds and small stones in the upper river, where the water moves slowly. These eggs then become young salmon and are called 'fry'.

Think about the information in your sentences following this pattern:



In the above image, you can see that the new information at the end of one sentence becomes the subject or the main idea at the beginning of the next sentence, working in a zig-zag pattern. We can add more information in between these sentences, but the change in focus should be made clear to the reader and you should be able to trace it clearly through your writing.

Practice

Practise this idea in the following exercises, by putting the sentences in a process summary into the correct order. Then do the same with the words in the sentences.

**Click Here
to Practise**

Varying your sentences

As we have repeatedly seen, cohesive devices help the reader to follow your ideas. In process tasks, the following words and phrases are often used to connect sentences:

First, ...Then, Next, After this,Following this, Finally,.....

These are very useful in showing the logical organisation of the steps in a process. However, if you want to score above Band 6 or 6.5 in writing, you should not use these as a template for your answer. Instead, aim to vary your sentence structures. We can find support for this idea in an examiner comment on a Band 6 answer in Cambridge IELTS 12 Academic (page 130). The examiner makes the following comment on an answer that uses a list of devices similar to those given above:

There is clear overall progression, with each stage being signalled by appropriate markers... These markers are adequate, but a higher score might be achieved by varying their position in each sentence rather than always placing them at the beginning.'

NB Notice the use of hedging language here (see *The Key to IELTS Writing Task 2* for more information on hedging language). The examiner says that varying the position '**might**' help. So, as always, this is not a simple quick 'trick' that will change your score – this is just one of the many ideas you need to apply to the way that you write. Notice also that the recommendation is to '**vary**' the position – this means you can **sometimes** begin a sentence like this but it is best not to **always** do this.

KEY IDEA: Try to vary the structure of your sentences in a process task by **NOT** always beginning the sentence with a cohesive device like these:

First, ...Then, Next, After this,Following this, Finally,.....

QUESTION 1

Put the sentences into the correct order by dragging and dropping them into place. Use the referencing clues to help. When you are happy with the order, click on the tick at the top to check if your answer is correct.

During this time, the body of the caterpillar develops wings and transforms into a butterfly.

During metamorphosis, the larvae will form a chrysalis, which is a hard protective coating.

After two weeks, it is fully grown and can now begin a process called metamorphosis.

There are four stages in the lifecycle of the Monarch butterfly.

In the first stage, eggs are laid on a plant.

After about four days, the eggs hatch into baby caterpillars, which are known as larvae.

The larvae eat almost continually at this stage, growing in size.

The chrysalis stage lasts for ten days.

Show hint

QUESTION 2

Now drag the words in each sentence into the correct order.

Sentence 1

There in of the four Monarch butterfly. the stages are lifecycle

QUESTION 3

Sentence 2

laid the stage, are first In eggs on a plant.

QUESTION 4

Sentence 3

known hatch After four the baby into which larvae. days, about as are caterpillars, eggs

QUESTION 5

Sentence 4

larvae almost size. The stage, growing in at this eat continually

QUESTION 6

Sentence 5

two process metamorphosis. and begin After it weeks, fully is called a grown can now

QUESTION 7

Sentence 6

will coating. is form the a protective During a metamorphosis, chrysalis, larvae hard which

QUESTION 8
Sentence 7

days. ten for The chrysalis lasts stage

QUESTION 9
Sentence 8

transforms a and butterfly. of into During the this caterpillar body time, develops the wings

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Put the sentences into the correct order by dragging and dropping them into place. Use the referencing clues to help. When you are happy with the order, click on the tick at the top to check if your answer is correct.

During this time, the body of the caterpillar develops wings and transforms into a butterfly.

During metamorphosis, the larvae will form a chrysalis, which is a hard protective coating.

After two weeks, it is fully grown and can now begin a process called metamorphosis.

There are four stages in the lifecycle of the Monarch butterfly.

In the first stage, eggs are laid on a plant.

After about four days, the eggs hatch into baby caterpillars, which are known as larvae.

The larvae eat almost continually at this stage, growing in size.

The chrysalis stage lasts for ten days.

The first sentence begins: There are four stages in...

QUESTION 2

Now drag the words in each sentence into the correct order.

Sentence 1

There in of the four Monarch butterfly. the stages are lifecycle

QUESTION 3

Sentence 2

laid the stage, are first In eggs on a plant.

QUESTION 4

Sentence 3

known hatch After four the baby into which larvae. days, about as are caterpillars, eggs

QUESTION 5

Sentence 4

larvae almost size. The stage, growing in at this eat continually

QUESTION 6

Sentence 5

two process metamorphosis. and begin After it weeks, fully is called a grown can now

QUESTION 7

Sentence 6

will coating. is form the a protective During a metamorphosis, chrysalis, larvae hard which

QUESTION 8
Sentence 7

days. ten for The chrysalis lasts stage

QUESTION 9
Sentence 8

transforms a and butterfly. of into During the this caterpillar body time, develops the wings

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Put the sentences into the correct order by dragging and dropping them into place. Use the referencing clues to help. When you are happy with the order, click on the tick at the top to check if your answer is correct.

During this time, the body of the caterpillar develops wings and transforms into a butterfly.

During metamorphosis, the larvae will form a chrysalis, which is a hard protective coating.

After two weeks, it is fully grown and can now begin a process called metamorphosis.

There are four stages in the lifecycle of the Monarch butterfly.

In the first stage, eggs are laid on a plant.

After about four days, the eggs hatch into baby caterpillars, which are known as larvae.

The larvae eat almost continually at this stage, growing in size.

The chrysalis stage lasts for ten days.

X

The first sentence begins: There are four stages in...

The answer:

There are four stages in the lifecycle of the Monarch butterfly.

In the first stage, eggs are laid on a plant.

After about four days, the eggs hatch into baby caterpillars, which are known as larvae.

The larvae eat almost continually at this stage, growing in size.

After two weeks, it is fully grown and can now begin a process called metamorphosis.

During metamorphosis, the larvae will form a chrysalis, which is a hard protective coating.

The chrysalis stage lasts for ten days.

During this time, the body of the caterpillar develops wings and transforms into a butterfly.

Look at the image to see how the referencing works. Notice the zig zag pattern as the new information at the end of one sentence comes near the beginning of the next sentence.

**QUESTION 2**

Now drag the words in each sentence into the correct order.

Sentence 1

There in of the four Monarch butterfly. the stages are lifecycle X

The answer:

There are four stages in the lifecycle of the Monarch butterfly.

QUESTION 3
Sentence 2

laid the stage, are first In eggs on a plant x

The answer:

In the first stage, eggs are laid on a plant.

QUESTION 4
Sentence 3

known hatch After four the baby into which larvae days about as are caterpillars eggs x

The answer:

After about four days, the eggs hatch into baby caterpillars, which are known as larvae.

QUESTION 5
Sentence 4

larvae almost size The stage growing in at this eat continually x

The answer:

The larvae eat almost continually at this stage, growing in size.

QUESTION 6
Sentence 5

two process metamorphosis and begin After it weeks fully is called a grown can now x

The answer:

After two weeks, it is fully grown and can now begin a process called metamorphosis.

There are other possible orders here:

After two weeks, it is fully grown and a process called metamorphosis can now begin.

After two weeks, it is now fully grown and can begin a process called metamorphosis.

QUESTION 7
Sentence 6

will coating is form the a protective During a metamorphosis chrysalis larvae hard which x

The answer:

During metamorphosis, the larvae will form a chrysalis, which is a hard protective coating.

QUESTION 8
Sentence 7

days. ten for The chrysalis lasts stage x

The answer:

The chrysalis stage lasts for ten days.

QUESTION 9
Sentence 8

transforms a and butterfly of into During the this caterpillar body time, develops the wings x

The answer:

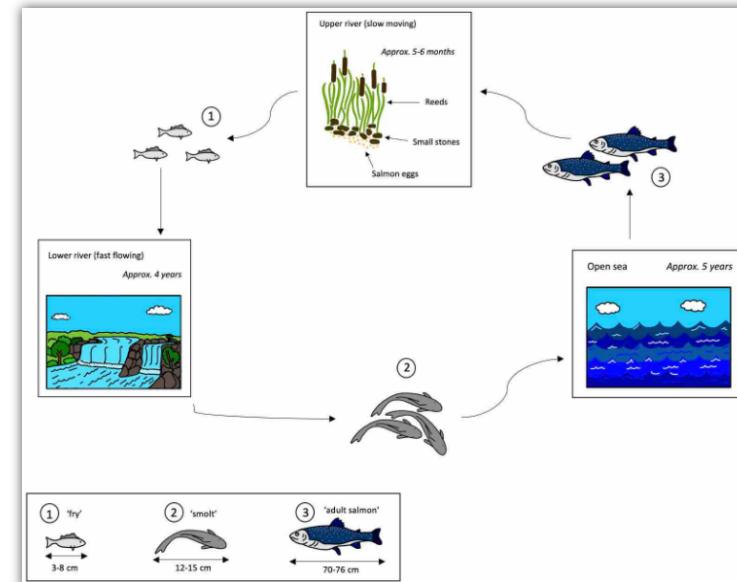
During this time, the body of the caterpillar develops wings and transforms into a butterfly.

All done !

9.3 Model answer and improving a short answer

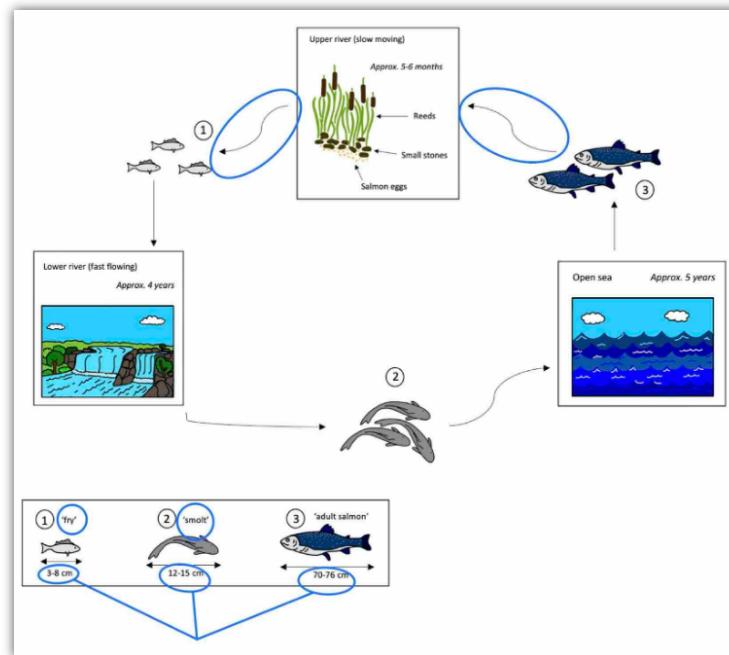
The diagrams below show the life cycle of a species of large fish called the salmon.

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



Comments on this task:

- The salmon is a very common type of fish. The question introduces it to us as '*a species of large fish called the salmon*' to help lower level candidates understand the word. You don't need to introduce it like this in your answer – you would only need to do this with a lesser-known species.
- As the diagram shows, salmon live in both the river and the sea.
- Look at the other details I noticed in the diagram before writing my answer:



- There are several details we need to pay attention to in a diagram like this:

- the arrows** – these can be used with different meanings, e.g. to show movement or to show a change. Here they are showing movement between different habitats.

2) The key (the extra information in the box) – this tells us the sizes and names of the fish in each stage. Notice that inverted commas have been used for the names. This shows that a word or phrase is being used in an unusual or technical way that may not be commonly known, which can affect how we use these terms in our writing.

- The instruction to make comparisons '**where relevant**' applies more in process tasks than in any other type of task 1 question. You may need to remind yourself at stage 2 of your planning (when identifying key ideas) to see if there is anything you can compare. In this task, we can compare the different environments (**faster / slower**) and the fish (**bigger / longer** etc). You might also compare its physical appearance (**lighter / darker colouring**) or the lengths of time (the first stage is **the shortest**). However, this instruction may not always be '**relevant**' in a process task.

The overview

Before you complete the exercise, write the overview statement from your answer below:

Lesson 9.3 Overview

QUESTION 1
Write your overview statement for this writing task below.

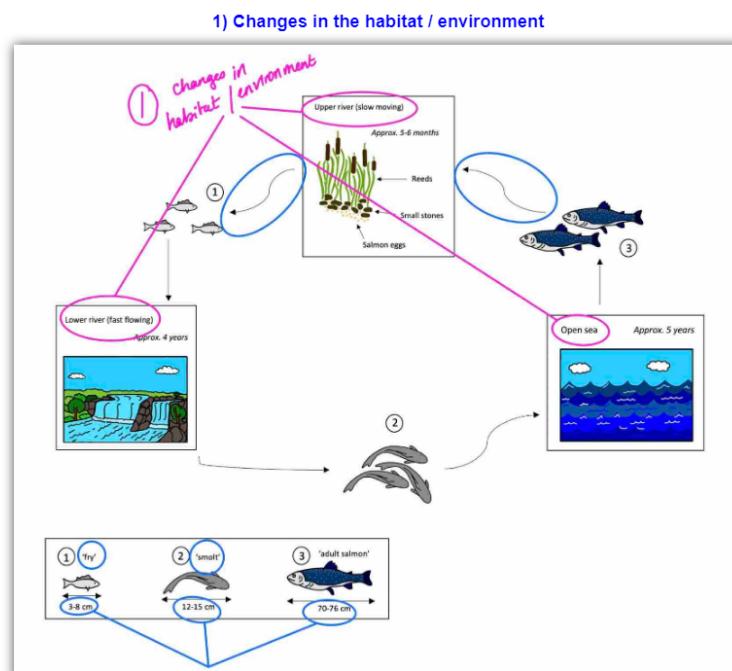
Delete Save Back Forward Print Help Home

Show answers

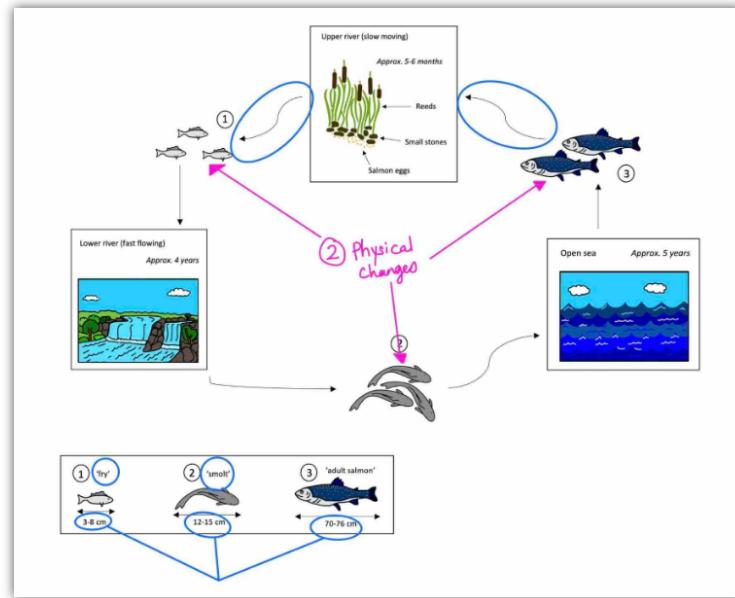
Remember, your overview statement must give the reader a clear (complete) picture of the main features. We make a note of these in the second thinking stage. With a process task, this might include features like:

- how many stages there are in the process**
- overall length of time**
- where the stages take place**

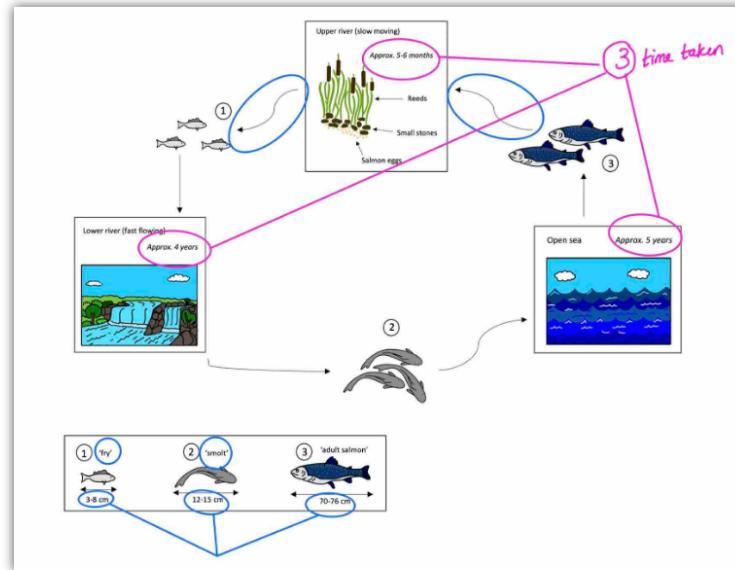
Here are four key features I noticed in this diagram:



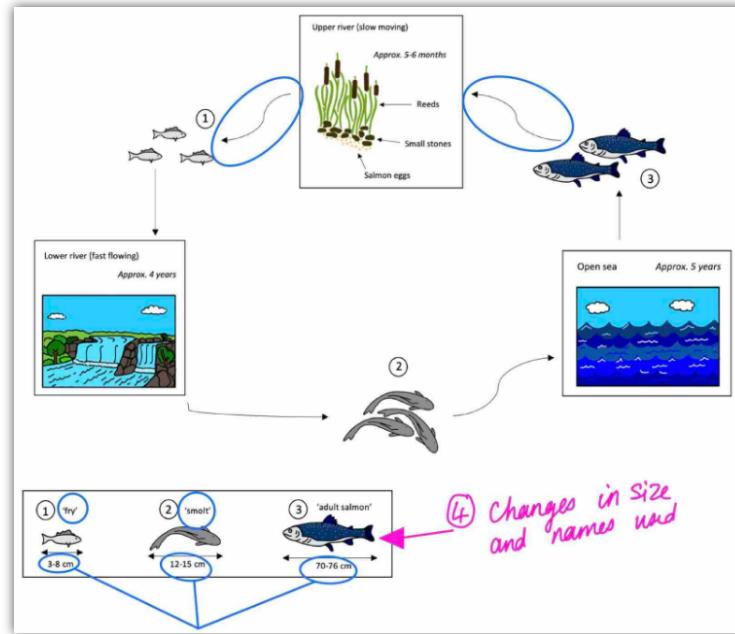
2) Changes in physical appearance



3) The time taken at each stage



4) The changes in size and name



Practice

Can you identify the problems in the following overview statements and think about how to correct them?

Click Here
to Practise

Look back at your overview statement. Do you think it sums up the main features without giving any details? Is there anything you need to add or remove?

KEY IDEA: A good way to check if your overview statement is too detailed is if it contains specific information you will need to repeat later in your answer.

My Model

Listen to the recording of my model. As you listen, think about the language I used and then fill in the blanks to help practise the language yourself.

Click Here
to Practise

Model answer

The diagram shows the different stages in the life cycle of a salmon. Overall, the cycle takes almost ten years and comprises three main stages, each of which takes place in a different aquatic environment.

The salmon begins life as an egg, in the slow-moving waters of the upper river, sheltered by reeds and small stones. Over a period of five to six months, the eggs hatch into very small fish known as 'fry', which can grow up to eight centimetres in length. The fry then move to the faster flowing water of the lower river, where they remain for a period of four years and continue to grow. During this phase, they can double or triple in size, reaching 12 to 15 centimetres, and are now referred to as 'smolt'.

At the end of this stage, the smolt leave the river for the open sea, where they will spend the next five years of their life. It is in this salt-water environment that the fish develops its characteristic shape and colouring and reaches its full length of 70 to 76 centimetres, almost ten times its original size. Finally, the adult salmon will return to the slow-moving river to lay its eggs, and the cycle will begin again. (208 words)

Points to notice

- I used inverted commas to introduce the new terms ('fry' and 'smolt') but only with the first mention of these terms.
- Notice the way that I was able to use different tenses. I used: the simple present, modals (*can grow, can double*), the passive (*are referred to*), and future tenses (*will spend, will return, will begin*). I also varied between the plural (*the fry move, the smolt leave*) and singular (*the fish develops*). However, these variations are grouped together logically (i.e. I did not change backwards and forwards between the different tenses or between singular and plural).
- In terms of organisation, I decided to write about stages one and two in the first paragraph, and then stages three and one (the return to the beginning) in the second paragraph.
- My answer is 208 words. There is no ideal length and each task will be different. However, you should aim to write between 160 and 220 words. I have never seen an answer with 150 words that was complete, so I don't advise you to aim for this length. In the next exercise, you will practise working on a shorter answer.

Vocabulary notes

Look back at my model and notice how I used the following words and phrases:

to lay an egg

to hatch

to flow

characteristic (adjective)

colouring

its original size

open (the open sea) – we also use this adjective with the word 'space' to stress or highlight that it is '**not enclosed**' (e.g. I prefer **open spaces**.)

Coherence and cohesion

Notice that, in my model, I varied the beginning of my sentences. Compare my version to this – read it aloud to hear the difference.

Problems in coherence and cohesion

First, the salmon begins life as an egg, in the slow-moving waters of the upper river, sheltered by reeds and small stones. **Next**, the eggs hatch into very small fish known as 'fry', which can grow up to eight centimetres in length. **Then**, the fry move to the faster flowing water of the lower river, where they remain for a period of four years as they continue to grow. **After this**, they can double or triple in size, reaching 12 to 15 centimetres and are referred to as 'smolt'.

Following this, the smolt leaves the river for the open sea, where it will spend the next five years of its life. **Then**, the fish develops its characteristic shape and colouring and reaches its full length of 70 to 76 centimetres, almost ten times its original size. **Finally**, the adult salmon will return to the slow-moving river to lay its eggs, and the cycle will begin again.

NB This use of cohesive devices is only a problem if you need to score above band 6-6.5 in writing.

Improving short answers - writing at least 150 words

I often find that answers to process tasks are a little too short (below 150 words). Every test question is tested to make sure that there is enough to write about. When practising, be sure to only use authentic materials (from Cambridge test books 9 to 16) or those written by experienced test writers (look for the authors mentioned in The Key to IELTS Success).

If you find that your answers are sometimes too short, look back at the diagram and think about the following:

- **Are there any key features you have missed?**
- **Are there any key features you have not highlighted enough?**
- **Have you made any comparisons?**

Also think about the verbs you have used to describe a change – have you been too concise? (For example, although it is accurate to say that '[The fry become smolt](#)', this could be developed and expanded to give more information about what is happening at this stage.

Look at the following example of this problem:

Short answers

The diagrams show the process through which a kind of fish called the salmon grows into an adult. The lifecycle of the salmon has 3 main stages and takes place in 3 different locations.

The cycle begins when salmon eggs are laid among the reeds and the small stones of the upper river. After around 5 to 6 months, these eggs turn into fry, which are 3-8 cm in length and begin to move to lower river where water flow is fast.

Fry live there for 4 years and become smolt, measuring 12-15 cm in length, after which they migrate to open sea. They live in this new environment for approximately 5 years to become adult salmon (70-76 cm). The adult salmon then begins its journey back to slow-moving upper river where it lays eggs and the process starts over again. (141 words)

Practice

Which parts of the answer could the candidate work on to add more? There are also issues with articles and commas here, can you fix them? Make your notes directly onto the image in the next exercise using the text tool. Then look at my comments and the changes I made.

**Click Here
to Practise**

Points to notice

- The new version is now 167 words and so is a good length for the task.
- The overview is now more complete and includes information about the total time taken as well as the different environments.
- Although I changed the smaller numbers to words, I decided to leave the shortest measurements as numerals so that all of the measurements were consistent.
- This writer chose not to use any inverted commas around the names, which is fine.

Extra practice

Task achievement

- Look back at any process task answers you have written in the past and consider your overview statement. Did you include features such as:

- **how many stages there are in the process**
- **overall length of time**
- **where the stages take place?**

- Look at the length of your answers - do they tend to be short? (under or very close to 150 words)? Look back at the diagrams and check the following:
- Did you use an authentic task (from Cambridge books 9 - 16)? If not, there may not be enough to write about, which is why your answer is too short.
- Were you too brief in some parts of the summary? Which parts could you expand more?
- Remember to think about the following:

- **Are there any key features you have missed?**
- **Are there any key features you have not highlighted enough?**
- **Have you made any comparisons?**

Coherence and cohesion

- Check the coherence and cohesion of your process task answers. Reading the answers aloud can help. Do you vary the beginning of your sentences, or do they always / mainly begin like this:

First, ...Then, Next, After this,Following this, Finally,.....

- Can you trace the ideas in your summary using the zig-zag pattern we saw in the Monarch butterfly summary?
- What changes can you make now to improve the coherence and cohesion?

Language

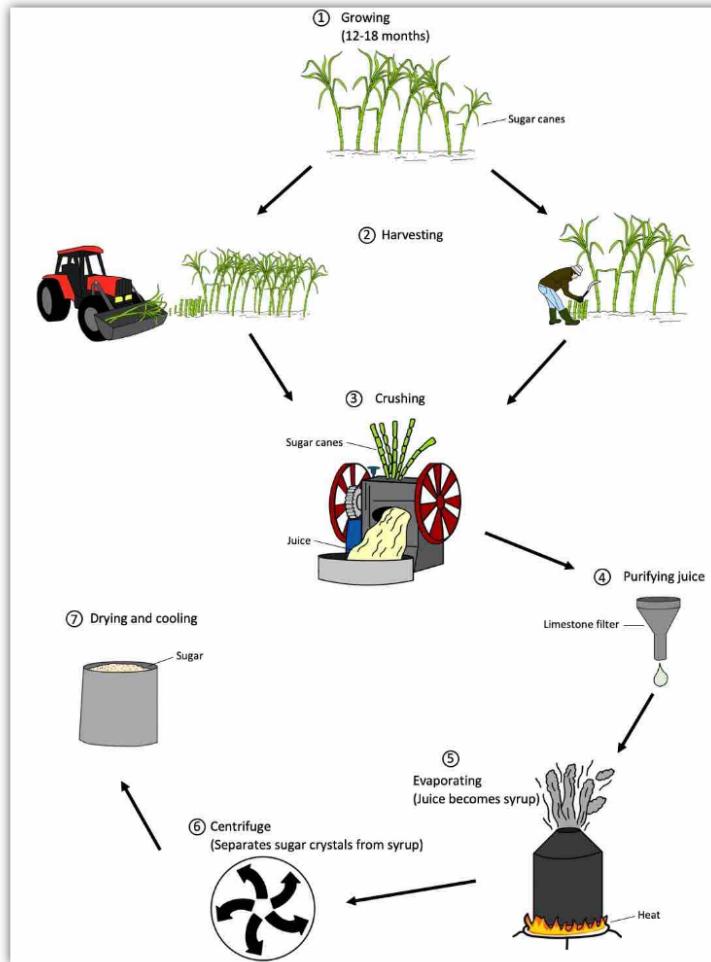
- Did you manage to vary the tenses in your answer? What changes could you make?
- Is there any new language you would like to make a note of to use in the future?

Homework

To prepare for the next lesson, write an answer for the following writing task question, which is adapted from Cambridge IELTS 16, page 52. Remember, always use authentic materials for your practice.

The diagrams below shows the manufacturing process for making sugar from sugar cane.

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



Write at least 150 words.

QUESTION 1

Write your overview statement for this writing task below.

¶ ∩ ∩ B I S U ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡

● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Write your overview statement for this writing task below.

¶ ∩ ∩ B I S U ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡

All done !

QUESTION 1

Look at the following overview statements and choose the most appropriate comment. You may choose more than one answer for each overview. What change would you make to number 6 to improve it?

	too much detail	not complete	not accurate
1) There are three main stages as the salmon develops from egg to mature adult. This kind of fish also experiences three transformations in appearance during the cycle, moving from eggs to fry to smolt and ultimately to adult salmon.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) Overall, it takes a total of close to 10 years for salmons to develop into its fully mature form. The development process consists of 3 main stages, starting with salmon eggs in the upper river where water flows slowly and ending with the formation of adult salmon.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) It is clear that they grow enormously in size when reaching adulthood, and also it takes up to ten years for them to return to their birthplace to breed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) Overall, this natural, 6-staged process happens in three different environments and takes up to 10 years to complete.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) Overall, salmon fish life cycle consists of two main stages, one in the river when it is young and one in the ocean when it comes of age. The link between the two stages is called the estuary stage that starts in the river and goes to the ocean to reach adult life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6) Overall, there are three stages in the life cycle of the large fish.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Look at the following overview statements and choose the most appropriate comment. You may choose more than one answer for each overview. What change would you make to number 6 to improve it?

- 1) There are three main stages as the salmon develops from egg to mature adult. This kind of fish also experiences three transformations in appearance during the cycle, moving from eggs to try to smolt and ultimately to adult salmon.
- 2) Overall, it takes a total of close to 10 years for salmons to develop into its fully mature form. The development process consists of 3 main stages, starting with salmon eggs in the upper river where water flows slowly and ending with the formation of adult salmon.
- 3) It is clear that they grow enormously in size when reaching adulthood, and also it takes up to ten years for them to return to their birthplace to breed.
- 4) Overall, this natural, 6-staged process happens in three different environments and takes up to 10 years to complete.
- 5) Overall, salmon fish life cycle consists of two main stages, one in the river when it is young and one in the ocean when it comes of age. The link between the two stages is called the estuary stage that starts in the river and goes to the ocean to reach adult life.
- 6) Overall, there are three stages in the life cycle of the large fish.

too much detail	not complete	not accurate
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 1) There is too much detail here (some information will be repeated later in the answer) and it is not complete (there is no mention of the changes in habitat).
- 2) There is too much detail here (some information will be repeated later in the answer) and it is not complete (there is no mention of the changes in habitat).
- 3) This does not give a clear, complete picture of the changes and suggests the salmon just travels for 10 years.
- 4) This is not a 6-staged process and nothing in this sentence tells us this is about a fish growing and developing.
- 5) There are more than two stages and there is too much detail here
- 6) We need more information than this e.g. about the changes in habitat.

Sentence 6 could be improved by making the following changes:

- 6) Overall, there are three stages in the life cycle of the salmon, and each takes place in a different habitat / environment.

All done !

QUESTION 1

Listen to the recording of my model answer and fill in the gaps with one or two words.



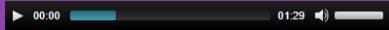
The diagram shows the different stages in the life cycle of a salmon. Overall, the cycle takes almost ten years and comprises three main stages, each of which takes place in a different aquatic environment.

The salmon begins life as an egg, in the slow-moving waters of the upper river, sheltered by reeds and small stones. Over a period of five to six months, the eggs hatch into very small fish known as 'fry', which can grow up to eight centimetres in length. The fry then move to the faster flowing water of the lower river, where they remain for a period of four years and continue to grow. During this phase, they can double or triple in size, reaching 12 to 15 centimetres, and are now referred to as 'smolt'.

At the end of this stage, the smolt leave the river for the open sea, where they will spend the next five years of their life. It is in this salt-water environment that the fish develops its characteristic shape and colouring and reaches its full length of 70 to 76 centimetres, almost ten times its original size. Finally, the adult salmon will return to the slow-moving river to lay its eggs, and the cycle will begin again.

QUESTION 2

This time, you need to write TWO words in each gap. This is not a listening test, so try to use your grammatical knowledge to complete as many as you can before you listen.



The diagram shows the different stages in the life cycle of a salmon. Overall, the cycle takes almost ten years and comprises three main stages, which takes place in different aquatic environments.

The salmon begins life as an egg, in the slow-moving waters of the upper river, sheltered by reeds and small stones. Over a period of five to six months, the eggs hatch into very small fish known as 'fry', which can grow up to eight centimetres in length. The fry then move to the faster flowing water of the lower river, where they remain for a period of four years and continue to grow. During this phase, they can double or triple in size, reaching 12 to 15 centimetres, and are now referred to as 'smolt'.

At the end of this stage, the smolt leave the river for the open sea, where they will spend the next five years of their life. It is in this salt-water environment that the fish develops its characteristic shape and colouring and reaches its full length of 70 to 76 centimetres, almost ten times its original size. Finally, the adult salmon will return to the slow-moving river to lay its eggs, and the cycle will begin again.

Complete model

The diagram shows the different stages in the life cycle of a salmon. Overall, the cycle takes almost ten years and comprises three main stages, each of which takes place in a different aquatic environment.

The salmon begins life as an egg, in the slow-moving waters of the upper river, sheltered by reeds and small stones. Over a period of five to six months, the eggs hatch into very small fish known as 'fry', which can grow up to eight centimetres in length. The fry then move to the faster flowing water of the lower river, where they remain for a period of four years and continue to grow. During this phase, they can double or triple in size, reaching 12 to 15 centimetres, and are now referred to as 'smolt'.

At the end of this stage, the smolt leave the river for the open sea, where they will spend the next five years of their life. It is in this salt-water environment that the fish develops its characteristic shape and colouring and reaches its full length of 70 to 76 centimetres, almost ten times its original size. Finally, the adult salmon will return to the slow-moving river to lay its eggs, and the cycle will begin again.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Listen to the recording of my model answer and fill in the gaps with one or two words.



The diagram shows the different stages in the life cycle of a salmon. Overall, the cycle almost ten years and three main stages, each of which in a different aquatic .

The salmon life as an egg, in the slow-moving waters of the upper river, by reeds and small stones. Over a period of five to six months, the eggs into very small fish as 'fry', which can up to eight centimetres . The fry then to the faster flowing water of the lower river, where they a period of four years and grow. During this phase, they can or in size, 12 to 15 centimetres, and now as 'smolt'.

At the end of this stage, the smolt the river for the open sea, where they the next five years of their life. in this salt-water environment that the fish its characteristic shape and colouring and its full length of 70 to 76 centimetres, almost ten times its original size. Finally, the adult salmon to the slow-moving river its eggs, and the cycle again.

The answer:

The diagram shows the different stages in the life cycle of a salmon. Overall, the cycle *takes* almost ten years and *comprises* three main stages, each of which *takes place* in a different aquatic *environment*.

The salmon *begins* life as an egg, in the slow-moving waters of the upper river, *sheltered* by reeds and small stones. Over a period of five to six months, the eggs *hatch* into very small fish *known* as 'fry', which can *grow* up to eight centimetres *in length*. The fry then *move* to the faster flowing water of the lower river, where they *remain* for a period of four years and *continue to grow*. During this phase, they can *double* or *triple* in size, *reaching* 12 to 15 centimetres, and *are now referred to* as 'smolt'.

At the end of this stage, the smolt *leave* the river for the open sea, where they *will spend* the next five years of their life. *It is* in this salt-water environment that the fish *develops* its characteristic shape and colouring and *reaches* its full length of 70 to 76 centimetres, almost ten times its original size. Finally, the adult salmon *will return* to the slow-moving river *to lay* its eggs, and the cycle *will begin* again.

QUESTION 2

This time, you need to write **TWO** words in each gap. This is not a listening test, so try to use your grammatical knowledge to complete as many as you can before you listen.



The diagram shows the different stages life cycle of a salmon. Overall, takes years and comprises stages, which takes place different .

The salmon begins life egg, slow-moving waters upper river, sheltered by reeds and small stones. five to six months, the eggs hatch into very small fish 'fry', grow eight centimetres in length. then move to flowing water lower river, remain four years and continue . phase, they can triple , reaching 12 centimetres, and referred 'smolt'.

 end stage, the smolt leave for the open sea, will spend five years life. It is salt-water the fish develops shape and reaches 70 to 76 centimetres, almost its . Finally, the adult salmon will return to the slow-moving river to lay , and will begin again.

The answer:

The diagram shows the different stages *in the* life cycle of a salmon. Overall, *the cycle* *takes* *almost ten* years and *comprises* *three main* stages, *each of which* *takes place* *in a different aquatic environment*.

The salmon begins life *as an* egg, *in the* slow-moving waters *of the* upper river, *sheltered* by reeds and small stones. *Over a period of* five to six months, the eggs *hatch* into very small fish *known as* 'fry', *which can grow up to* eight centimetres *in length*. *The fry then move to the faster flowing water of the lower river, where they remain for a period of* four years and *continue to grow*. *During this phase, they can double or triple in size, reaching* 12 to 15 centimetres, and *are now referred to as* 'smolt'.

At the end of this stage, the smolt leave the river for the open sea, where they will spend the next five years of their life. It is in this salt-water environment that the fish develops its characteristic shape and colouring and reaches its full length of 70 to 76 centimetres, almost ten times its original size. Finally, the adult salmon will return to the slow-moving river to lay its eggs, and the cycle will begin again.

Complete model

The diagram shows the different stages in the life cycle of a salmon. Overall, the cycle takes almost ten years and comprises three main stages, each of which takes place in a different aquatic environment.

The salmon begins life as an egg, in the slow-moving waters of the upper river, sheltered by reeds and small stones. Over a period of five to six months, the eggs hatch into very small fish known as 'fry', which can grow up to eight centimetres in length. The fry then move to the faster flowing water of the lower river, where they remain for a period of four years and continue to grow. During this phase, they can double or triple in size, reaching 12 to 15 centimetres, and are now referred to as 'smolt'.

At the end of this stage, the smolt leave the river for the open sea, where they will spend the next five years of their life. It is in this salt-water environment that the fish develops its characteristic shape and colouring and reaches its full length of 70 to 76 centimetres, almost ten times its original size. Finally, the adult salmon will return to the slow-moving river to lay its eggs, and the cycle will begin again.

All done !

QUESTION 1

Which parts of the answer could the candidate work on to add more information?

Can you fix any problems with articles and commas?

Use the text tool to make your notes on the image below then click on 'show answers' to see my notes.



The diagrams show the process through which a kind of fish called the salmon grows into an adult. The lifecycle of the salmon has 3 main stages and takes place in 3 different locations.

The cycle begins when salmon eggs are laid among the reeds and the small stones of the upper river. After around 5 to 6 months, these eggs turn into fry, which are 3-8 cm in length and begin to move to lower river where water flow is fast.

Fry live there for 4 years and become smolt, measuring 12-15 cm in length, after which they migrate to open sea. They live in this new environment for approximately 5 years to become adult salmon (70-76 cm). The adult salmon then begins its journey back to slow-moving upper river where it lays eggs and the process starts over again. (141 words)

QUESTION 2

Look at the following four extracts from this answer. Make the suggested changes in brackets to improve the answer and make it longer.

- 1) The lifecycle of the salmon has 3 main stages and takes place in 3 different locations. (Can you add more to the overview?)
- 2) After around 5 to 6 months, these eggs turn into fry, which are 3-8 cm in length and begin to move to lower river where water flow is fast. (Can you add a reference to the upper river and a comparison?)
- 3) Fry live there for 4 years and become smolt, measuring 12-15 cm in length, after which they migrate to open sea. (Add more here and perhaps a comparison about the size?)
- 4) They live in this new environment for approximately 5 years to become adult salmon (70-76 cm). (Something information is missing here)



Show answers

QUESTION 1

Which parts of the answer could the candidate work on to add more information?

Can you fix any problems with articles and commas?

Use the text tool to make your notes on the image below then click on 'show answers' to see my notes.

The diagrams show the process through which a kind of fish called the salmon grows into an adult. The lifecycle of the salmon has 3 main stages and takes place in 3 different locations.

The cycle begins when salmon eggs are laid among the reeds and the small stones of the upper river. After around 5 to 6 months, these eggs turn into fry, which are 3-8 cm in length and begin to move to lower river where water flow is fast.

Fry live there for 4 years and become smolt, measuring 12-15 cm in length, after which they migrate to open sea. They live in this new environment for approximately 5 years to become adult salmon (70-76 cm). The adult salmon then begins its journey back to slow-moving upper river where it lays eggs and the process starts over again. (141 words)

Look at my notes below and compare them to yours before making the changes in the next task.

NB in the final paragraph, the writer is saying that the salmon "live there to become adult salmon" something is missing here as 'to become' is being given as a reason why they live in the sea. Instead, we need to know what changes occur when they live in the sea.

The diagrams show the process through which a kind of fish called the salmon grows into an adult. The lifecycle of the salmon has ^{three}₃ main stages and takes place in ^{three}₃ different locations.
(overview could be developed more)

The cycle begins when salmon eggs are laid among the reeds and the small stones of the upper river. After around ^{five}₅ to ^{six}₆ months, these eggs turn into fry, which are 3-8 cm in length and begin to move to lower river where water flow is fast.
(add a reference to the speed of the water)
(add more information and perhaps a comparison here?)

Fry live there for ^{four}₄ years and become smolt, measuring 12-15 cm in length, after which they migrate to open sea. They live in this new environment for approximately ^{five}₅ years to become adult salmon (70-76 cm). The adult salmon then begins its journey back to slow-moving upper river where it lays eggs and the process starts over again. (141 words)
(something is missing here)

QUESTION 2

Look at the following four extracts from this answer. Make the suggested changes in brackets to improve the answer and make it longer.

- 1) The lifecycle of the salmon has 3 main stages and takes place in 3 different locations. (Can you add more to the overview?)
- 2) After around 5 to 6 months, these eggs turn into fry, which are 3-8 cm in length and begin to move to lower river where water flow is fast. (Can you add a reference to the upper river and a comparison?)
- 3) Fry live there for 4 years and become smolt, measuring 12-15 cm in length, after which they migrate to open sea. (Add more here and perhaps a comparison about the size?)
- 4) They live in this new environment for approximately 5 years to become adult salmon (70-76 cm). (Something information is missing here)

Compare your changes to those I made below. Notice the answer is now 167 words.

The diagrams show the process through which a kind of fish called the salmon grows into an adult. The lifecycle of the salmon lasts almost ten years and has three main stages, each taking place in a different location.

The cycle begins when salmon eggs are laid among the reeds and the small stones of the upper river. After around five to six months in the slower moving waters, these eggs turn into fry, which are 3-8 cm in length and begin to move to the lower river, where the water flow is faster.

The fry live there for four years growing bigger and changing into what are called smolt, measuring 12-15 cm in length, after which they migrate to the open sea. They live in this new environment for approximately five years developing into adult salmon and reaching their full size (70-76 cm). The adult salmon then begins its journey back to the slow-moving upper river, where it lays eggs and the process starts over again. (167 words)

All done !

LESSON 10 - Process Tasks (2)

In this lesson, you will learn about:

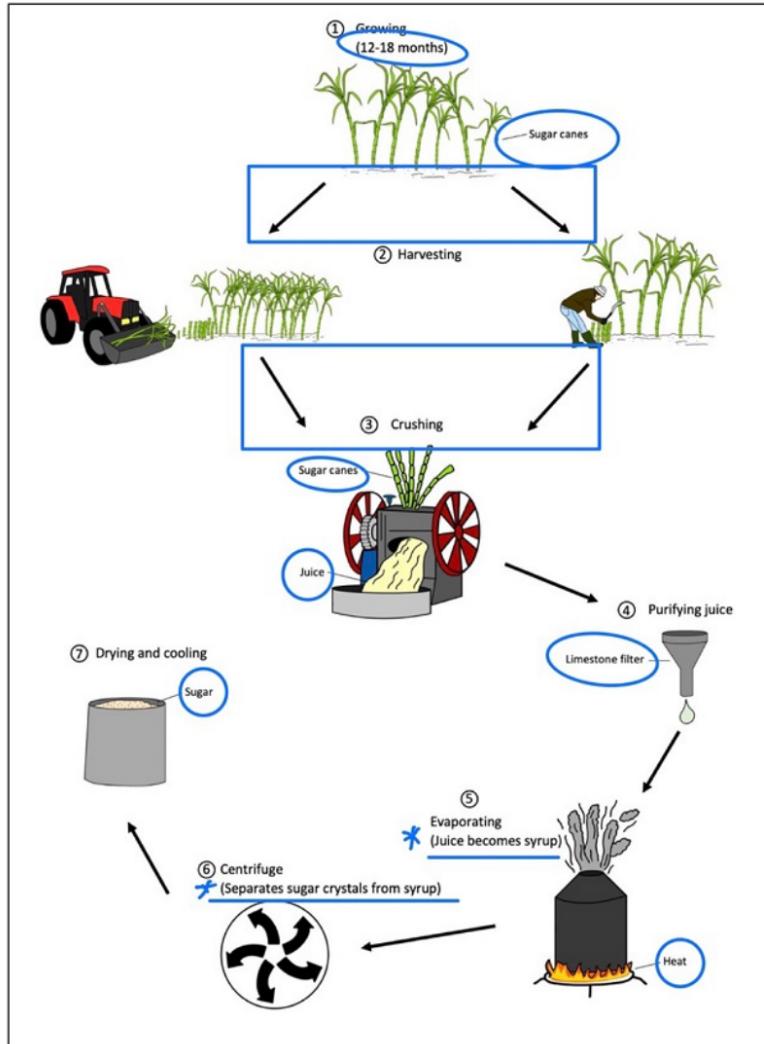
- 10.1 The difference between trends steps and stages
- 10.2 Changing the language in the question
- 10.3 Model answer

10.1 The difference between trends steps and stages

This lesson deals with a different type of process: the manufacturing or making of something. Although we are dealing with one specific product (sugar), the same approach can be used with any task where you are shown the different steps in a process. Here is a reminder of our current task as well as the details I noticed on the task:

The diagram below shows the manufacturing process for making sugar from sugar cane.

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



Points to notice

- The length of time – this is only given in step 1, so we don't know how long the other steps take.
- The names we are given: e.g. **sugar canes**; **juice**; **limestone filter**, **syrup**, **heat**, **sugar crystals**, **sugar**.
- Notice that with sugar cane, we can use the plural to write about the individual canes (as in the diagram) or the singular to write about the crop (as in the question).
- Notice the different arrows – in particular, those showing that there are two ways of harvesting the crop
- In steps 5 and 6 we are given extra information about what is happening.
- Notice that 'centrifuge' is a noun not a verb (there is no 'ing' at the end).

Stages and trends

As we saw in lesson 9, process tasks have stages rather than trends, and it is these stages that you must highlight in your body paragraphs and summarise in your overview. We identify a trend by looking at the beginning point and end point in the data. A common problem in process tasks is that, in their overview, candidates often mention only the first and the last stage in the process, thus confusing a stage with a trend. Look at the following example :

The process consists of seven steps of various time length, starting by farming sugar canes and ending by dry sugar ready to use.

This extract is from a sample answer in the Cambridge IELTS 16 test book (page 133).

Unfortunately, the examiner's comment is not very helpful here. The comment says:

'There is an overview presented in the first paragraph which summarises the process into the farming stages and the drying stages. This summary could be more detailed, e.g. farming, crushing, separating and drying stages.'

It is true that this is not a complete or clear overview because we do not get a clear picture of what happens between the farming of the sugar canes and the dry sugar at the end. However, the use of the word '**detailed**' is unfortunate here. It would have been better to say that the overview needs to include more information in order to be a clear or complete overview.

Listing four of the steps in the diagram as examples (e.g. *farming, crushing, separating and drying stages*) also suggests you should include these words in your overview, which is not a good idea as they are given in the question. Later in this lesson we will look at how to avoid using words from the question paper, which is very important. In my view, this advice is better expressed as follows: ***There is an overview presented in the first paragraph which mentions two stages: farming and drying. A clearer summary would give an overview of the main stages rather than just the first and the last steps in the process.***

KEY IDEA: In a process task, be very careful **not** to just copy the words and phrases used in the diagram.

How to identify the main stages

To identify the main stages in a process, we need to do more than just look at the beginning and end. Instead, you need to look at the different steps in the process and see if you can group them together in some way. This will help to categorise them. With our current task, I identified two main stages, each of which involves more than one step. Can you identify the two categories from the following list? NB The words you choose should be umbrella terms rather than one specific step.

1. **Crushing**
2. **Drying**
3. **Evaporating**
4. **Farming**
5. **Growing**
6. **Harvesting**
7. **Processing**
8. **Purifying**
9. **Separating**

Answer: The umbrella terms here are: 4, Farming, 7, Processing

Steps and stages

In lesson 4.2, I recommended asking yourself questions about a diagram, like this:

Q: What are we being shown here? A: This diagram is showing the steps involved in...

A step is one part of a process. Here are some useful phrases with the word 'step':

- When learning a new skill, it is best to do it **one step at a time**. (= slowly and deliberately)
- I will explain what you need to do **step by step**. (= giving instructions in a logical order)
- Changing the resources you use to practice is **a step in the right direction**. (= a good starting point)

The word 'stage' has a broader meaning:

We're renovating the house **in stages, we'll start with the downstairs areas, then do the upstairs rooms, and finally the area outside the house.**

This means we can say that the diagram shows seven steps in a process, but we can also group these steps into key stages. This is very helpful in producing a clear overview, but we need ask a second question:

Q 1 : What are we being shown here? Answer: The diagram shows the steps involved in a process.

Q 2: What are the main stages in this process?

Looking carefully at the diagram will help. One easy way to decide on a 'main stage' is to look at the product or material being processed and noticing when it changes in form (e.g. from a plant to a juice). This means that, we need to notice:

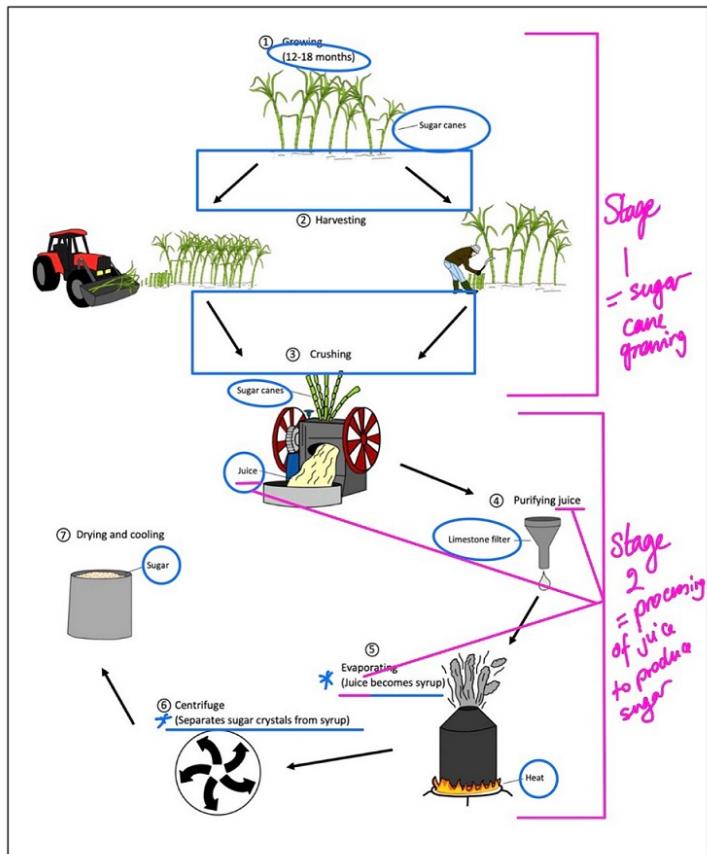
- **what type of process it is** (e.g. **mechanical, manual**)
- **how many steps there are**
- **where the process takes place**
- **the product and how it changes**
- **whether any of the steps can be grouped together into key stages**

In our current diagram there are seven steps numbered 1-7, but they are not all equal. Some are important separate stages (growing, harvesting) while others are smaller steps in a part of the process (purifying, evaporating, separating). Looking at how the product changes (from sugar canes, to juice, to syrup, then sugar) helps to group these together so that we can summarise them in a clear overview.

KEY IDEA: We can identify the main stages by grouping steps together. Remember, we are always looking for the main changes, so looking at when the product changes form can also help.

For example: the plant \Rightarrow juice \Rightarrow syrup \Rightarrow sugar.

Look at my notes for this step:



For my overview, I identified two main stages 1) the growing and harvesting of the crop and 2) the processing of the juice from the canes to produce sugar. To make sure our overview is 'complete' and 'clear', we can include the following:

- **the type of process**
 - **how many stages there are and what these are (using umbrella terms)**
 - **what happens during the process (without giving too much detail) i.e. the main changes**

Although we can't avoid giving some details here (e.g. sugar cane and sugar) try to avoid giving too many other details in this overview. Write your version below then compare it to mine later when we look at my model.

Lesson 10.1 Overview practice



QUESTION 1

Try to predict what my overview will look like by writing an overview statement that includes the following information:

- the type of process
- the number of stages and what they are (use umbrella terms)
- what happens during the process (avoid giving too much detail here)

You can compare this to mine later in the lesson.



10.2 Changing the language in the question

Process tasks generally have more language on the question paper than other tasks. This helps you to understand what is happening but it also means you need to be careful: in order to show your language skills, you need to avoid just copying the language on the diagram.

The different steps in the process are labelled, usually with the noun form of a verb (the ing form). For example, **growing, harvesting, crushing, purifying, evaporating, drying and cooling**. Steps 5 and 6 in our current diagram are unusual. Rather than adding more detail to the diagram (e.g. showing and labelling the syrup and the centrifuge), the question tells us that, in step 5 'juice becomes syrup' and in step 6 the centrifuge 'separates sugar crystals from syrup'. So we have even more language to avoid copying here.

Repetition is another common problem in process tasks, as it is easy to use the same grammatical structures repeatedly. To solve these problems, use the language points below to build your vocabulary and your grammatical range and accuracy.

Comprise, consist of, involve

These verbs are useful for your overview. They have a similar meaning but are structurally different.

The following examples show how they are used. Make a note of any prepositions needed.

- **Comprise** is followed by a noun: *This process comprises two main stages.*
- **Consist of** and **involve** can both be followed by a noun or verb (in the ing form):
 - *This process consists of two main stages.*
 - *This consists of growing and harvesting the crop and then processing it to make sugar.*
 - *This process involves two main stages.*
 - *This involves growing and harvesting the crop and then processing it to make sugar.*

Vocabulary note:

Here is some other useful vocabulary to learn:

Raw materials – this refers to the materials needed to produce something at the start of the process and in their original state.

Ingredients – this is used when the raw materials are different foods used in a recipe.

We 'remove' something we do not want and 'extract' something we do want:

- *The leaves are removed from the plant before cooking.*
- *The juice is extracted from the plant and used to create the sugar.*

The verb **allow** means 'give permission for something', but it can also be used in a process to mean 'to make something possible':

- *Crushing the plants allows the juice to be extracted.*

Changing from ing to passive

In your body paragraphs, you will need to change the 'ing' forms in the diagram and use the verbs actively or, more often, passively. For example:

Step 1) Growing → ***The sugar cane is grown.***

Be careful with verbs that cannot be used in the passive. Verbs like this cannot have an object. For example, the verb 'fall' cannot be used with an object (something can fall but we cannot fall something). So we can say:

The apples fall into a bucket.

But we cannot say:

A worker falls the apples into a bucket.

Which is why we also cannot use it in the passive:

The apples are fallen into a bucket.

Instead, we would need to use the verb 'drop' here:

- ***A worker drops the apples into a bucket.***
- ***The apples are dropped into a bucket.***

Problem verbs like these are called 'intransitive verbs' and you will see the letter [I] in brackets next to them in a dictionary. The verbs that can have an object are called transitive and have a [T] next to them. Some verbs can be both, depending on their meaning. Other intransitive verbs to be careful of (and which cannot be used in the passive) are:

appear, arrive, become, come, disappear, go, jump

To + infinitive of purpose

In a process task, you often need to say **why** something is done. **To + infinitive** can be helpful here. For example, this sentence, '**Seeds are planted to produce the crop,**' tells us why the seeds are planted.

Practice these structures in the next exercise.

Practice

Click Here
to Practise

Avoiding repetition

To avoid repeating the same structures, we can also use a relative clause or reduced relative clause to explain the result of a step. For example:

- *The plants are crushed to extract the juice.*
- *The plants are crushed, which extracts the juice.*
- *The plants are crushed, extracting the juice.*

As we saw in the vocabulary note, sometimes, we can add the verb 'allow':

- *The plants are crushed to extract the juice.*
- *The plants are crushed, which allows the juice to be extracted.*
- *The plants are crushed, allowing the juice to be extracted.*

After, Once and When

Another way to avoid repeating the same structures is to use *after*, *once*, or *when*. This allows you to use a present perfect or present perfect passive and show a range of grammatical structures.

Look at the following examples:

- *First the crop is grown and then it is harvested.*
- *After the crop has grown, it is harvested.*
- *Once the crop has grown, it is harvested.*
- *When the crop has grown, it is harvested.*

We can vary the tense of the second clause by saying: it *can be* harvested, or it *will be* harvested. However, we cannot use 'will' immediately following after, once, or when:

After / Once / When the crop will be grown.

You can practice varying your sentences like this in the next exercises.

Practice

Click Here
to Practise

KEY IDEA: Practise writing the same idea in a variety of ways to avoid repetition and improve your grammatical range and accuracy score.

QUESTION 1

Fill in the gaps in the sentences below to change the name of the stage into a short sentence.

1) Growing the sugar cane

The sugar cane

2) Harvesting the crop

The crop

3) Crushing the plants

The

4) Extracting the juice

5) Purifying the juice

6) Separating out the sugar crystals

7) Spinning the syrup

8) Drying and cooling the sugar crystals

QUESTION 2

Put the words in the following sentences into the correct order. NB They each feature to + infinitive to show purpose.

to produce are Seeds the crop planted

QUESTION 3

crushed plants The to are extract juice the

QUESTION 4

The through to filter juice a is it purify passed

QUESTION 5

juice a is it into turn heated The to syrup

QUESTION 6

sugar The spun syrup crystals centrifuge the in separate to a out is

QUESTION 7

and sugar dried crystals cooled to produce the sugar are The

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the gaps in the sentences below to change the name of the stage into a short sentence.

1) Growing the sugar cane

The sugar cane

2) Harvesting the crop

The crop

3) Crushing the plants

The

4) Extracting the juice

5) Purifying the juice

6) Separating out the sugar crystals

7) Spinning the syrup

8) Drying and cooling the sugar crystals

The answer:

1) Growing the sugar cane

The sugar cane *is grown*.

2) Harvesting the crop

The crop *is harvested*.

3) Crushing the plants

The *plants are crushed*.

4) Extracting the juice

The juice is extracted.

5) Purifying the juice

The juice is purified.

6) Separating out the sugar crystals

The sugar crystals are separated out.

7) Spinning the syrup

The syrup is spun.

8) Drying and cooling the sugar crystals

The sugar crystals are dried and cooled.

QUESTION 2

Put the words in the following sentences into the correct order. NB They each feature to + infinitive to show purpose.

to produce are Seeds the crop. planted x

The answer:

Seeds are planted to produce the crop.

QUESTION 3

crushed plants The to are extract juice. the x

The answer:

The plants are crushed to extract the juice.

QUESTION 4

The through to filter juice a is it. purify passed x

The answer:

The juice is passed through a filter to purify it.

QUESTION 5

juice a is it into turn heated The to syrup. x

The answer:

The juice is heated to turn it into a syrup.

QUESTION 6

sugar The spun syrup crystals. centrifuge the in separate to a out is x

The answer:

The syrup is spun in a centrifuge to separate out the sugar crystals.

QUESTION 7

and sugar. dried crystals cooled to produce the sugar are The x

The answer:

The sugar crystals are dried and cooled to produce the sugar.

All done !

QUESTION 1

Fill in the gaps to rewrite the following sentences using:

- A) a relative clause
- B) a reduced relative clause
- C) to + infinitive

1) The juice is passed through a filter, to purify it.

A) The juice is passed through a filter, .

B) The juice is passed through a filter, .

2) The juice is heated to turn it into a syrup.

A) The juice is heated, .

B) The juice is heated, .

3) The syrup is spun in a centrifuge, separating out the sugar crystals.

A) The syrup is spun in a centrifuge, .

C) The syrup is spun in a centrifuge .

4) The sugar crystals are dried and cooled to produce the final product.

B) The sugar crystals are dried and cooled, .

A) The sugar crystals are dried and cooled, .

QUESTION 2

Rewrite sentences 1- 5 below to practise using after, once, or when + the present perfect or present perfect passive. When you have finished, click on the tick at the top to see my versions.

1) First the crop is grown and then it is harvested.

2) The crop is harvested and then taken to a factory for processing.

3) The crop is harvested and then crushed to extract the juice.

4) The juice is purified and then heated.

5) The sugar crystals are separated out and then dried and cooled to produce sugar.



Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the gaps to rewrite the following sentences using:

- A) a relative clause
 - B) a reduced relative clause
 - C) to + infinitive

1 The juice is passed through a filter, to purify it.

- A) The juice is passed through a filter.
 - B) The juice is passed through a filter.

2) The juice is heated to turn it into a syrup.

- A) The juice is heated, _____.
B) The juice is heated, _____.

3) The syrup is spun in a centrifuge, separating out the sugar crystals.

- A) The syrup is spun in a centrifuge,
 - C) The syrup is spun in a centrifuge

4) The sugar crystals are dried and cooled to produce the final product.

- B) The sugar crystals are dried and cooled.

A) The sugar crystals are dried and cooled.

The answer:

1 The juice is passed through a filter, to purify it.

- A) The juice is passed through a filter, which purifies it.
 - B) The juice is passed through a filter, purifying it.

2) The juice is heated to turn it into a syrup.

- A) The juice is heated, *which turns it into a syrup.*
 - B) The juice is heated, *turning it into a syrup.*

3) The syrup is spun in a centrifuge, separating out the sugar crystals.

- A) The syrup is spun in a centrifuge, which separates out the sugar crystals.
C) The syrup is spun in a centrifuge to separate out the sugar crystals.

4) The sugar crystals are dried and cooled to produce the final product.

- B) The sugar crystals are dried and cooled, *producing the final product.*
A) The sugar crystals are dried and cooled, *which produces the final product.*

QUESTION 2

Rewrite sentences 1- 5 below to practise using after, once, or when + the present perfect or present perfect passive. When you have finished, click on the tick at the top to see my versions.

- 1) First the crop is grown and then it is harvested.
 - 2) The crop is harvested and then taken to a factory for processing.
 - 3) The crop is harvested and then crushed to extract the juice.
 - 4) The juice is purified and then heated.
 - 5) The sugar crystals are separated out and then dried and cooled to produce sugar.



My versions

1) After / Once / When the crop has grown, it is harvested.

Or: After / Once / When the crop has grown, it will be /can be harvested.

2) After / Once / When the crop has been harvested, it is taken to the factory for processing.

Or: After / Once / When the crop has been harvested, it can / will be taken to the factory for processing.

3) After / Once / When the crop has been harvested, it is crushed to extract the juice.

4) After / Once / When the crop has been purified, it is heated.

5) After / Once / When the sugar crystals have been separated out, they are dried and cooled to produce sugar.

All done !

10.3 Model answer

My model

Listen to my model answer for this task and fill in the gaps as you listen.

Click Here
to Practise

Click here to see the complete model and then read the comments below.

See My
Version Here

Points to notice

- My overview mentions the two main stages and the main changes, and these are reflected in my two body paragraphs.
- I was able to make two comparisons: 1) the longest stage in the process and 2) comparing the different methods used for harvesting.
- In my editing, I read my answer aloud to see if there was repetition – this lead me to change two sentences to fix the following problems: 1) a repetition of ‘then’ (*is then extracted...is then heated*) and 2) in the last sentence, I had written ‘which are *finally* dried and cooled to produce the *final* product.’ Notice the changes I made to avoid this. Be sure to read through your own answer in your head if you have time at the end.
- Notice the clear coherence and cohesion in my answer: I signalled the main topic of each paragraph very clearly (The first stage....The second stage) and the information is logically organised, step by step. Try to notice the referencing and how you can easily trace the ideas (the zig-zag pattern we saw in lesson 9).

Writing clearly

Look back at the overview sentence you wrote earlier and compare it to mine. How clear is your writing?

A problem can occur in your overview if you identify the main stages but then do not make these clear in your overview. Look at the following example:

Overall, the process compromises two main stages, where sugar canes and their juice are processed, and there are several different tools involved.

This overview begins well, stating that there are two main stages, but then presents the information as though this is one stage: *where sugar canes and their juice are processed*. We need to show these are two separate stages:

Overall, the process comprises two main stages, during which sugar canes are grown in the field, and then processed in the factory, where their juice is extracted and turned into sugar.

It is important to note that there are many ways to give your overview. For example, in the new version above I mentioned the two locations (the field and the factory). The following is another example of a clear overview:

The entire process includes a total of 7 stages with the plant undergoing various changes in form from solid to liquid then to syrup. Although the process is partly manual, most of the stages involve heavy machinery.

Practice

Practise the vocabulary from this lesson by matching the words to their meaning.

Click Here
to Practise

Now test yourself to see how many words you can remember from this lesson

**Click Here
to Practise**

Extra practice

Task achievement

1) Look back at your answer to this process task and consider your overview. Did you include:

- *the type of process it is (mechanical etc)*
- *the number of main stages and what these are (using umbrella terms)*
- *what happens during the process (the main changes that produce the final result)*

2) Did you manage to include any comparisons?

3) Was your answer long enough? If is it too short, can you see how to expand it?

Varying your language

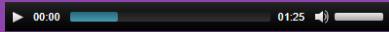
- Read your answer aloud – do you notice any repetition such as the same grammatical structures or vocabulary used too often?
- What changes can you make to avoid this (e.g. to+ infinitive; relative clause; once + present perfect etc).
- Is there any vocabulary from this lesson you can use in your answer or that you would like to learn?

After a week, repeat this test question again without looking back at this lesson. Then read the lesson again to see how much you have remembered or still need to learn.

To prepare for Section 2: Test Practice, be sure to review the earlier lessons in this section.

QUESTION 1

Listen to the model answer and fill in the blanks. You will need to write 1-3 words in each gap.



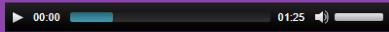
The diagram shows the process used to make sugar. Overall, this is a largely mechanical process comprising two main stages: the farming of sugar cane and the processing of the crop, which turns it into sugar.

The first stage of the process is the longest as the sugar cane takes between 12 to 18 months to grow tall enough to be harvested. Once fully grown, the crop can be harvested in two ways, either mechanically using specialist machinery or by hand, a much more labour-intensive method.

The second stage is wholly mechanical and involves five steps. First, the plants are crushed to form a juice, which is then purified by passing it through a limestone filter before being heated. During this step, the liquid content of the juice evaporates leaving behind a syrup. The syrup is then put in a centrifuge and spun at a high enough speed to separate out the sugar crystals, which are subsequently dried and cooled to produce the final product.

QUESTION 2

Now practise different language used in this model to increase your grammatical range and accuracy and your lexical resource scores.



The diagram shows the process used to make sugar. Overall, this is a largely mechanical process comprising two main stages: the farming of sugar cane and the processing of the crop, which turns it into a juice and a syrup into sugar.

The first stage of the process is the longest as the sugar cane takes between 12 to 18 months to grow tall enough for harvesting. Once it is harvested, the crop can be harvested in two ways, either mechanically using specialist machinery or by hand, a much more labour-intensive method.

The second stage is wholly mechanical and involves five steps. First, the plants are crushed to form a juice, which is then extracted. The juice is purified by passing it through a limestone filter before being heated. During this step, the liquid content of the juice evaporates leaving behind a syrup. The syrup is then put in a centrifuge and spun at a high enough speed to separate out the sugar crystals, which are subsequently dried and cooled to produce the final product.

[Show answers](#)

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Listen to the model answer and fill in the blanks. You will need to write 1-3 words in each gap.



The diagram shows the process used to make sugar. Overall, this is a largely mechanical process comprising two main stages: the farming of sugar cane and the processing of the crop, which turns it into a liquid and eventually into sugar.

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The second stage is wholly mechanical and involves five steps. First, the plants are crushed to form a juice, which is then extracted. The juice is purified by passing it through a limestone filter before being heated. During this step, the liquid content of the juice evaporates leaving behind a syrup. The syrup is then put in a centrifuge and spun at a high enough speed to separate out the sugar crystals, which are subsequently dried and cooled to produce the final product.

The answer:

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All done !

Model answer

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The second stage is wholly mechanical and involves five steps. First, the plants are crushed to form a juice, which is then extracted. The juice is purified by passing it through a limestone filter before being heated. During this step, the liquid content of the juice evaporates leaving behind a syrup. The syrup is then put in a centrifuge and spun at a high enough speed to separate out the sugar crystals, which are subsequently dried and cooled to produce the final product.

to remove
solids from
a liquid or
gas

machinery

at high
speed

wholly

manually

following
this

to cool

subsequently

very fast

mostly

to filter

to make
something
hot

requiring a
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specialist

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completely

to make
something
colder

largely

Congratulations!

QUESTION 1

How many words can you remember from this lesson?

Fill in the blanks with the correct words and phrases.

- 1) The materials needed to produce something =
- 2) The different foods used in a recipe =
- 3) To remove something you want = to
- 4) To remove solids from a liquid or gas = to
- 5) Requiring a lot of workers / work =
- 6) By hand =
- 7) By machine =
- 8) Large machines =
- 9) Mostly =
- 10) Completely =
- 11) Following this =
- 12) To make something colder = to
- 13) To make something hotter =
- 14) To allow something to fall = to

Show answers

QUESTION 1

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Fill in the blanks with the correct words and phrases.

- 1) The materials needed to produce something =
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- 10) Completely =
- 11) Following this =
- 12) To make something colder = to
- 13) To make something hotter =
- 14) To allow something to fall = to

The answer:

- 1) The materials needed to produce something = *raw materials*
- 2) The different foods used in a recipe = *ingredients*
- 3) To remove something you want = to *extract*
- 4) To remove solids from a liquid or gas = to *filter*
- 5) Requiring a lot of workers / work = *labour-intensive*
- 6) By hand = *manually*
- 7) By machine = *mechanically*
- 8) Large machines = *machinery*
- 9) Mostly = *largely*
- 10) Completely = *wholly*
- 11) Following this = *subsequently*
- 12) To make something colder = to *cool*
- 13) To make something hotter = to *heat*
- 14) To allow something to fall = to *drop*

All done !

Section 2

Test practice

By now, hopefully you will have realised that, although it is a shorter task, Task 1 is still a complex task that demands language skills from bands 7 to 9 to complete well. In this section we will review key points about each task type as well as looking at specific language problems and how to deal with more complex tasks. There will also be a greater emphasis on test practice. We will begin with more guided tasks, then move on to time test practice in the final lessons.

Key Ideas About Test practice

In this section, we will apply everything we have learned about thinking, planning, and building an argument, to create model answers for the writing task 1 Academic questions in the *Cambridge IELTS* test practice book. The criteria and skills needed for all writing task 1 Academic questions are the same – the difference is in the topics.

In the first 7 lessons, we will review the most important points from this book, and you will be guided through the summary-writing and editing process. This will help to develop your planning and writing skills. The final 3 lessons are less guided, so that you can become more independent and confident in test situations. As well as the Cambridge test questions, I have written additional tasks on similar topics. This will help to consolidate your skills, and will have the added benefit of practising any new language you have learned from the models. We will use the planner throughout, and I recommend you print off several copies at the start of your practice. However, once you are more familiar with the format, go to my website to see how to make a simplified version to use in the test.

In some of these lessons, we will work on answers sent to me by followers of my Facebook page. These are examples of band 6.5 writing, and the accompanying exercises will help you identify and address issues at this level. Use them to work on any problems in your own writing. If you are not studying in a class, with a teacher who can give feedback, I recommend finding a ‘test buddy’ to work with. It is much easier to spot problems in someone else’s writing than in your own, and explaining your ideas and language choices to another student also reinforces your language learning.

Taking control and dealing with test anxiety

Test situations can be stressful, even more so when the result is as important as it is in IELTS. There are several things you can do during the practice stage to manage this. First, it is important to separate the things you cannot control from the things you can control; focusing on these will help you to feel less anxious.

Your mindset

While you cannot control the test question, you can control your response to it. The practice exercises here will train you to respond in a disciplined way to any question, no matter how difficult it seems at first. Think of yourself as building skills that will make you more resourceful – going into the test knowing you have these skills will boost your confidence and help you stay calm.

When studying for her exams, my daughter would always put a little peppermint oil on her wrist. It is claimed that peppermint oil helps with concentration. Using it during her study, as well as during each of her exams, helped her to mentally prepare – when she smelt peppermint, she knew she was in ‘exam mode’ and this helped her to stay alert and focused. Try this yourself. You may find it gives you a psychological boost and helps you to feel mentally ‘switched on’.

If you don’t like the smell of peppermint, experiment with another scent. Just be sure not to use one with a relaxing effect, like lavender, and to limit the amount you use so as not to negatively affect those around you. A word of caution, several years after her exams, my daughter accidentally spilled some peppermint oil in her room one evening. As a result, her body went into exam mode and she was unable to sleep for several hours!

KEY IDEA: Anxiety can interfere with your ability to think clearly. Feeling more in control can help you stay calm in the test. Try to develop a positive mindset – be aware that you are developing skills now that will help you in the test.

Workspace

You cannot control your test room, but you can control your own desk space. During your test practice, behave as though you are in a test situation. In other words, aim for total quiet, with no distractions or interruptions, and have a totally clear desk with only the tools you need to make notes and to write or type your answer. Making every test practice situation a rehearsal for the real test will help you to control your mindset within the test.

Choose your tools based on whether you are preparing for the written version or the computer delivered version of the test. Contact your test centre to find out what you are allowed to bring into the room with you. Even if I were preparing for the computer delivered test, I would still choose to do my planning on paper. However, chatting to other writers, I have found that we differ on this – while my thinking is clearer when I use pen and paper, others say that they work much better on a computer. This really is a personal choice so, during your practice, try several methods to see what works best for you.

Practice materials

In chapter 10 of *The Key to IELTS Success*, I explained why it is important to use test materials written by skilled, experienced writers, and that reflect the real test. If you practise using materials you find online, you risk practising writing in a vague and confusing way, and you are not practising for IELTS, where the tasks always have a clear focus.

Try to change your attitude towards materials and resources – just because you have ‘done’ a test, does not mean there is nothing more to learn from it. My response to a question is different each time I answer it, so don’t be afraid to do the same tasks repeatedly. The same applies to the lessons in this book. We can understand the concepts related to a skill on an intellectual level before we can apply them consistently in practice. Thus, when learning a skill, it isn’t enough to read once, or practise once. Runners keeps running on the same track because doing it once is not enough – each time, they get faster, fitter, and better equipped to run the next race.

KEY IDEA: You will only improve your writing score when you can consistently apply the skills you are learning here, which will only come from repeated practice. As with any skill, you cannot master it by simply reading about doing it.

Time

Feeling productive can help you to stay motivated and give you a sense of making progress. Set aside at least 15 minutes every day for writing practice, but aim for 30 – 40 minutes as often as possible. Adding this into your daily schedule, or adding a reminder on your phone are good ideas, but be realistic about what you can fit in. Be deliberate in your practice – make sure you know what you are focusing on and why (see chapter 2 of my free book, *The Key to IELTS Success* for more about this).

What is the best way to practise?

Although managing your time in the test is very important, you should prioritise the development of the necessary skills first. I tried using a stopwatch for my first test practice but soon stopped because it made me anxious and interfered with my ability to concentrate. I advise you not to time yourself too strictly until you feel more confident in your thinking and planning skills. This may not happen until you have completed 3 or more practice tests – just keep going until you feel you have reached that stage.

If you struggle with the writing stage, again, daily practice will help. It is far more useful to have frequent, short periods of writing practice than to always try to complete a whole summary. Work on body paragraphs in particular, and don’t progress to full analysis until you can consistently explain a brief highlight. Only with repeated practice will this become natural to you.

Remember, writing is thinking we can see. Clear thinking also needs to be practised, and doing this will help with your writing. To do this, try planning an summary then giving a talk to present your analysis using your plan as a guide. Each time you stumble, adjust your notes and start again. Record yourself and listen back to identify areas that still seem unclear.

When I am preparing to give a talk, I have to do this several times before I can fluently and clearly explain an idea, so make sure that your expectations are realistic; it is far more difficult to explain something clearly and simply than to ramble on in a confusing way. Once you are happy with your ability to talk about your summary, write your essay. You should find that you are able to do this a lot more fluently as a result of the speaking exercise.

KEY IDEA: Attempting to explain something simply trains you to think more logically. This is like doing mental arithmetic – if you don't force yourself to do relatively simple sums in your head, you will soon lose the ability and come to rely on a calculator. The same applies to logic, except no technology can do the thinking for you.

Varying your practice will help you to stay motivated. On the next page, you will find some suggestions depending on how much time you have.

Useful practice activities

KEY IDEA: Most people can find at least 15 minutes in a day to work on something that is important. This amount of time can be ideal for focused deliberate practice. The following list gives some ideas to help keep your practice useful and focused, no matter how much or how little time you have. Don't waste any short amounts of time you have and don't tell yourself 'I don't have time to do that.'

15 MINUTES

Planning

- Write an essay plan. If necessary, revisit old essays and plan a new argument for a different position (for example, if you completely agreed with the view in the question, write a plan for an argument that completely disagrees). You can use these plans in later exercises.

Writing

- Write a body paragraph based the ideas in one of your plans – this is really helpful even with essay questions you have done before.
- Rewrite the introduction and conclusion to an old essay – don't look back at your original versions, just use the body paragraphs to guide you. Practise using umbrella terms (see lesson 10)
- Practise your handwriting so that it is easier to read, or improve your typing skills
- Review a model answer from this book. Read it several times, then try to recreate one of the body paragraphs in your own words without looking back.

Editing

- Read an old essay aloud and edit it until you are happy with it – think about how clear your argument is rather than thinking about language alone.
- Look through an old essay and focus on the vocabulary or grammar mistakes you know that you habitually make. Think about hedging language – are you cautious enough in your statements?
- Practise proofreading – look for typing or writing errors

Language / skill building

- Read an old essay aloud and try to notice repetition of words, phrases, and grammatical structures. If you often use the same words and phrases in your essays practise rewriting several sentences in a new way to expand your vocabulary or sentence structures. Think about umbrella terms and synonyms.
- Look over one or more of the model answers in this book and focus on vocabulary or grammar. Make a note of any useful language you would like to learn
- Work on weak areas in your vocabulary and grammar (see *The Key to IELTS Success* for ideas)
- Review or repeat lessons in this book – especially those that taught you something new

If you set aside a longer period of time, it is also important not to waste it and to stay focused:

30 MINUTES

- Plan and produce a rough first draft of an essay
- Select 3 or 4 essays you have written and critically analyse them for
- Task response and Coherence and cohesion. Make a note of any problems and how often you make these mistakes
- Do further practice on any repeated errors you have identified – review the relevant lessons in this book to help
- Review a model essay from this book. Read it several times then try to recreate the same argument in your own words. To broaden your vocabulary, you can make a note of key words and phrases to use.
- Combine any two of the 15-minutes activities above

40 MINUTES

- When you feel ready, do a timed-essay – NB attempting to do this within a strict time limit too soon may demotivate you.

1 HOUR

- This is the ideal amount of time for timed-essay practice – it allows time to settle down as well as time to review at the end.
- Combine any of the earlier ideas – varying your activities and practice will help you stay motivated
- Don't aim to do too much at once – build up your skills gradually and increase as you go, until eventually you are always working within the time limit of the writing test.

LESSON 11 - Guided Test Practice 1 - Data about People (1)

In this lesson, you will learn about:

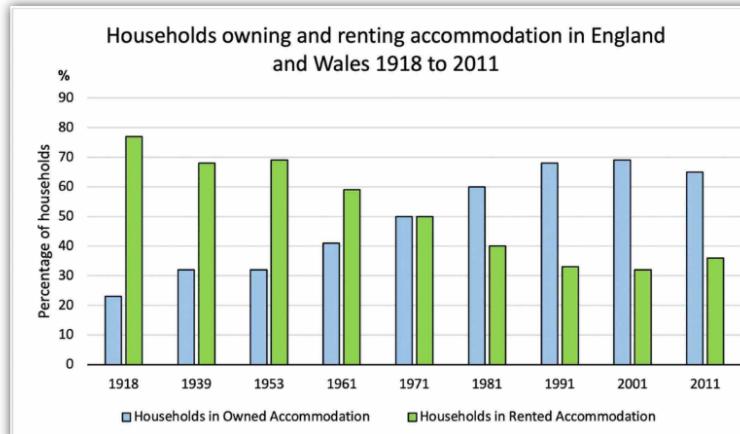
- 11.1 Understanding the Data
- 11.2 Changing the language in the question
- 11.3 Model answer and Language review

11.1 Understanding the Data

In the next few lessons, we will return to charts and tables. We will also consider several key topic areas and the language issues they present. The aim in this section is to move towards test practice. However, we will begin with guided test practice, and you do not always need to write to a strict time limit just yet. The first writing task in this lesson is based on Cambridge IELTS 13, page 51.

The chart below shows the percentage of households in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales between 1918 and 2011.

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



Presenting details that is relevant, appropriate, and accurate

The answers I see to this question reveal a common problem with data tasks: drawing the wrong conclusions about what the data tells us. As we saw in lessons 1 and 3, this can present problems for your Task Achievement score (**at Band 6, details may be irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate**).

To understand the issue, think about where the data in the bar chart has come from. Data about people and how they live generally comes from some sort of survey, where people answer personal questions. Our current data would be based on the answer to **one question**.

Which of the following questions could have produced the data in the bar chart above?

- A. Are you planning to buy or rent a house in the future?
- B. Where do you live now?
- C. Do you live in a house or a flat?
- D. Do you rent or own your home?
- E. Would you prefer to own a home or rent?
- F. Where did you live before you moved to this house?

The only question that fits the data in this chart is Option D: *Do you rent or own your home?*

This means we do not have any information about where people moved from, or what their living preferences are. Yet I often see sentences like this:

It is clear from the chart that owned accommodation became more popular in the final 4 decades.

To be able to say that something is '*more popular*', we would need to ask a different question in the survey. With our current data, we can only say that home ownership was **more common** in the later years. We do not know if the people concerned **preferred** or **chose** to rent – they may have been forced through circumstances (e.g. a lack of money or job). If homelessness was increasing, we would not say that it was becoming '*more popular*'.

KEY IDEA: Always think about what the data actually tells us – what question does it answer? Avoid using the words **popular, favourite, or choice** unless the data answers a question such as '*Which do you prefer / enjoy?*' Or where it is clear that a choice has been made.

Is there data to support your description?

The data in this chart is from 9 different years, so the same question would need to be asked in each of these years. The first year is 1918 and the last year is 2011, which means this data covers a period of 93 years. Do you think the people who were asked this question in 1918 are the same people answering the question in 2011? I think you'll agree this is highly unlikely. What about between 1971 and 1991? Again, we do not know. This tells us another important point: the data set for each year can tell us about general trends within the population of England and Wales, but it does not tell us about the movements of individual people. Therefore, we can't draw conclusions like this:

However, over the next 40 years, more and more residents managed to buy their own place and moved out of rented accommodation.

This is going too far. We don't know whether the people who said they owned their home in 1991 had moved out of rental accommodation – we do not have data for this. They could be people who have just moved to the area after selling a house somewhere else, they could have lived with their parents until they could afford to buy a house, someone may have given the house to them. The increased numbers of home owners may be due to housing becoming cheaper and easier to buy, government support, or many more homes being built in the area. We do not know, so we cannot make statements about this in our answer.

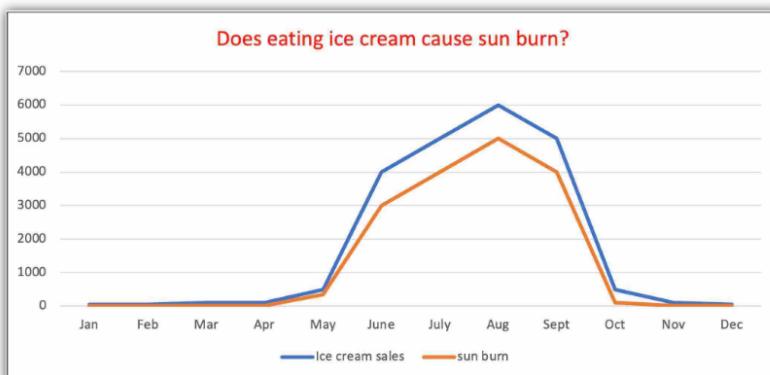
How will I know if my statements are relevant?

In [The Key to IELTS Writing Task 2](#), we saw that you need to present clear, logical evidence to support the points you make. The same idea applies in writing task 1. If you make a statement such as '*more and more residents moved out of rented accommodation*', then you need to be sure you can supply evidence from the data you are given to support this. If there is no evidence in the data about *people moving house*, then the statement is not relevant to the task.

KEY IDEA: Think carefully about what the data actually shows and make sure to only write about what you can prove in the data.

Correlation not causation

It is important to see the data set for each year in the graph as a separate set of people answering the survey question, and we shouldn't try to connect the data in a cause and effect way. This is an important point in interpreting data, and a fact that is often repeated in academic writing is that: **correlation** (*two things matching or occurring at the same time*) should not be seen as **causation** (*one thing being directly related to or caused by another*).



The increases in ice cream sales **correspond** with increases in sun burn but this is **correlation not causation** - both just happen to occur in summer or hot weather.

KEY IDEA: Don't try to find a connection between the data sets – you will not have enough information for this. You can talk about the data '**corresponding**', but you should not relate them directly or invent a story about what is happening.

Language problems in this task

This task presents some language challenges, especially as only 2 variables are mentioned (renting a home or living in a home you own). This means we need to try to avoid repeating the same words and phrases and we need to use different words to those in the question **when possible**. Remember, we do not need to vary this every time, sometimes a key word is unavoidable. We just need to reduce the number of times we repeat the same terms.

One way to do this is to vary the way you present the data. You can either write about the figures in the chart, or about the people behind the data. Look at the following examples, which all present the same fact:

- **The figure for rented accommodation fell from just under 80% in 1918 to less than 70% in 1939.**
- **The percentage of people renting accommodation fell from just under 80% in 1918 to less than 70% in 1939.**
- **Fewer people rented accommodation in 1918 than in 1939 (just under 80% and 70% respectively).**

I often see answers that only describe what the numbers and figures are doing (e.g. *going up, going down, staying the same*). This creates a very repetitive answer. Make sure to think about the people behind the statistics, and what the data represents.

KEY IDEA: Be careful to vary your sentences – don't always refer just to the figures and what happens to the data. Think about the people that these numbers represent as well.

Household, House and home

Although this question refers to 'households', this does not mean the people all lived in houses – they may have rented or owned a flat. A household refers to the group of people all living together within the same place – whether it is a house or flat. The word 'home' covers this nicely as a home refers to the place where you live, whether that is a tent, a boat, a flat, or a house.

My own, on your own, or to own?

The word 'own' often creates problems because of its different meanings and uses. For example, **to own** is a verb meaning to have something that legally belongs to you; **own** is also a pronoun, or can be used to mean 'alone'.

The verb '**to own**' is not used in the same way as the verb 'to possess', which has a much stronger meaning and is not appropriate in this context. Another important fact about the verb 'to own' is that it is a 'stative' verb, this means it cannot be used in a continuous tense. So, we cannot say, '*More people were owning their home*'. However, we can talk about 'owning a home' (the noun form of the verb), and we can also talk about '**ownership**' and '**home ownership**' (you will find this written as separate words, hyphenated, or as one word).

Look at the following sentences and decide whether the word 'own' is a verb, a pronoun, or means 'alone'.

1. *That family is very rich, they live in a huge house and also own 10 properties that they rent out.*
2. *I didn't get my project finished because my family arrived and I couldn't get any time on my own.*
3. *I still live with my parents, I can't wait to have my own home.*

(Answer: 1 = verb, 2 = alone, 3 = pronoun)

Consider also that, if you rent a property, someone owns it. The wording in the question and the chart is a little unhelpful here as it refers to '**owned** accommodation' and '**rented** accommodation'. This works with 'accommodation' as the context is clear. But people are often tempted to write '*living in an owned house / property*', which does not work. You need to write, '*the percentage of people living in their own home*' not '*living in an owned home*'.

Vocabulary note:

Sector, market, category

These words are useful umbrella terms to use as synonyms to avoid repetition.

Sector = an area of economic activity (similar to 'field' in the academic world.) Examples of sectors are: the banking sector, the tourism sector, the housing sector

Market = business or trade in a specific product (e.g. the rental market; the housing market)

Category = a group, or system of grouping similar information or things.

If you haven't already done so, write an answer to this question. Remember the following key steps:

Points to remember

- Spend a few moments noticing the details in the bar chart. Pay attention to what is being measured as well as when, and how is it being measured.
- Identify the key trends in the data and think about how to write about these in your overview. Remember – you should not mention just one trend.
- Think about: what stayed the same, what changed, what comparisons can be made.
- Group the information together so that you can write about it logically. Chronological order is the clearest and most logical. Remember to make comparisons where relevant.
- Your paragraphs should cover one main idea (e.g. The data for renting.) and this should be clear to the reader.
- As you write, remember to vary your tenses and your sentence structures.

11.2 Addressing Band 6.5 Problems

Read the following sample answer. What problems can you identify? Use the practice task below to make notes or underline any problems using the Text tool. Then answer the questions in each step to improve the answer.

Band 6.5 sample answer

The bar chart provides statistics about families which lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people tended to lean more towards having their own properties.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales opting for this option. The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. In 1939, it underwent a noticeable decrease to less than 70% before remaining stable until 1953. People gradually became less interested in renting accommodation as the figure dropped steadily and reached the lowest point of around 30% in 2001, before rising slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

On the other hand, owned accommodation was less popular in 1918, with just over 20% of families possessing a property. This figure, however, rose rapidly to 50% in 1971 and overtook the proportion of households in rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households staying in owned properties had gone up to more than 60%. (185 words)

Practice

Step 1) Addressing language problems

Use the text tool to make any general notes about problems you can identify in the answer then complete each task.

In the first exercise, I have only highlighted language errors - we will deal with the language problems that affect Task achievement later. Can you correct the problems highlighted? Use the text tool to make notes.

Click Here
to Practise

Step 2) Addressing Coherence and cohesion

In the first paragraph, there are several problems connected to showing contrast and making it clear when something happened. As we make the necessary changes, we need to be careful not to repeat the same structures. You will notice that each change we make has a 'knock-on effect', forcing more changes. This shows how connected each sentence is within one paragraph, and the benefits of pausing to think before writing. When you notice a contrast, signal it, if you have already used the same device for this, stop and think 'How else could I write that?' You can review this in Lesson 2.

Click Here
to Practise

KEY IDEA: All of the sentences in a good paragraph work together. As you write, be aware of the kind of information you are adding and whether it contrasts with a previous idea. It is important to vary the way you signal this contrast, so, as you write, think '**How else can I say that?**'

Step 3) Addressing Task achievement problems

The main problems in Task achievement are linked to language that does not accurately represent the data we are given, as well as some key features being missing. There could also be more comparisons made. In the next exercises, use the questions and hints to address these problems, then compare your version to the final answer.

**Click Here
to Practise**

KEY IDEA: You will improve your Task achievement score by:

- giving a clear overview
- writing in an accurate way about what the data shows
- providing evidence for the statements you make
- pointing out all of the key features
- making comparisons where relevant.

QUESTION 1

Read through the sample answer. Can you identify any problems?
Use the text tool to make any notes.

**Sample answer**

The bar chart provides statistics about families which lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people tended to lean more towards having their own properties.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales opting for this option. The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. In 1939, it underwent a noticeable decrease to less than 70% before remaining stable until 1953. People gradually became less interested in renting accommodation as the figure dropped steadily and reached the lowest point of around 30% in 2001, before rising slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

On the other hand, owned accommodation was less popular in 1918, with just over 20% of families possessing a property. This figure, however, rose rapidly to 50% in 1971 and overtook the proportion of households in rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households staying in owned properties had gone up to more than 60%. (185 words)

QUESTION 2

Can you correct the language issues highlighted? Use the text tool to make any notes then click on the tick at the top to see my suggestions. (NB I have not highlighted language issues that affect Task achievement at this stage).



*The bar chart provides statistics about families ¹**which** lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people tended to lean more towards having their own ²**properties**.*

*In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales ³**opting** for this **option**. The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. In 1939, it ⁴**underwent a noticeable decrease to** less than 70% before remaining stable until 1953. People gradually became less interested in renting accommodation as the figure dropped steadily and reached the lowest point of around 30% in 2001, before rising slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.*

*On the other hand, ⁵**owned accommodation** was less popular in 1918, with just over 20% of families ⁶**possessing** a property. This figure, however, rose rapidly to 50% in 1971 and overtook the proportion of households in rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households ⁷**staying in owned properties** had gone up to more than 60%.*

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Read through the sample answer. Can you identify any problems?
Use the text tool to make any notes.

Sample answer

The bar chart provides statistics about families **which** lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people tended to lean more towards having their own **properties**.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales **opting for this option**. The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. In 1939, it **underwent a noticeable decrease to** less than 70% before remaining stable until 1953. People gradually became less interested in renting accommodation as the figure dropped steadily and reached the lowest point of around 30% in 2001, before rising slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

On the other hand, **owned accommodation** was less popular in 1918, with just over 20% of families **possessing** a property. This figure, however, rose rapidly to 50% in 1971 and overtook the proportion of households in rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households **staying in owned properties** had gone up to more than 60%. (185 words)

QUESTION 2

Can you correct the language issues highlighted? Use the text tool to make any notes then click on the tick at the top to see my suggestions. (NB I have not highlighted language issues that affect Task achievement at this stage).

The bar chart provides statistics about families **1which** lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people tended to lean more towards having their own **2properties**.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales **3opting for this option**. The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. In 1939, it **4underwent a noticeable decrease to** less than 70% before remaining stable until 1953. People gradually became less interested in renting accommodation as the figure dropped steadily and reached the lowest point of around 30% in 2001, before rising slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

On the other hand, **5owned accommodation** was less popular in 1918, with just over 20% of families **6possessing** a property. This figure, however, rose rapidly to 50% in 1971 and overtook the proportion of households in rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households **7staying in owned properties** had gone up to more than 60%.

Suggested answers

- 1) Change 'which' to 'who'
- 2) This word should be singular: property
- 3) We generally don't combine a related verb and noun (e.g. we do not say 'they are planning a plan') so we need to change either the verb or the noun: choosing this option / opting for this choice
- 4) We can either say 'it decreased noticeably' or 'it decreased to 70%', to say both, we need to add another verb (it decreased noticeably, falling to less than 70%...)
- 5) Change to: Home ownership / owning your own home
- 6) 'Possessing' is not appropriate here. Change to 'Owning'
- 7) 'Staying' is temporary, this is about people 'living' in their own home

All done !

QUESTION 1

Read through the sample answer. Can you identify any problems?
Use the text tool to make any notes.

Sample answer

The bar chart provides statistics about families which lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people tended to lean more towards having their own properties.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales opting for this option. The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. In 1939, it underwent a noticeable decrease to less than 70% before remaining stable until 1953. People gradually became less interested in renting accommodation as the figure dropped steadily and reached the lowest point of around 30% in 2001, before rising slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

On the other hand, owned accommodation was less popular in 1918, with just over 20% of families possessing a property. This figure, however, rose rapidly to 50% in 1971 and overtook the proportion of households in rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households staying in owned properties had gone up to more than 60% (185 words)

QUESTION 2

Can you correct the language issues highlighted? Use the text tool to make any notes then click on the tick at the top to see my suggestions. (NB I have not highlighted language issues that affect Task achievement at this stage).

The bar chart provides statistics about families ¹which lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people tended to lean more towards having their own ²properties.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales ³opting for this option. The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. In 1939, it ⁴underwent a noticeable decrease to less than 70% before remaining stable until 1953. People gradually became less interested in renting accommodation as the figure dropped steadily and reached the lowest point of around 30% in 2001, before rising slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

On the other hand, ⁵owned accommodation was less popular in 1918, with just over 20% of families ⁶possessing a property. This figure, however, rose rapidly to 50% in 1971 and overtook the proportion of households in rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households ⁷staying in owned properties had gone up to more than 60%.

Suggested answers

- 1) Change 'which' to 'who'
- 2) This word should be singular: property
- 3) We generally don't combine a related verb and noun (e.g. we do not say 'they are planning a plan') so we need to change either the verb or the noun: choosing this option / opting for this choice
- 4) We can either say 'it decreased noticeably' or 'it decreased to 70%', to say both, we need to add another verb (it decreased noticeably, falling to less than 70%...)
- 5) Change to: Home ownership / owning your own home
- 6) 'Possessing' is not appropriate here. Change to 'Owning'
- 7) 'Staying' is temporary, this is about people 'living' in their own home

All done !

Coherence and cohesion problems

Use the comments and hints below to help address the Coherence and cohesion problems in the next exercise.

Paragraph 1

- 1) The fact in this sentence contrasts to the previous one, so this needs to be indicated – (Hint: Start with 'However,...')
- 2) 'Before + ing' is used to say what happened or what was done next and it is odd to use this with 'remaining stable' (i.e. nothing happened) 'then remained' would be better here.
- 3) How does this sentence connect with the previous one? (Hint: It is again introducing a contrasting idea, which needs to be indicated and it is also showing what happened from 1953, which also needs to be signalled). We have already used 'However,...'. So show this contrast using 'While....' (Hint: To do that, you need to change the previous sentence and contrast this idea with remaining stable).
- 4) How do we use 'as'? What is the function of 'as' here? (How does it connect the two ideas?) (Hint: Change this to 'and'. What change could you make to 'and reached' to avoid repeating 'and' in the sentence?)
- 5) We use 'the' with the superlative when ranking several things but this is referring to the lowest point for renting. (Hint: use 'its')
- 6) This whole sentence is very long and this third point is different to the idea that started the sentence (People gradually became less interested in renting...) This means that again we need to show contrast, but it is also better to break this sentence into two. (Hint: Begin the new sentence with 'it reached...' and use 'although' to avoid repeating 'however' and 'while'.)

Paragraph 2

7. This sentence should introduce the next topic. Is the main idea of this paragraph that 'owning your home was less popular'? How can this be made clearer? Remember, you are helping the reader to follow your ideas.
8. Can you find a way to reduce the repetition of 'owning'
9. We can sometimes use 'however' like this to add emphasis to the subject (This figure), but this seems odd here. Rewrite this to use 'However' correctly.
10. The word order makes this confusing reorder it so that it is clear exactly what happened in 1971 and add a new cohesive device to show when one figure 'overtook' the other.

QUESTION 1

Use the text tool to make notes below, then check my comments and answers.



The bar chart provides statistics about families who lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people tended to lean more towards having their own property.

*In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales choosing this option. The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. ¹**In 1939**, it decreased noticeably, falling to less than 70% ²**before** remaining stable until 1953. ³**People gradually** became less interested in renting accommodation ⁴**as** the figure dropped steadily and reached ⁵**the** lowest point of around 30% in 2001, ⁶**before rising slightly in 2011**, the final year of the period.*

*⁷**On the other hand**, owning your home was less popular in 1918, with just over 20% of families ⁸**owning** a property. ⁹**This figure, however**, ¹⁰**rose rapidly to 50% in 1971 and overtook** the proportion of households in rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households living in their own home had gone up to more than 60%.*

Show answers

Coherence and cohesion problems

Use the comments and hints below to help address the Coherence and cohesion problems in the next exercise.

Paragraph 1

- 1) The fact in this sentence contrasts to the previous one, so this needs to be indicated – (Hint: Start with 'However,...')
- 2) 'Before + ing' is used to say what happened or what was done next and it is odd to use this with 'remaining stable' (i.e. nothing happened) 'then remained' would be better here.
- 3) How does this sentence connect with the previous one? (Hint: It is again introducing a contrasting idea, which needs to be indicated and it is also showing what happened from 1953, which also needs to be signalled). We have already used 'However,...' So show this contrast using 'While....' (Hint: To do that, you need to change the previous sentence and contrast this idea with remaining stable).
- 4) How do we use 'as'? What is the function of 'as' here? (How does it connect the two ideas?) (Hint: Change this to 'and'. What change could you make to 'and reached' to avoid repeating 'and' in the sentence?)
- 5) We use 'the' with the superlative when ranking several things but this is referring to the lowest point for renting, (Hint: use 'its')
- 6) This whole sentence is very long and this third point is different to the idea that started the sentence (People gradually became less interested in renting...) This means that again we need to show contrast, but it is also better to break this sentence into two. (Hint: Begin the new sentence with 'it reached...' and use 'although' to avoid repeating 'however' and 'while'.)

Paragraph 2

7. This sentence should introduce the next topic. Is the main idea of this paragraph that 'owning your home was less popular'? How can this be made clearer? Remember, you are helping the reader to follow your ideas.
8. Can you find a way to reduce the repetition of 'owning'?
9. We can sometimes use 'however' like this to add emphasis to the subject (This figure), but this seems odd here. Rewrite this to use 'However' correctly.
10. The word order makes this confusing reorder it so that it is clear exactly what happened in 1971 and add a new cohesive device to show when one figure 'overtook' the other.

QUESTION 1

Use the text tool to make notes below, then check my comments and answers.

The bar chart provides statistics about families who lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people tended to lean more towards having their own property.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales choosing this option. The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. ¹In 1939, it decreased noticeably, falling to less than 70% ²before remaining stable until 1953. ³People gradually became less interested in renting accommodation ⁴as the figure dropped steadily and reached ⁵the lowest point of around 30% in 2001, ⁶before rising slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

⁷On the other hand, owning your home was less popular in 1918, with just over 20% of families ⁸owning a property. ⁹This figure, however, ¹⁰rose rapidly to 50% in 1971 and overtook the proportion of households in rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households living in their own home had gone up to more than 60%.

Suggestion answers:

- 1) and 2): Change to: 'However, in 1939, it decreased noticeably, falling to less than 70%, then remained stable until 1953.' (NB see next)
- 3) To introduce a contrast and indicate the time element, we could start with: 'However, from this point on/ onwards, ...' but we have already used 'However,' above, so, we need to change these sentences. For example:
"However, in 1939, it decreased noticeably, falling to less than 70%. While it remained relatively stable until 1953, from this point on,"
- 4) 'As' can be used to mean 'at the same time / simultaneously' (you can see this use in the overview) or to mean 'because'. Neither meaning is appropriate here - we should not try to explain why something is happening in the data, so we need to change this to 'and'. To avoid repeating 'and' we could change 'and reached' to 'reaching':
'and the figure dropped steadily, reaching its lowest point of...' (However, we will need to change this - see next sentence).
- 5) change to 'its lowest point'
- 6) The sentence needs to be broken up here and, again, we need to show contrast without repeating 'However,' or 'While'. (see the final image below)

Paragraph 2

- 7) It is better to use 'In contrast' here. 'On the other hand' is used to give a balanced view or perspective and is not appropriate here. The main idea of the paragraph is that owned housing followed a different pattern. So we can say: 'In contrast, owning a home followed the opposite trend.' Or, we can just signal a change of subject: 'In terms of owning a home, in 1918.... / Turning to ..., '
- 8) We can change 'owning a home' to 'home ownership' or change one of these to an active verb: 'just over 20% of people owned'
- 9) However, (NB, to avoid repeating 'However' we could change this to: Nevertheless,)
- 10) To make the order of events clear, we need to put the date closest to the relevant verb: 'However, in 1971, this figure rose rapidly to 50% and from 1981 overtook...'

The bar chart provides statistics about families who lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people tended to lean more towards having their own property.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales choosing this option. The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. **However**, in 1939, it decreased noticeably, falling to less than 70%. **While** it remained relatively stable until 1953, **from this point on**, people gradually became less interested in renting accommodation **and** the figure dropped steadily. **It reached** its lowest point of around 30% in 2001, **although** it did rise slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

In contrast, home ownership followed the opposite trend. In 1918, just over 20% of families owned a property. **Nevertheless, in 1971**, this figure rose rapidly to 50% **and from 1981** overtook the proportion of households in rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households living in their own home had gone up to more than 60%.

All done !

Task achievement problems

Use the comments and hints below to address the Task achievement problems in the next exercise.

Paragraph 1

- 1) This is not accurate. A 'household' can sometimes be 'a family' but it may also be a single person; we are not given 'statistics' about these people. Can you make this more accurate?
- 2) This extract is copied directly from the test question, can you paraphrase it?
- 3) There is a vocabulary problem here. 'Lean towards' is a phrasal verb that is used to indicate a preference when someone is still deciding about something. For example, 'She hasn't decided what to study yet, but she is leaning towards architecture.' 'Tended to lean towards' suggests we know about the preferences of these people, but we only know one piece of data and is also not accurate in terms of the meaning and use. Can you make this more accurate?
- Is there anything missing from the overview? (Hint: What happened in the final decade?)
- 4) and 5) Again, this is not accurate - we do not have data about choices. Can you make the language more accurate? (Hint: Try using 'sector' and 'category')
- 6) This sentence highlights a supporting detail that belongs in the previous sentence (the percentage that shows this is 'the majority'). Cut this sentence and include the percentage in the previous sentence (Hint: You may need to use brackets).
- 7) Again, the language here is not accurate (we do not know what the people were interested in). Can you change this to accurately reflect the data? (Hint: Try to add a comparison to improve the TA score)

Paragraph 2

- 8) This data is not about 'owning a property', it is about whether the people rented or owned the property they were living in – their home. Can you make this more accurate?
- 9) This is not accurate – the figure increased steadily from 1853 rather than rapidly in 1971. A key feature is missing in this summary – can you add it here? (Hint: 50% indicates both were equal at this point).
- 10) Two key points are missing here – 1) the peak figure for home ownership was just below 70% in 2001 2) the final figure is lower than in the previous decade. Also 'more than 60%' sounds lower than it really was (approximately 65%). Can you show this contrast, mention the peak figure, and try to make another comparison?

QUESTION 1

Use the text tool to make notes and click on show answers to see the final corrected answer, which is now band 8+.



The bar chart ¹provides statistics about families who ²lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people ³tended to lean more towards having their own property.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant ⁴choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales ⁵choosing this option. ⁶The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. However, in 1939, it decreased noticeably, falling to less than 70%. While it remained relatively stable until 1953, from this point on, ⁷people gradually became less interested in renting accommodation and the figure dropped steadily. It reached its lowest point of around 30% in 2001, although it did rise slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

In contrast, home ownership followed the opposite trend. In 1918, just over 20% of families ⁸owned a property. Nevertheless, ⁹in 1971, this figure rose rapidly to 50% and from 1981 overtook rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households living in their own home ¹⁰had gone up to more than 60%.

Show answers

Task achievement problems

Use the comments and hints below to address the Task achievement problems in the next exercise.

Paragraph 1

- 1) This is not accurate. A 'household' can sometimes be 'a family' but it may also be a single person; we are not given 'statistics' about these people. Can you make this more accurate?
- 2) This extract is copied directly from the test question, can you paraphrase it?
- 3) There is a vocabulary problem here. 'Lean towards' is a phrasal verb that is used to indicate a preference when someone is still deciding about something. For example, 'She hasn't decided what to study yet, but she is leaning towards architecture.' 'Tended to lean towards' suggests we know about the preferences of these people, but we only know one piece of data and is also not accurate in terms of the meaning and use. Can you make this more accurate? Is there anything missing from the overview? (Hint: What happened in the final decade?)
- 4) and 5) Again, this is not accurate - we do not have data about choices. Can you make the language more accurate? (Hint: Try using 'sector' and 'category')
- 6) This sentence highlights a supporting detail that belongs in the previous sentence (the percentage that shows this is 'the majority'). Cut this sentence and include the percentage in the previous sentence (Hint: You may need to use brackets).
- 7) Again, the language here is not accurate (we do not know what the people were interested in). Can you change this to accurately reflect the data? (Hint: Try to add a comparison to improve the TA score)

Paragraph 2

- 8) This data is not about 'owning a property', it is about whether the people rented or owned the property they were living in – their home. Can you make this more accurate?
- 9) This is not accurate – the figure increased steadily from 1853 rather than rapidly in 1971. A key feature is missing in this summary – can you add it here? (Hint: 50% indicates both were equal at this point).
- 10) Two key points are missing here – 1) the peak figure for home ownership was just below 70% in 2001 2) the final figure is lower than in the previous decade. Also 'more than 60%' sounds lower than it really was (approximately 65%). Can you show this contrast, mention the peak figure, and try to make another comparison?

QUESTION 1

Use the text tool to make notes and click on show answers to see the final corrected answer, which is now band 8+.

The bar chart ¹provides statistics about families who ²lived in owned and rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as people ³tended to lean more towards having their own property.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant ⁴choice, with the majority of residents in England and Wales ⁵choosing this option. ⁶The figure stood at nearly 80% of the total households in both countries. However, in 1939, it decreased noticeably, falling to less than 70%. While it remained relatively stable until 1953, from this point on, ⁷people gradually became less interested in renting accommodation and the figure dropped steadily. It reached its lowest point of around 30% in 2001, although it did rise slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

In contrast, home ownership followed the opposite trend. In 1918, just over 20% of families ⁸owned a property. Nevertheless, ⁹in 1971, this figure rose rapidly to 50% and from 1981 overtook rented accommodation. By the end of the period, the percentage of households living in their own home ¹⁰had gone up to more than 60%.

The bar chart shows the percentage of people who owned their home or lived in rented accommodation in England and Wales from 1918 to 2011. Overall, renting a house became less and less common as more people owned their own home, although this trend showed signs of change at the end of the period.

In 1918, rented accommodation was the dominant sector, with the majority of residents in England and Wales (**nearly 80%**) falling into this category. However, in 1939, it decreased noticeably, falling to less than 70%. While it remained relatively stable until 1953, from this point on, **fewer and fewer people were living in rented accommodation**, and the figure dropped steadily. It reached its lowest point of around 30% in 2001, although it did rise slightly in 2011, the final year of the period.

In contrast, home ownership followed the opposite trend. In 1918, just over 20% of families **owned their own home**. However, this figure rose steadily, and in 1971 it equalled the figure for rented accommodation, overtaking it from 1981. By the end of the period, the percentage of households living in their own home had **reached more than 60%**, although this was slightly lower than its peak of just under 70% in the previous decade.

All done !

11.3 Model answer and Language review

In the next exercise, complete my model answer by filling in the blanks with ONE WORD ONLY. Use the words in the box below to help. NB You may need to change the verbs / adjectives (e.g. to make an adverb, a comparative, or superlative). You will also need to add any necessary articles or prepositions.

Before you start, look at the words in the box and try to predict when and how I may have used them.

Words to Use

Nouns:

Sector, evidence, category, end, decade

Adjectives:

ten-year, continual, dominant, high, slight, few, final, apart, throughout, approximate

Verbs:

decline, reverse, remain, reach, fall, drop, increase, slow, live, rent, contrast, climb, correspond, peak

Try to fill in as many as you can, then check the answers and try again. Complete the task again at a later point to review the language.

Click Here
to Practise

Points to notice

- I wanted to show that the first three years seem separate and are not in a fixed pattern, while the final six years are at regular ten-year intervals. I mentioned this in the introductory sentence and in the paragraphs (by using apart from; with the exception of).
- My overview shows the main trends and also indicates a change in the final year.
- My body paragraphs expand on the trends in the overview, giving more detail but fully supporting the trends I identified at the beginning.
- Notice the comparisons I made even though my paragraphs deal with each category separately.
- Study the language I used in my model and the explanations in the vocabulary note below.

Vocabulary note:

The following phrases are used to show a statement does not apply to **everything**:

- Apart from**
- Except for**
- With the exception of**
 - It fell in every year **apart from** 1992.*
 - It fell in every year **except for** 1992.*
 - It fell in every year **with the exception of** 1992.*
- Reach parity with** = to get to a point where it is equal to something else
 - In 1971 home ownership **reached parity with** renting.*
- Correspond with** = to match or be similar to in some way
 - The falls in renting **corresponded with** the increases in home ownership.*
- Account for** = to form part of the total, make up part of the total
 - Renting **accounted for** just under 80% of all households.*

Practice

Use these two games to practise useful phrases from this lesson. First, match the words to practise collocation.

Click Here
to Practise

Now, see how many of the phrases you can remember in this game of hangman. To play, tap on the letters you think may be in the words. Try to complete the phrase before the drawing is complete. Tap for the next question.



Extra practice

Review your own answer to the question from this lesson.

- Is your overview complete? Does it cover the main trends?
- Are there any key features that you missed in your summary?
- Did you accurately represent the data or are any of your statements *irrelevant* or *inaccurate*?
- Is your information organised logically and into clear paragraphs? (How did you show the main idea? Did you summarise the data chronologically?)
- Check how many comparisons you made – can you add any more?
- Is your language accurate? Think about your choice of words rather than grammatical errors or spelling mistakes.
- Rewrite your answer using as many of the new words and phrases from this lesson as you can. e.g. **account for**, and **correspond with**.

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks with no more than one word. Use the words below to help (NB you may need to change the form of the words). You will also need to add words not in the box, such as prepositions and articles. Fill in as many as you can, then check the answers, and try again. You can clear your answers by clicking on the rubbish bin icon at the top.

Nouns:

Sector, evidence, category, end, decade

Adjectives

ten-year, continual, dominant, high, slight, few, final, apart, throughout, approximate

Verbs:

decline, reverse, remain, reach, fall, drop, increase, slow, live ,rent, contrast, climb, correspond, peak

The graph compares the percentage of households in England and Wales living in [redacted] a rental property or [redacted] home in 1918, 1939, and 1953, and [redacted] intervals [redacted] 1961 and 2011. Overall, the two [redacted] followed [redacted] trends, with renting generally [redacted] as home ownership [redacted]. However, towards [redacted] period, there is [redacted] of this trend [redacted] and home ownership did not reach renting's [redacted] level.

Renting was [redacted] peak in 1918, accounting [redacted] just under 80% [redacted] households. Despite [redacted] almost [redacted] from [redacted] point, it [redacted] the [redacted] category until 1971, when it [redacted] parity with homeownership. [redacted] 1939 and 1953, the figures [redacted] almost every [redacted] until 1991, [redacted] decline [redacted] and renting increased [redacted] in 2011. Nevertheless, in [redacted] 40 years, significantly [redacted] people (40% or lower) were [redacted] in [redacted] accommodation.

This [redacted] starkly [redacted] data [redacted] home ownership, which [redacted] steadily [redacted], again [redacted] exception [redacted] 1939 and 1953. Notably, [redacted] increases [redacted] owning a home [redacted] with the [redacted] renting, and from 1981 [redacted], it was [redacted] common [redacted] renting. However, the figure [redacted] at below 70% in 2001, almost 10% [redacted] the rental peak, and [redacted] 2011 [redacted] fallen [redacted] 65%.

Study the vocabulary and the organisation of my model answer. Make a note of any language you would like to learn.

The graph compares the percentage of households in England and Wales living in either a rental property or their own home in 1918, 1939, and 1953, and at ten-year intervals between 1961 and 2011. Overall, the two sectors followed opposite trends, with renting generally declining as home ownership increased. However, towards the end of the period, there is evidence of this trend reversing and home ownership did not reach renting's highest level.

Renting was at its peak in 1918, accounting for just under 80% of all households. Despite declining almost continually from this point, it remained the dominant category until 1971, when it reached parity with homeownership. Apart from 1939 and 1953, the figures dropped in almost every decade until 1991, when the decline slowed and renting increased slightly in 2011. Nevertheless, in the final 40 years, significantly fewer people (40% or lower) were living in rented accommodation.

This contrasts starkly with the data for home ownership, which climbed steadily throughout, again with the exception of 1939 and 1953. Notably, the increases in owning a home corresponded with the falls in renting, and from 1981 onwards, it was increasingly more common than renting. However, the figure peaked at below 70% in 2001, almost 10% less than the rental peak, and by 2011 had fallen to approximately 65%.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks with no more than one word. Use the words below to help (NB you may need to change the form of the words). You will also need to add words not in the box, such as prepositions and articles. Fill in as many as you can, then check the answers, and try again. You can clear your answers by clicking on the rubbish bin icon at the top.

Nouns:

Sector, evidence, category, end, decade

Adjectives

ten-year, continual, dominant, high, slight, few, final, apart, throughout, approximate

Verbs:

decline, reverse, remain, reach, fall, drop, increase, slow, live, rent, contrast, climb, correspond, peak

The graph compares the percentage of households in England and Wales living in [] a rental property or [] home in 1918, 1939, and 1953, and [] intervals [] 1961 and 2011. Overall, the two [] followed [] trends, with renting generally [] as home ownership []. However, towards [] period, there is [] of this trend [] and home ownership did not reach renting's [] level.

Renting was [] peak in 1918, accounting [] just under 80% [] households. Despite [] almost [] from [] point, it [] the [] category until 1971, when it [] parity with homeownership. [] 1939 and 1953, the figures [] almost every [] until 1991, [] decline [] and renting increased [] in 2011. Nevertheless, in [] 40 years, significantly [] people (40% or lower) were [] in [] accommodation.

This [] starkly [] data [] home ownership, which [] steadily [], again [] exception [] 1939 and 1953. Notably, [] increases [] owning a home [] with the [] renting, and from 1981 [], it was [] common [] renting. However, the figure [] at below 70% in 2001, almost 10% [] the rental peak, and [] 2011 [] fallen [] 65%.

The answer:

The graph compares the percentage of households in England and Wales living in *either* a rental property or *their own* home in 1918, 1939, and 1953, and *at ten-year intervals between* 1961 and 2011. Overall, the two *sectors* followed *opposite* trends, with renting generally *declining* as home ownership *increased*. However, towards *the end of the* period, there is *evidence* of this trend *reversing* and home ownership did not reach renting's *highest* level.

Renting was *at its* peak in 1918, accounting *for* just under 80% *of all* households. Despite *falling* almost *continually* from *this* point, it *remained the dominant* category until 1971, when it *reached* parity with homeownership. *Apart from* 1939 and 1953, the figures *dropped* in almost every *decade* until 1991, *when the* decline *slowed* and renting increased *slightly* in 2011. Nevertheless, in *the final* 40 years, significantly *fewer* people (40% or lower) were *living in rented* accommodation.

This *contrasts* starkly *with the* data *for* home ownership, which *climbed* steadily *throughout*, again *with the* exception *of* 1939 and 1953. Notably, *the increases in* owning a home *corresponded* with the *falls in* renting, and from 1981 *onwards*, it was *increasingly more common than* renting. However, the figure *peaked* at below 70% in 2001, almost 10% *less than* the rental peak, and by 2011 *had fallen to approximately* 65%.

Study the vocabulary and the organisation of my model answer. Make a note of any language you would like to learn.

The graph compares the percentage of households in England and Wales living in *either* a rental property or *their own* home in 1918, 1939, and 1953, and *at ten-year intervals between* 1961 and 2011. Overall, the two sectors followed *opposite* trends, with renting generally *declining* as home ownership *increased*. However, towards *the end of the* period, there is *evidence* of this trend *reversing* and home ownership did not reach renting's *highest* level.

Renting was at its peak in 1918, accounting for just under 80% of all households. Despite declining almost continually from this point, it remained the dominant category until 1971, when it reached parity with homeownership. Apart from 1939 and 1953, the figures dropped in almost every decade until 1991, when the decline slowed and renting increased slightly in 2011. Nevertheless, in the final 40 years, significantly fewer people (40% or lower) were living in rented accommodation.

This contrasts starkly with the data for home ownership, which climbed steadily throughout, again with the exception of 1939 and 1953. Notably, the increases in owning a home corresponded with the falls in renting, and from 1981 onwards, it was increasingly more common than renting. However, the figure peaked at below 70% in 2001, almost 10% less than the rental peak, and by 2011 had fallen to approximately 65%.

All done !

3) reach

category

7) account

with (ii)

parity with

4) with the

6) fall into

common

1) Apart

ownership

2) except

12) on
your

exception
of

a category

5)
correspond

9) the
dominant

8)
increasingly

11) a
rental

13) home

for

14)
contrast

10) at ten-
year

property

from

intervals

for (ii)

with

own

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dominant

8) increasingly

11) a
rental

13) home

for

14) contrast
..

10) at ten-
year

property

from

intervals

for (ii)

with

own

Congratulations!

Vocabulary review



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



1



On your own

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !

Vocabulary review



1



A B C D E F G H I J K L M

N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



2



F a l l i n t o a c a t e g o r y

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !



2



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



3



Contrast with

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !

Vocabulary review



3



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



4



R e a c h p a r i t y w i t h

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !



4



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



5



Home ownership

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !



5



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



6



E | x | c | e | p | t f | o | r

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !



6



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



7



a t t e n - y e a r i n t e r v a l s

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !



7



A B C D E F G H I J K L M

N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



8



A r e n t a l p r o p e r t y

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !



8



A B C D E F G H I J K L M

N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



9



I n c r e a s i n g l y c o m m o n

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !



9



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



10



With the exception of

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !

Vocabulary review



10



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



11



A p a r t f r o m

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !



11



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



12



Correspond with

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !



12



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



13



The dominant category

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WELL DONE !



13



All done!

You found 13 out of 13 words.

The dominant category

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
WELL DONE !

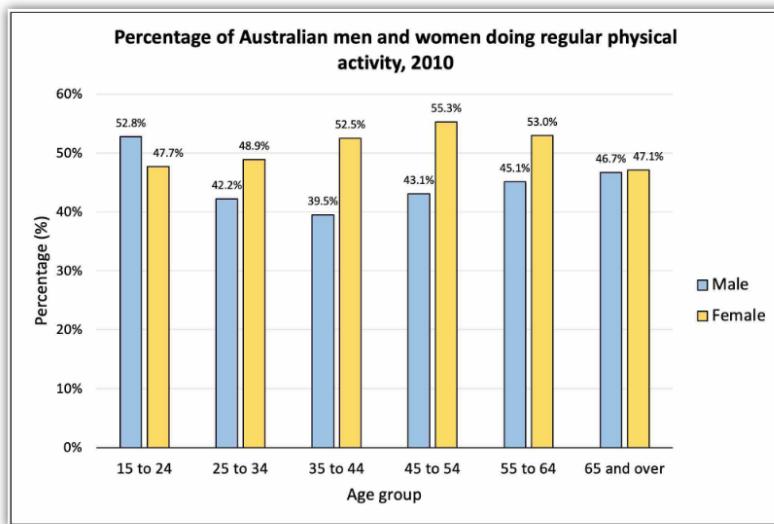
LESSON 12 - Guided Test Practice 2 - Data about People (2)

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 12.1 Writing about gender and age
- 12.2 Timed test practice and making general statements
- 12.3 Model answer

12.1 Writing about gender and age

In this lesson we complete our first timed test practice. Use this to get an idea of how long you need to spend on this task at the moment. We will also look at two more problems when talking about people: gender and age. We will be using the following task, adapted from Cambridge IELTS 12, page 27. Start by looking at the data:



In this task, you are given data about men and women, and the data is divided into different age groups. Look at the following common language problems when people write about men and women (different genders). Can you correct the problems in red?

- **male and female in Australia**
- **With respect to the male's proportion**
- **Australian males' and females' exercises**
- **the percentage of female kept going up, while male fell**

The main problem here is that **male** and **female** are adjectives (**male students, female students** etc.) but the same words are also nouns:

The number of females increased while the number of males decreased.

Although you might need to talk about '**the female**' and '**the male**' if you are given a life cycle of an animal, with charts and data, you are always writing about **more than one**, so you should not be using the singular form unless there is **a plural noun** next to it (in other words, when you are using these words as an adjective).

In your introduction and overview, you can make a general statement about **males** and **females**, or **men** and **women**. You can also add the nationality, to describe the main trends in the behaviour of **Australian men** and **Australian women** in 2010. However, in your body paragraphs, you will mainly refer to the specific age groups. Describing ages also causes problems. Can you correct the problems below?

- **at the stage from 35 to 44,**
- **the first age period**
- **For young women with the age of 15 to 24,**
- **with the exception of 15 to 24 ages**
- **the figure for females went up at almost all the ages given**
- **males tended to be less active at the group age 35 to 44.**
- **at the age group from 25 to 34, men were**
- **Australian men from over 15s to 24 years old**
- **in 65 years old females and over-aged.**

We only use 'stage' or 'period' to talk about a stage or period in life. For example, **childhood, the teenage years, and adulthood** are all examples of **stages** or **periods** in life. However, these terms are not appropriate for our data, which is divided into specific **age groups** or **age ranges**.

Prepositions

As you can see above, there are also problems with prepositions, especially when we are referring to a range of ages. Look at the following examples then the rules below:

- **Women aged 25 to 34...**
- **Men aged between 35 and 44...**
- **Women who were 25 to 34 years old...**
- **Men in the 25- to 35-year-old age group...**
- **This fell from 24 years.**

We use '**at**' with '**the age of**' and '**in**' with an age group or range. When it comes to specific ages, we can use **aged, years old, or year-old**. When giving data like this, we can also just write the 'number + **years**'.

Hyphens

We use hyphens when the number combines with 'year-old' to form a compound adjective or a compound noun. So, we can write the following:

- **I taught a class of ten-year-olds.** (compound noun - plural)
- **I taught a class of ten-year-old children.** (compound adjective)

If we are using a range of ages, we use a hyphen with both numbers in the range:

- **I taught a class of 20- to 25-year-olds.** (compound noun in a range)

The final age group is often presented like this: **60+, 65+** etc. We can express this in two ways:

- **Men aged 60 and over...**
- **Women aged 65 and above...**

Specific age groups

A generation is generally seen as 25 years, so the groups in our data do not represent different generations. **Teenagers** are people aged **thirteen** to **nineteen**, so we cannot use this term for the youngest age group, which goes up to 24. Be careful with 'middle' as it has a specific meaning when combined with 'age'. **Middle-aged** refers to people aged between approximately 40 and 60. You can refer to the '**middle age groups**' (meaning the groups in the middle), but you need to be careful in using this.

Counterparts

Counterparts can be used to refer to a different but similar group. For example, if the whole group consists of **females** divided into different ages, we can avoid repeating 'females' by saying:

Females aged 15 to 24 exercised less than their older counterparts.

If we see the group in terms of age, we can refer to men and women of the same age group as follows:

Females aged 15 to 24 exercised less than their male counterparts.

The same idea can also be used with men and women, or other groups:

Men aged 15 to 24 exercised less than their female counterparts.

Female students played less sport than their male counterparts.

Male managers answered fewer emails than their female counterparts.

Rate

The rate of something can refer to an **exchange rate** (for currency), speed (**at a very fast rate; at a rate of 60 kilometres an hour**), or the number of times something happens (e.g. **the rate of crime / the crime rate**). This data is telling us about the percentage of people who did 'regular' physical activity, in other words, we are discussing their **rate** of physical activity.

Vocabulary note:

We can avoid repeating 'do regular physical activity' by changing the adjective to an adverb (**regularly; on a regular basis**). We can also use the following verbs and phrases:

- **To participate in**
- **participation rate**
- **To take part in**
- **To engage in**

Using exact synonyms

A good synonym for 'physical activity' would be 'exercise'. We cannot use 'sport' because this is a very specific form of physical activity and we do not know whether these people did sport or just some physical activity at home on a regular basis. So we cannot make statements like this:

- **Approximately half of the Australian adults in the year 2010 did some sports.**
- **52.8% of Australian males did a workout.**

Remember the example from lesson 1.2: a tiger is a type of cat, but if we are given data for 'tigers' we cannot apply this to 'cats' in general. Similarly, if we are given data for cats. We cannot apply this to one specific type of cat.

KEY IDEA: Remember, you must describe the data accurately. Only use a synonym that is very close in meaning to the information you are given. If the data is about a broad group (e.g. physical activity), you should not use a specific example of this (e.g. **doing a workout**) as a synonym.

Practice

Use this exercise to practise using the vocabulary from this lesson.

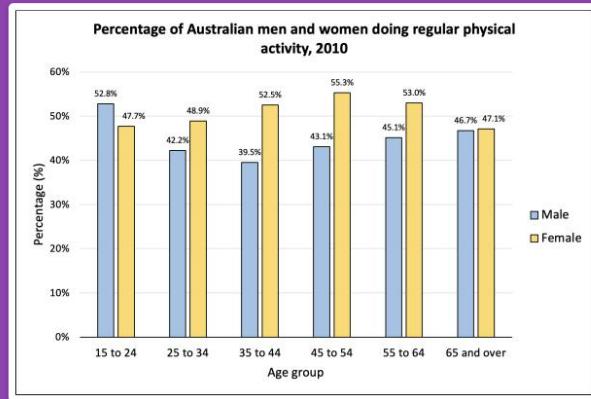
Click Here
to Practise

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in the following extracts using one or two suitable words from this lesson. Use the words below to help. (NB you will not need to use all of these words.)

Prepositions: at, in, from, with,

Adjectives / nouns: age/s, aged, counterparts, females, group, male/s, period, range, stage, year-old, years old



- 1) _____ in the youngest age _____ exercised less than men.
- 2) Women _____ the 35 to 44 _____ ...
- 3) Conversely, _____ the age of 25, men ...
- 4) For young women _____ the age of 15 to 24,
- 5) with the exception of the 15 to 24 _____ group....
- 6) the figure for _____ went up _____ almost every age group
- 7) The lowest participle rate for _____ was _____ the age of 35 to 44.
- 8) With females _____ 65 and over...
- 9) Men who were 15 to 24 _____ exercised more than their older _____.
- 10) 15- to 24- _____ men exercised more than their female _____.

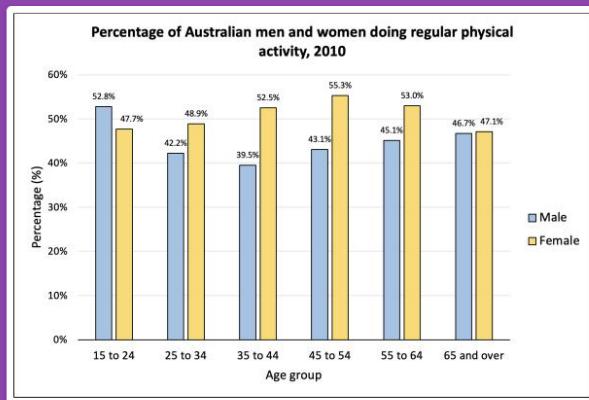
Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in the following extracts using one or two suitable words from this lesson. Use the words below to help. (NB you will not need to use all of these words.)

Prepositions: at, in, from, with,

Adjectives / nouns: age/s, aged, counterparts, females, group, male/s, period, range, stage, year-old, years old



- 1) _____ in the youngest age group exercised less than men.
- 2) Women _____ the 35 to 44 group ...
- 3) Conversely, _____ the age of 25, men ...
- 4) For young women _____ the age of 15 to 24,
- 5) with the exception of the 15 to 24 group....
- 6) the figure for _____ went up _____ almost every age group
- 7) The lowest participle rate for _____ was _____ the age of 35 to 44.
- 8) With females _____ 65 and over...
- 9) Men who were 15 to 24 _____ exercised more than their older _____.
- 10) 15- to 24-year-old men exercised more than their female _____.

The answer:

- 1) *Females* in the youngest age *group* exercised less than men.
- 2) Women *in* the 35 to 44 *age group*...
- 3) Conversely, *at / from* the age of 25, men ...
- 4) For young women *at* the age of 15 to 24,
- 5) with the exception of the 15 to 24 *age group*....
- 6) the figure for *females* went up *in* almost every age group
- 7) The lowest participle rate for *males* was *at* the age of 35 to 44.
- 8) With females *aged* 65 and over...
- 9) Men who were 15 to 24 *years old* exercised more than their older *counterparts*.
- 10) 15- to 24-year-old men exercised more than their female *counterparts*.

All done !

12.2 Timed test practice - making general statements

In this lesson you will begin timed test practice using our test question. As you should now be a little familiar with the data, you should be able to complete this in no more than 20 minutes. However, as you are still developing the skills you need, some people may still need more time, which is fine.

Set a stopwatch or user a timer on your phone as soon as you begin the task and make a note of how long it takes you to complete it. You can either go straight to the task now or complete it after looking at the exercise about making general statements and my notes below.

Thinking and planning

Remember to spend 3-4 minutes doing the following:

- noticing the key details
- identifying the key features
- identifying the main trends
- thinking about how to summarise the main trends in your overview and how to logically organise your answer.

Making general statements

Even more importantly, remember that you must not list the information in the data. We are using the data we are given to make general statements about the people and then providing supporting evidence for those statements from the chart.

Answers that list the information look like this:

Firstly, 52.8% of males and 47.7% of females aged 15 to 24 did regular physical activity, while 42.2% of males and 48.9% of females aged 15 to 24 exercised regularly. In the 25 to 34 age group, 42.2% of males and 48.9% of females...

Use the exercise below to make general statements and then add supporting evidence. Then try to do the same in your writing.

Practice

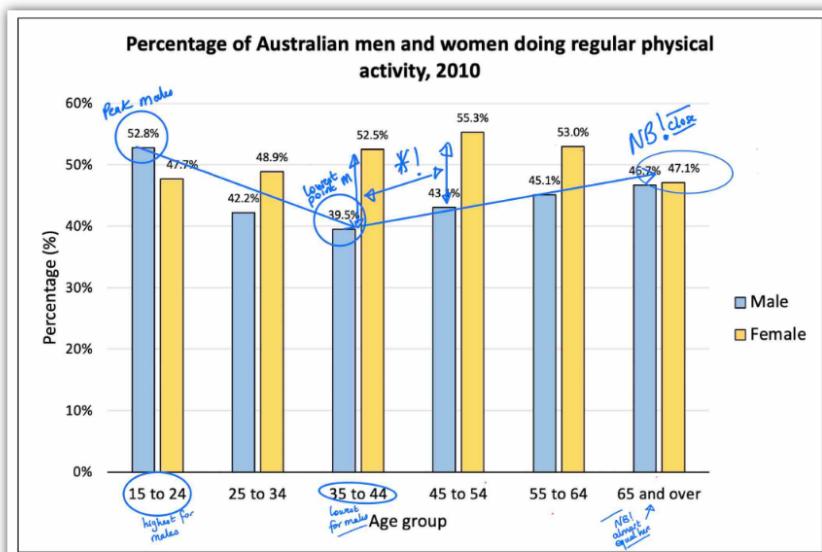
Complete the general statements and then add supporting evidence.

Click Here
to Practise

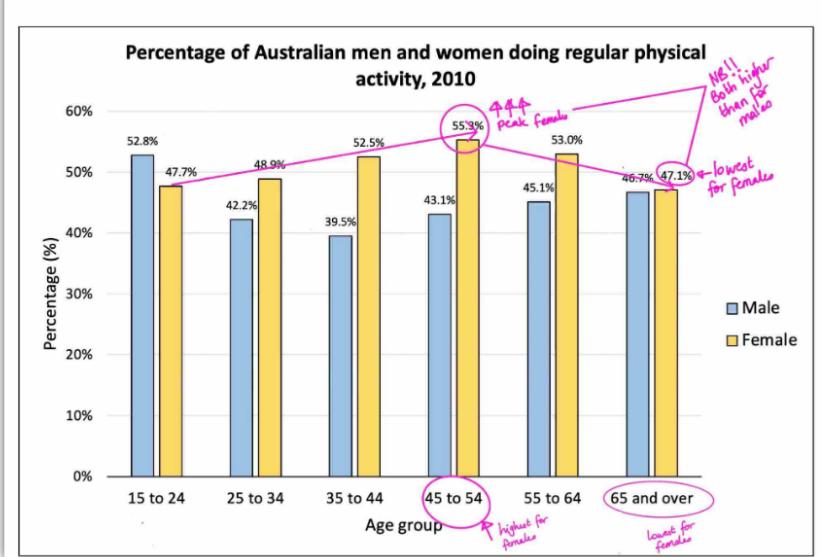
My notes

Look through my notes about the key features and trends in this data.

Key features in the data for men:



Key features in the data for women:

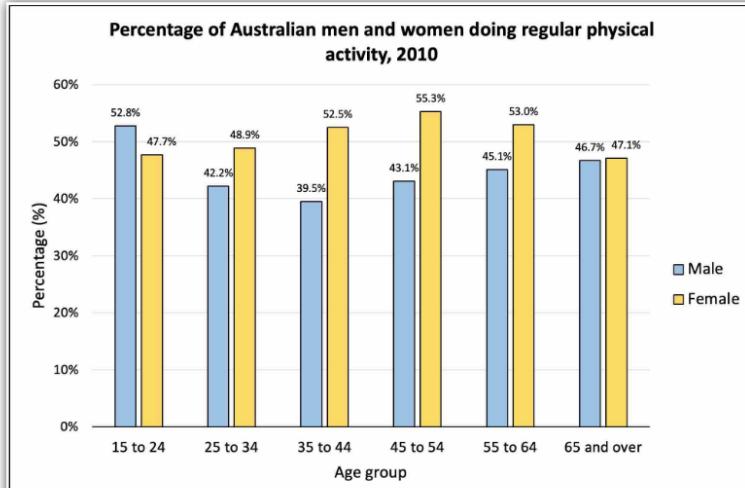


Did you notice the same points? Now write your answer.

Timed Test Practice

The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups who did regular physical activity in 2010.

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



Click on the button below and write your answer here. You can make notes directly on the image using the Text tool or paintbrush tool. Make a note of the time it took you so that you can improve on this.

Click Here
to Practise

Reviewing your answer

Look at the following list of key features in this data. Tick the boxes that show key features you included in your answer.

Key Features

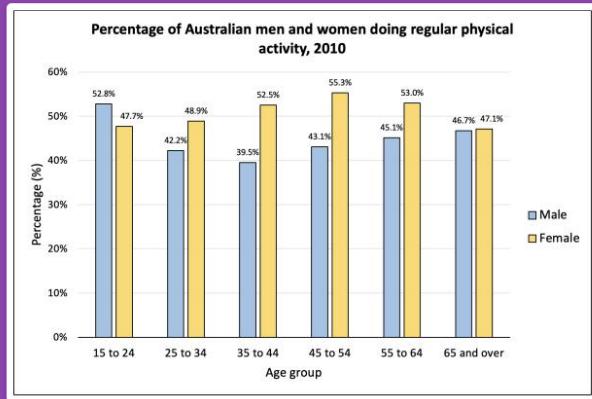
- females increased physical activity with age until 64
- the trend for males was different – decreasing steadily in young adulthood before rising again from 45+
- the highest rate of exercise for females was in the 45-54 age groups
- the peak for men was at age 15-24
- the peak and trough for women were both higher than that for men
- the lowest percentage for women was at age 65
- the lowest point for men was aged 35 to 44 (39.5%)
- the figures for men were mostly under 50%
- the gap between the two genders narrowed as they are older
- at 65 and over the two genders were almost equal

How many of these did you include? You should have mentioned at least 6 of these to cover the main key features in your answer. The first two key features in the list describe the main trends you needed to mention in your overview. Did you include these? Did you remember to add supporting evidence for the general points you made?

KEY IDEA: To improve your Task achievement score, you need to make sure you include the most important key features in your answer. Make general statements about these and then provide supporting evidence from the data. Make sure your overview summarised the main trends, and that you make comparisons where relevant.

QUESTION 1

Complete the general statements by dragging the extracts into the correct place.



at age 45 to 54 numbers declined from this point on in the 35 to 44 age group males outnumbered females the figures for both males and females were almost the same

- 1) In the youngest age group, [] .
- 2) 15 to 24 was the peak age for men as [] .
- 3) Males reached their lowest point [] .
- 4) Female participation rates peaked [] .
- 5) From age 65 and over [] .

QUESTION 2

Now improve these sentences by adding the appropriate supporting evidence.

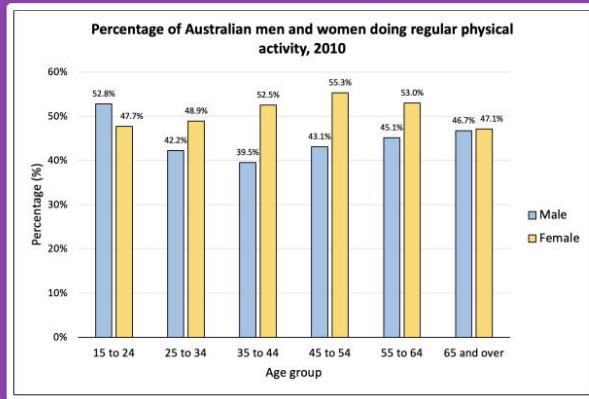
and remained below 50% at 46.7% and 47.1% respectively when they reached 55.3% with 52.8% compared to 47.7% of females when just below 40% exercised regularly

- 1) In the youngest age group, males outnumbered females in doing regular exercise, [] .
- 2) 15 to 24 was the peak age for men as numbers declined from this point on [] .
- 3) Males reached their lowest point in the 35 to 44 age group, [] .
- 4) Female participation rates peaked at age 45 to 54 [] .
- 5) From age 65 and over the figures for males and females were almost the same [] .

[Show answers](#)

QUESTION 1

Complete the general statements by dragging the extracts into the correct place.



at age 45 to 54 numbers declined from this point on in the 35 to 44 age group males outnumbered females the figures for both males and females were almost the same

- 1) In the youngest age group, .
- 2) 15 to 24 was the peak age for men as .
- 3) Males reached their lowest point .
- 4) Female participation rates peaked .
- 5) From age 65 and over .

The answer:

- 1) In the youngest age group, males outnumbered females.
- 2) 15 to 24 was the peak age for men as numbers declined from this point on.
- 3) Males reached their lowest point in the 35 to 44 age group.
- 4) Female participation rates peaked at age 45 to 54.
- 5) From age 65 and over the figures for both males and females were almost the same.

QUESTION 2

Now improve these sentences by adding the appropriate supporting evidence.

and remained below 50% at 46.7% and 47.1% respectively when they reached 55.3% with 52.8% compared to 47.7% of females when just below 40% exercised regularly

- 1) In the youngest age group, males outnumbered females in doing regular exercise, .
- 2) 15 to 24 was the peak age for men as numbers declined from this point on .
- 3) Males reached their lowest point in the 35 to 44 age group, .
- 4) Female participation rates peaked at age 45 to 54 .
- 5) From age 65 and over the figures for males and females were almost the same .

The answer:

- 1) In the youngest age group, males outnumbered females in doing regular exercise, with 52.8% compared to 47.7% of females.
- 2) 15 to 24 was the peak age for men as numbers declined from this point on and remained below 50%.
- 3) Males reached their lowest point in the 35 to 44 age group, when just below 40% exercised regularly.
- 4) Female participation rates peaked at age 45 to 54 when they reached 55.3%.
- 5) From age 65 and over the figures for males and females were almost the same at 46.7% and 47.1% respectively.

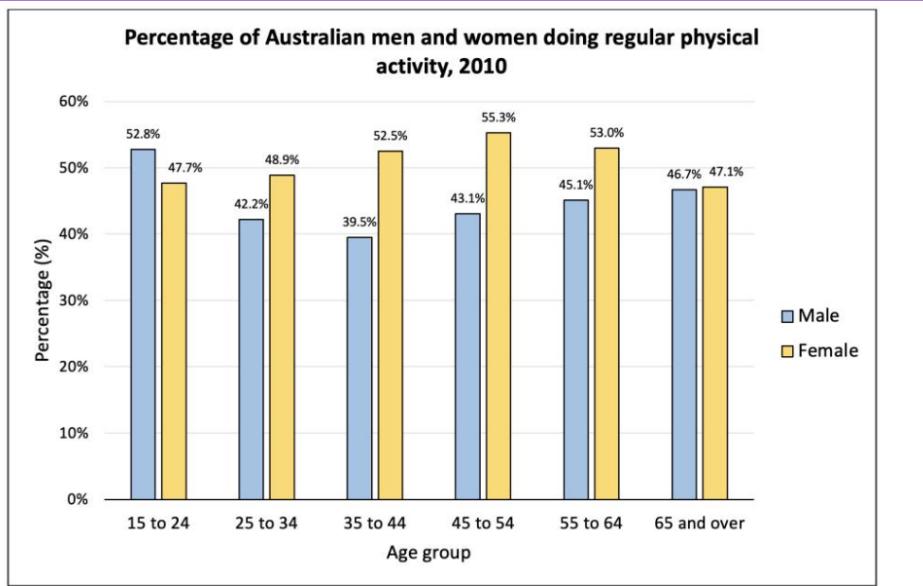
All done !

QUESTION 1

The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups who did regular physical activity in 2010.

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

Write at least 150 words.

**QUESTION 2**

Write your answer below.



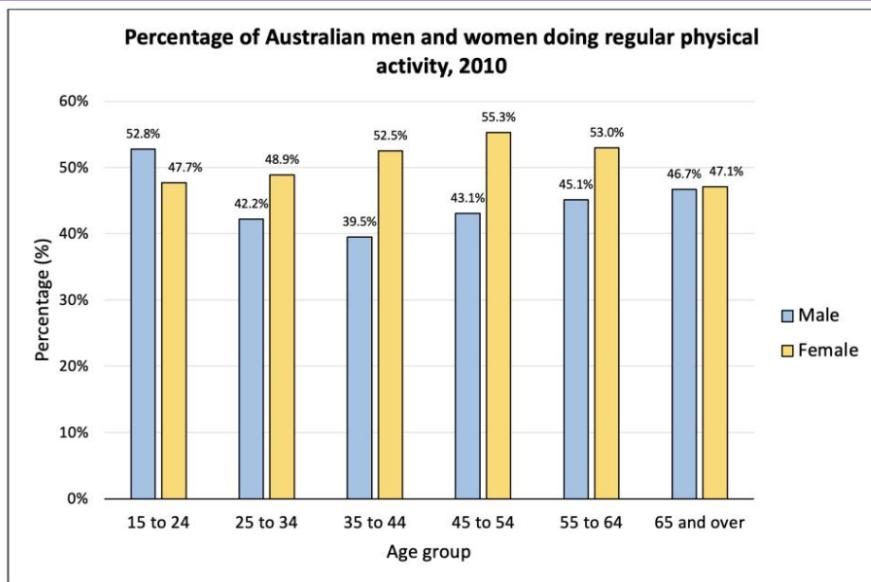
Show answers

QUESTION 1

The bar chart below shows the percentage of Australian men and women in different age groups who did regular physical activity in 2010.

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

Write at least 150 words.



QUESTION 2

Write your answer below.



All done !

12.3 Model answer and Language review

Use the following listening tasks to review my model answer. In the first task, you will listen to five sentences from the first two paragraphs of my answer and put these in order. A jigsaw listening like this helps you to focus on the overall meaning and think about organisation. Try the following to help:

1. Listen to the first extract by clicking on the speaker symbol on the left.
2. Listen again and make notes, or try to write out what you hear.
3. Repeat this for the next extract until you have listened and made notes on each one.
4. Decide on the logical order and match the audio to the correct label on the right. Begin by finding the introduction, then the overview etc.



Points to notice

- My overview summarised the two main trends from the list we saw in 12.2. My body paragraphs also support these trends.
- I used the term 'peak' and 'trough' in the overview. I don't use the word 'trough' very often - I usually refer to 'the lowest point' instead, which feels more natural to me. However, when making a general comment about the lowest and highest points in the overview, the terms 'peak' and 'trough' can be very useful.
- In my body paragraphs, I made general statements about what the data shows and gave supporting evidence.
- We are not writing about changes over time in this task, but we can write about differences between the age groups. I used the simple past throughout, but could also have used the simple present because we are using the data to make general statements about Australians and physical activity. This means we can write:

In contrast, younger females generally exercise less than their older counterparts.

- My body paragraphs are organised into 1) males 2) females. I usually begin with the group that is the leader at the start of the data, but there is no rule about this.
- Within each paragraph, the statements begin with the youngest group then move on to the older ages, in order.
- I made comparisons where relevant.
- I use 'notably' when I want to highlight or point out something particularly noteworthy or interesting:

Notably, more than 50% of women aged 35 to 64 exercised on a regular basis.

- I could have added more in this sentence, making a direct comparison with the corresponding data for males, but I did not want to make my answer too long and I felt the point had been made.
- I am often asked about inversion (when the subject and verb are inverted as in a question). I rarely use this structure unless it is helpful in highlighting a point, which is what I wanted to do in my final sentence:

Only from age 65 and over were the figures for both genders near parity at 46.7% (males) and 47.1% (females).

- In task 2, you might use this structure with '**Only after ...**' For example, in your conclusion: '**Only after** making these changes **will the situation improve.**'

Extra practice

- Look back through any of your previous task 1 answers with data concerning men and women, or groups of different ages. Did you make any mistakes when referring to the different groups? Try to correct them now.
- Write out bullet points for your answer showing the key features you have included. Look back at the chart. Have you included all of the main features or are there some missing? Rewrite your answer to include any key features that are missing.
- Look at the sentences in your answers. Can you find a general point + relevant supporting data? If not, rewrite the sentences to improve the task achievement in your writing.
- Make a note of any language you want to learn from this lesson.
- Rewrite your answer to this task after a week or a few days. Try to practise using some of the vocabulary you have learned.
- If you needed longer than 20 minutes, try to complete the task again in a shorter time.

QUESTION 1

Listen to five extracts from the first part of my answer. Make notes if you prefer, then match the extract to the correct label on the right.

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Introduction |
| | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Overview |
| | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | BP Sentence 1 |
| | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | BP Sentence 2 |
| | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | BP Sentence 3 |

QUESTION 2

Now listen to four extracts from the second body paragraph. They are in the correct order. As you listen, try to write out as much as you can.

It may help to begin by writing down the key words given and listening for them in the recording, then adding the words around them.

Paragraph 2, Sentence 1:
contrast, exercised, counterparts



¶ ↩ ↪ B I S U ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡

QUESTION 3

Paragraph 2, Sentence 2.
participation, marginally, peaking



¶ ↩ ↪ B I S U ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡

QUESTION 4

Paragraph 2, sentence 3
Notably, exercised, basis



¶ ↩ ↪ B I S U ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡

QUESTION 5

Paragraph 2 sentence 4 (NB two of the words in this sentence are in brackets).
over, genders, parity



Read and listen to the complete model.



Model answer

The bar chart shows the percentage of Australian men and women of different ages who engaged in regular exercise in the year 2010. Overall, female participation generally increased with age, while the reverse was true for males until middle age, and males experienced a lower peak and trough than the corresponding figures for females.

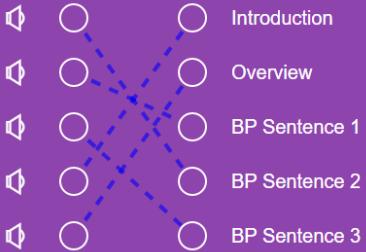
In the youngest age group, males outnumbered females, with 52.8% of 15- to 24-year-olds taking part in regular activity compared to 47.7% of females. However, this was the peak age range for men as numbers declined from this point on, reaching their lowest point at 35 to 44 years, when just under 40% exercised regularly. Although the figure increased again from the age of 45, male participation rates remained below 50% for almost all age groups.

In contrast, the younger females generally exercised less than their older counterparts. From the age of 25, female participation rates increased marginally but steadily, peaking at 55.3% between the ages of 45 and 54, then falling to their lowest point (47.1%) in the oldest group. Notably, more than 50% of women aged 35 to 64 exercised on a regular basis. Only from age 65 and over were the figures for both genders near parity at 46.7% (males) and 47.1% (females).

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Listen to five extracts from the first part of my answer. Make notes if you prefer, then match the extract to the correct label on the right.



The bar chart shows the percentage of Australian men and women of different ages who engaged in regular exercise in the year 2010. Overall, female participation generally increased with age, while the reverse was true for males until middle age, and males experienced a lower peak and trough than the corresponding figures for females.

In the youngest age group, males outnumbered females, with 52.8% of 15- to 24-year-olds taking part in regular activity compared to 47.7% of females. However, this was the peak age range for men as numbers declined from this point on, reaching their lowest point at 35 to 44 years, when just under 40% exercised regularly. Although the figure increased again from the age of 45, male participation rates remained below 50% for almost all age groups.

QUESTION 2

Now listen to four extracts from the second body paragraph. They are in the correct order. As you listen, try to write out as much as you can.

It may help to begin by writing down the key words given and listening for them in the recording, then adding the words around them.

Paragraph 2, Sentence 1:
contrast, exercised, counterparts

A screenshot of a video player interface. At the top, there's a progress bar showing '00:00' at the start and '00:06' at the end, with a volume icon. Below the progress bar is a toolbar with the following icons from left to right: a trash can, a copy symbol, a paste symbol, bold ('B'), italic ('I'), underline ('U'), a list icon (bullet or numbered), a black ink bottle, a red ink bottle, a blue ink bottle, and a green ink bottle.

In contrast, the younger females generally exercised less than their older counterparts.

QUESTION 3

Paragraph 2, Sentence 2.
participation, marginally, peaking

A horizontal toolbar with the following icons from left to right: a trash can, a copy symbol, a paste symbol, a bold 'B', an italic 'I', an underline 'U', a font size down arrow, a font size up arrow, a left align symbol, a center align symbol, a right align symbol, a full justify symbol, a list icon, a bullet point icon, a black ink bottle, a red ink bottle, and a blue ink bottle.

From the age of 25, female participation rates increased marginally but steadily, peaking at 55.3% between the ages of 45 and 54, then falling to their lowest point (47.1%) in the oldest group.

QUESTION 4

Paragraph 2, sentence 3
Notably, exercised, basis

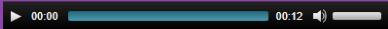
▶ 00:00 00:09 🔊

Notably, more than 50% of women aged 35 to 64 exercised on a regular basis.

(NB This is notable because of the statement made at the end of the previous paragraph.)

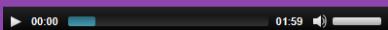
QUESTION 5

Paragraph 2 sentence 4 (NB two of the words in this sentence are in brackets).
over, genders, parity



Only from age 65 and over were the figures for both genders near parity at 46.7% (males) and 47.1% (females).

Read and listen to the complete model.



Model answer

The bar chart shows the percentage of Australian men and women of different ages who engaged in regular exercise in the year 2010. Overall, female participation generally increased with age, while the reverse was true for males until middle age, and males experienced a lower peak and trough than the corresponding figures for females.

In the youngest age group, males outnumbered females, with 52.8% of 15- to 24-year-olds taking part in regular activity compared to 47.7% of females. However, this was the peak age range for men as numbers declined from this point on, reaching their lowest point at 35 to 44 years, when just under 40% exercised regularly. Although the figure increased again from the age of 45, male participation rates remained below 50% for almost all age groups.

In contrast, the younger females generally exercised less than their older counterparts. From the age of 25, female participation rates increased marginally but steadily, peaking at 55.3% between the ages of 45 and 54, then falling to their lowest point (47.1%) in the oldest group. Notably, more than 50% of women aged 35 to 64 exercised on a regular basis. Only from age 65 and over were the figures for both genders near parity at 46.7% (males) and 47.1% (females).

All done !

LESSON 13 - Pie Charts, Stacked Bar charts, and Future predictions

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 13.1 Dealing with Pie charts
- 13.2 Test practice and being precise
- 13.3 Model answer and Stacked bar charts

13.1 Dealing with Pie Charts; Future predictions

In this lesson, we will look at pie charts and stacked bar charts. After doing timed test practice, we will also look at a band 7 answer so you can compare this to your level now and help improve it to make a band 8 answer.

Dealing with Pie charts

A key feature to remember with pie charts is that we can only use one if we have a total of 100%. When the total is less than 100%, a different form of bar chart is used.

A pie chart 'breaks' the total 'down' into categories. You can use the phrasal verb '**to break down**' or the noun form (**breakdown**) in your introductory sentence:

- **The pie charts show the population of Sweden and Australia broken down into ...**
- **The pie chart gives/provides a breakdown of spending ... (etc.)**

Pie charts help us to clearly visualise the percentages because we can see the information divided into different sized '**portions**', which can also be a useful word to use in your overview. For example, if we have a pie chart showing how the total annual budget for a company was spent, we can say:

The greatest portion of the budget was allocated to technology.

Percentages and fractions

Perhaps because the segments or portions of the circle or 'pie' are easy to visualise, it is tempting to refer to fractions (e.g. **a half**, **a third**, **a quarter** etc.). This is a nice way to avoid repeating 'percentage' in your answer, but you do need to be consistent. Look at the following problem:

Online music sales showed the highest growth of 12% from just over a fifth to constitute about a third of overall online sales for the given sectors.

This mixture of percentages and fractions is confusing for the reader – it does not give us a clear picture of what the data for online music sales is. If we tried to recreate the pie chart from a summary like this, we would not be able to do it. If you want to use fractions, it is better to limit these to the most common and be sure to give the real data to support your statement. For example:

Online music sales showed the highest growth over this period increasing from a quarter (25%) to just over a third of all online sales (36%).

KEY IDEA: Be careful if you are using a mixture of fractions and percentages. This is not a maths test and you should not force the examiner to check if your maths is correct! Just use the most common fractions (**a half**, **a third**, **a quarter** etc.) and support this by giving the data from the question.

We write percentages as a figure rather than in words and you do not need to write the word percent. Write 3% not **three percent** or **three%**. However, you should write '**percentage**' as a word (not **%age**). Be careful not to repeat percentage and % in the same sentence as this is repetitive. For example, you should write:

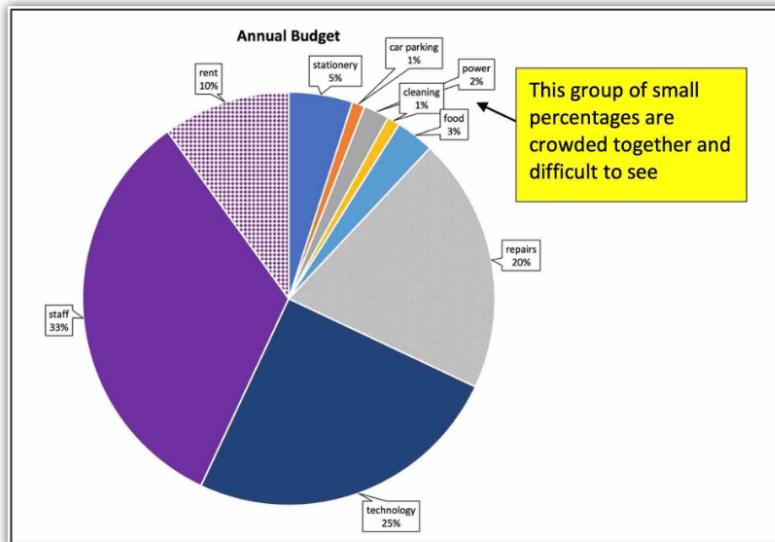
The youngest group is predicted to drop to 37%.

Instead of

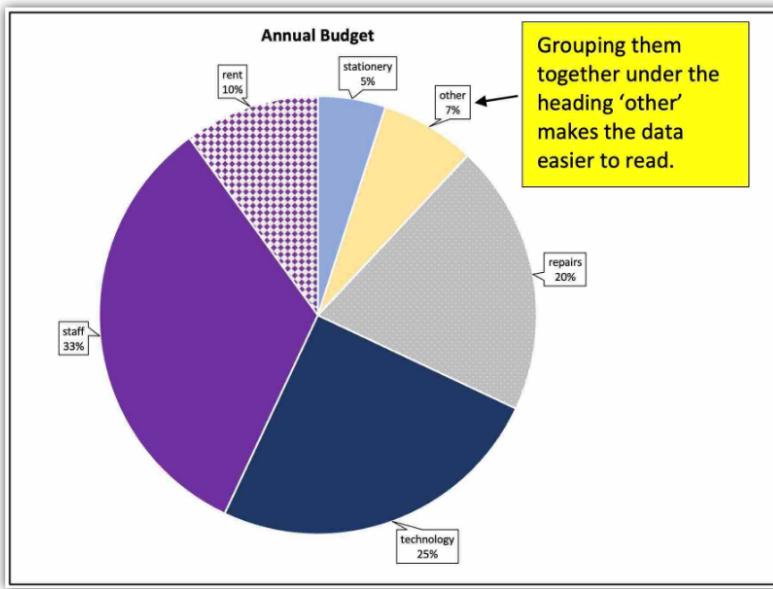
The percentage of the youngest group is predicted to drop to 37%.

Other

Sometimes a pie chart is divided into many categories, like this:



If this looks too crowded, it can be difficult to read, and so smaller percentages are often grouped together and called '**Other**', like this:



In the second pie chart, four small categories (car parking (1%), power (2%), cleaning (2%), and food (3%)) have been combined together to form the category labelled, 'Other (7%)'.

If the portion for 'Other' is relatively small, you can ignore it as a minor detail. However, if this is a significant number then you should treat it as a key feature and mention it in your summary. There are no fixed rules about this, but here are some guidelines to help you decide if this category can be seen as significant:

Include '**Other**' in your summary if:

- ***There are not many categories***
- ***It is more than 5%***
- ***It is greater than another category***
- ***This portion grows or shrinks in a second pie chart***

You need to be careful when you write about the 'Other' category because you cannot use this word on its own, like this:

- ***Other made up a further 7% of the budget.***
- ***A further 7% of the budget was spent on 'Other'.***
- ***The smallest type of cost was **other**, at 7%.***

Instead, you need to add a noun. In the pie chart above, the categories are 'expenses' or 'costs', so you can write:

- ***Other expenses / costs made up a further 7% of the budget.***
- ***A further 7% of the budget was spent on other costs.***

Future predictions – the future perfect

The test practice task we are going to use in this lesson has pie charts that show predictions for the future. We can see this kind of predicted data on other charts too, such as line graphs. To write about future predictions, we can use will, but you can also show a range of grammar by using the following words and phrases:

Language used to write about future predictions:

Nouns:

- *Estimations of*
- *Projections for*
- *Predictions for*

Adjectives

- Predicted
- Estimated
- Projected
- Expected
- Anticipated

Verbs:

- To *be estimated to*
- To *be expected to*
- To *be predicted to*
- To *be projected to*

NB we can also use these verbs with a preparatory "It" followed by 'that' + a clause.

- It is *estimated that* something *will happen / will have happened*
- It is *expected that* something *will happen / will have happened*
- It is *predicted that* something *will happen / will have happened*
- It is *projected that* something *will happen / will have happened*

For example:

- The cost of petrol *is predicted to increase* to \$5 per gallon in 2040.
- *It is predicted that* the cost of petrol *will increase to* \$5 per gallon in 2040.

Notice that, in the list above, we can use the future perfect 'will have done'. As we saw in lesson 6.1, we can only use the perfect tenses if we have two different dates / times. With the present perfect, one date will be in the past and one in the present. With the past perfect, both dates are in the past. The future perfect links the present to a time in the future.

To use the future perfect, we use 'By' with the future date:

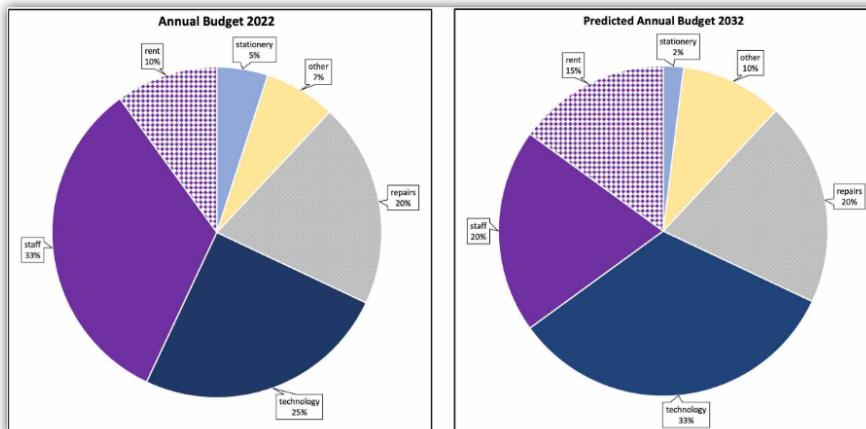
- *By 2040, it is predicted that* the cost of petrol *will have increased to* \$5 per gallon.
- *By 2040, the cost of petrol is predicted to have increased to* \$5 per gallon.

So, we can say '*to be predicted to be / to do something*' or '*to be predicted to have done something*'.

Notice that the verbs above (*predict* etc.) are being used passively (*to be predicted*). The data is produced by someone (we assume experts) but in Task 1 your language should be as impersonal as possible. Notice also that this verb is in the present tense because the experts are predicting this data **now**.

Practice

Look at the following pie charts then use the information to complete the sentences in the practice exercise.



NB This is not a writing task (there is not enough to write about). It is just an opportunity to practise this language.

Click Here
to Practise

KEY IDEA: Try to see each test as an opportunity to show your language skills. If you see future predictions in a question, instead of worrying about this, think 'Great, now I can use my future tenses!'

QUESTION 1

Fill in the gaps in each of the sentences below using the words in brackets to help. Each gap needs THREE words. The words you are given are in the correct order but you may need to make changes to them and add prepositions.

1) (predict)

Rent [] increase from 10% to 15% of the total budget in 2032.

2) (anticipate / remain)

[] that the cost of repairs [] same in 2032 at 20% of the budget.

3) (predict / increase)

By 2032, [] that technology [] to a third of the budget at 33%.

4) (estimate)

By 2032, spending on technology is [] risen from 25% to 33%.

5) (project / spend / rise)

By 2032, [] technology [] from 25% to 33%.

6) (expect)

Staffing costs [] reduce from 33% to 20% in 2032.

7) (estimate / spend / fall / other)

[] stationery [] 2%, while [] increase to 10%.

8) (pie chart / breakdown / annual budget / projection)

[] give [] in 2022 [] 2032.

9) (pie chart / annual / spend / estimated / cost)

[] show [] budget [] 2022 and [] 2032.

[Show answers](#)

QUESTION 1

Fill in the gaps in each of the sentences below using the words in brackets to help. Each gap needs THREE words. The words you are given are in the correct order but you may need to make changes to them and add prepositions.

1) (predict)

Rent [] increase from 10% to 15% of the total budget in 2032.

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By 2032, [] that technology [] to a third of the budget at 33%.

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Staffing costs [] reduce from 33% to 20% in 2032.

7) (estimate / spend / fall / other)

[] stationery [] 2%, while [] increase to 10%.

8) (pie chart / breakdown / annual budget / projection)

[] give [] in 2022 [] 2032.

9) (pie chart / annual / spend / estimated / cost)

[] show [] budget [] 2022 and [] 2032.

The answer:

1) (predict)

Rent *is predicted to* increase from 10% to 15% of the total budget in 2032.

2) (anticipate / remain)

It is anticipated that the cost of repairs *will remain the* same in 2032 at 20% of the budget.

3) (predict / increase)

By 2032, *it is predicted that* technology *will have increased* to a third of the budget at 33%.

4) (estimate)

By 2032, spending on technology is *estimated to have* risen from 25% to 33%.

5) (project / spend / rise)

By 2032, *it is projected that* spending on technology *will have risen* from 25% to 33%.

6) (expect)

Staffing costs *are expected to* reduce from 33% to 20% in 2032.

7) (estimate / spend / fall / other)

It is estimated that spending on stationery *will fall to* 2%, while *other expenses will / other costs will* increase to 10%.

8) (pie chart / breakdown / annual budget / projection)

The pie charts give a breakdown of the annual budget in 2022 and projections for 2032.

9) (pie chart / annual / spend / estimated / cost)

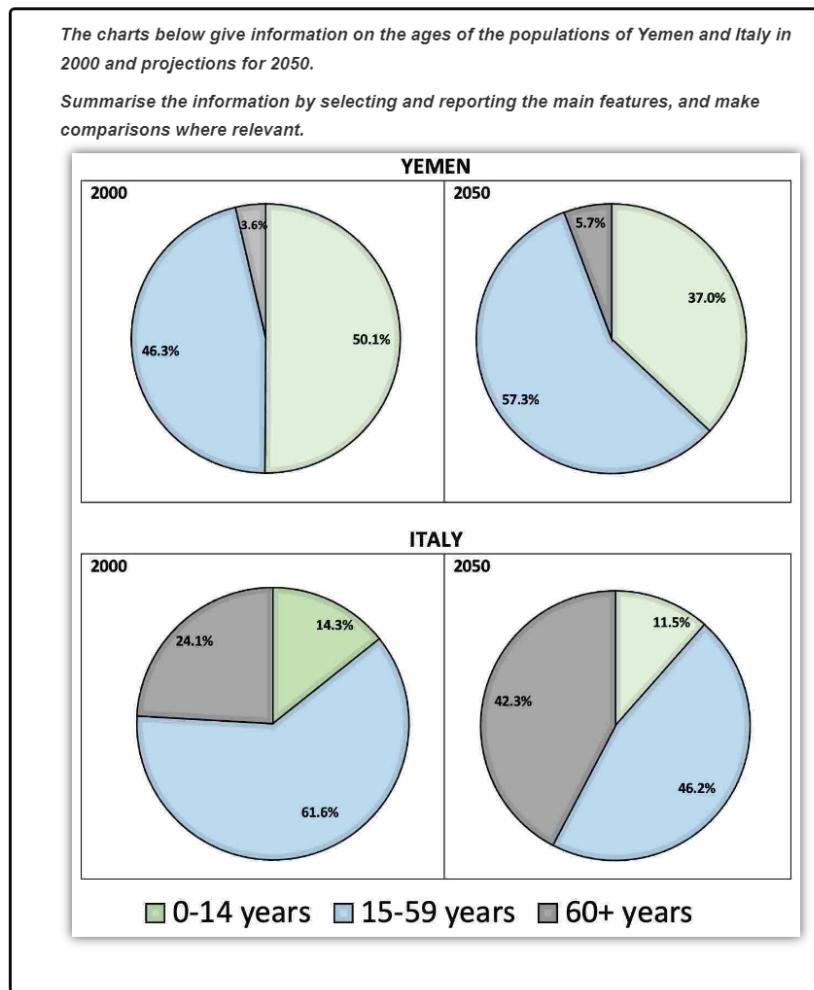
The pie charts show how the annual budget was spent in 2022 and estimated costs for 2032.

All done !

13.2 Test practice and being precise

Timed test practice

The test practice for this lesson is based on the following writing task, which has been adapted from Cambridge IELTS 9, page 77. Read my notes then complete the task below.



Notes on this task

There are relatively few pieces of data to summarise here. Because of this, it is easy to fall into the trap of listing all of the information. To prevent this, remember to:

- *think about what the data tells us about changes in the populations of these two countries*
- *make general statements about these changes*
- *and give supporting evidence*

It may help to write bullet points about the key changes you can see and then use these to write your answer – you can do this in the exercise below.

If you are still struggling when it comes to writing an overview, try writing it after you have made notes about the main changes, or even after you have completed your paragraphs. This may help you to get a better idea of the main trends. When you write your answer, remember the language points from lesson 12 about age groups, and try to use some of the language from 13.1 to write about future predictions. Again, make a note of your time, and try to keep to 20 minutes or under.

Test Practice

Click Here
to Practise

Click on the link below to see the main changes I noted. How many of these did you include in your answer? The first two in the list are key trends - did you include these in your overview?

See The Answer

Problematic overviews

Can you identify the problems in the following two overviews. Both are unclear, can you identify why?

1) Overall, it is clear that in 2000, the majority of people were aged 0-14 years and 15-59 years in Yemen and Italy respectively, which is expected to be dominated by the same age group in Italy, but would be replaced by middle-aged group in Yemen in 2050.

2) To conclude, by comparing the given pie graphs, we can infer that in 2050, the demography of Yemen is predicted to be similar to that of 2000 with slight difference of nearly 10% in the statistics. However, for Italy, it is expected that an apparent demographic change will affect the population structure in the form of the significant growth of the number of people aged 60 and above.

Click below to see my comments.

See The Answers

Think about your overview – did you include the following main trends?

In both countries, the population is younger in 2000 / will be older in 2050

Yemen will have a younger population than Italy in 2050 / Italy will have an older population than Yemen

NB – you may have expressed these trends differently (e.g. stating that Yemen will have more people aged... etc.) which is fine.

Is your language and referencing clear? Is your language concise or have you added unnecessary extra words and phrases? Consider this extract from the second overview:

'for Italy, it is expected that an apparent demographic change will affect the population structure in the form of the significant growth of the number of people aged 60 and above' (31 words),

I changed this to:

Italy's population is expected to have significantly more people aged 60 and above. (13 words)

Other examples of unnecessary phrases are:

After comparing the two pie charts, ... It can clearly be seen that; From a careful analysis of the given data...

Words are precious in a summary, don't waste them on unnecessary phrases that add nothing.

KEY IDEA: A summary must be concise – your word count is precious so don't waste it on unnecessary or empty phrases like 'we can see / observe that.'

Being precise

Below is a band 7 answer to this question. Interestingly, the organisation is different to my answer, which you will see in 13.3. This writer chose to write about the year 2000 and then the predictions for 2050. There is no right or wrong way to organise the information – you just need to make a decision and then make sure you can logically describe the information before you begin writing. However, I do think this method can prevent you from making comparisons or describing the main changes.

KEY IDEA: There is no 'correct' way to organise your answer. You need to make a decision and only begin writing when you have checked that you can write clearly and logically (without jumping backwards and forwards), and that you can make comparisons. Be careful to write about the changes, not just two separate situations (i.e. The populations in 2000 then the populations in 2050).

Read through the answer and then complete the task.

Band 7 sample answer

The pie-charts compare the percentages of three age-group of the Italian population and the Yemenite one in 2000. They also provide future forecasts for 2050. The age groups taken under consideration are: 0-14 year old, 15-59 year old and over 60 year old. Overall, we can observe that in 2000 the population in Yemen was almost entirely made by people aged from 0 to 59, while in Italy there was more difference between the ages. Nevertheless, in the future it is likely that both the countries will have the majority of their inhabitants aged between 15 and 59 years old.

Having a deeper look at the 2000 situation, we can notice that in Yemen the youngsters accounted for half the population. The middle-aged citizens were another 46%, while the elderly accounted only for less than 4%. In contrast, in Italy, two-thirds of the population were in the 15-59 years group, the elderly were a quarter of the total, and very young people were only just under 15%.

Interestingly, experts forecast a different situation for 2050. It is predicted that in Yemen the majority of the population will be middle-aged. In addition, the youngest group will probably show a decrease of almost 13%, and the over 60 will have a slight increase of only 2%. Conversely, in Italy we could witness a more balanced situation, where more than three-quarters of the population could be equally distributed over the two eldest categories, whereas the percentage for the first age-group will only be 11.5%.

This writer tried to express complex ideas using the language they know. The result is 'effective' (because we full understand the points) but the language is not always 'accurate' or 'precise', and so this is a good example of band 7 'flexibility'.

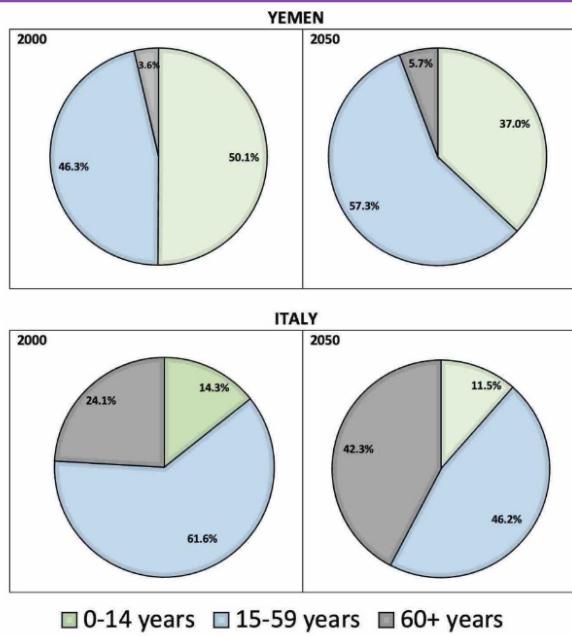
Practice

Use the notes and comments in the task below to address these problems and make this a band 8 answer.

Click Here
to Practise

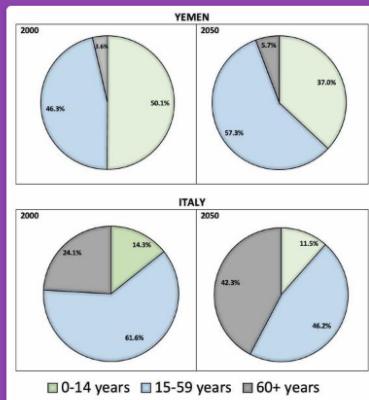
QUESTION 1

Make notes on the image below if you find this helpful.

**QUESTION 2**

Write bullet points about the key changes you can see. Use the following headings:

- 1) Yemen - Changes between 2000 and 2050
- 2) Italy - Changes between 2000 and 2050

**QUESTION 3**

Use your bullet points to help you write your answer to this question. Make sure to make general statements about the changes you noticed and give supporting evidence. Don't forget to make comparisons.



- 1** In both countries, the population is younger in 2000 / older in 2050
- 2** Yemen will have a younger population than Italy in 2050//Italy will have an older population than Yemen
- 3** In 2000, the population of Yemen was young – just over 50% were 14 and under
- 4** (In Yemen,) the youngest age group will be lower in 2050 (dropping to 37%)
- 5** (In Yemen,) the two older age groups will increase in 2050
- 6** (In Yemen,) the majority of inhabitants will be aged 15-59 in 2050 (57.3%)
- 7** (In Italy,) the population in 2000 was much older than Yemen (only 14.3% aged 0-14)
- 8** (In Italy,) the majority of the population in 2000 was aged 15-59 (61.6%)
- 9** (In Italy,) in 2050 the youngest and middle groups will decline (to 11.6% and 46.2%)
- 10** (In Italy,) in 2050 the oldest group will double in size (from 24.1% to 42.3%)
- 11** There is a big difference between the size of the oldest group in Yemen and Italy in 2050 (42.3% and 6%)

1) Overall, it is clear that in 2000, the majority of people were aged 0-14 years and 15-59 years in Yemen and Italy respectively, which is expected to be dominated by the same age group in Italy, but would be replaced by middle-aged group in Yemen in 2050.

2) To conclude, by comparing the given pie graphs, we can infer that in 2050, the demography of Yemen is predicted to be similar to that of 2000 with slight difference of nearly 10% in the statistics. However, for Italy, it is expected that an apparent demographic change will affect the population structure in the form of the significant growth of the number of people aged 60 and above.

My Comments

1) The first overview is unclear because of language problems, which make it very difficult to follow. The referencing in particular is very unclear – we do not know what the final two clauses refer to (which is expected to be dominated by the same age group in Italy, but would be replaced by middle-aged group in Yemen in 2050.) This overview does not meet the requirements for band 6 and is closer to band 5 in Task achievement.

2) This overview was given at the end of a very long answer (332 words). Given that you should not draw conclusions or give an opinion about the data in Task 1, I don't recommend using the verb 'infer'. This 'overview', is very wordy (68 words). This should be a concise summary not a lengthy description. If we shorten it, removing the unnecessary details, we can see another problem:

"To conclude, in 2050, the demography of Yemen is predicted to be similar to that of 2000 with a slight difference of nearly 10% in the statistics. However, Italy's population is expected to have significantly more people aged 60 and above." (41 words)

The first sentence is not accurate (the total difference in the data is more than 10%) and both sentences only give us part of the picture. So, although there is an overview, it is not a 'complete' or 'clear' overview and so would not meet the criteria for higher than band 6.

Introduction and overview

The pie-charts (1) compare three age-groups of the Italian population and the Yemenite one in 2000. They also provide future forecasts for 2050. The age groups (2) taken under consideration are: 0-14 year old, 15-59 year old and over 60 year old. Overall, (3) we can observe that in 2000 the population in Yemen was almost entirely made by people aged from 0 to 59, while in Italy there was more difference between the ages. Nevertheless, in the future it is likely that (4) both the countries will have the majority of their inhabitants aged between 15 and 59 years old.

Body paragraph 1

(5) Having a deeper look at the 2000 situation, we can notice that in Yemen the youngsters accounted for half the population. (6) The middle-aged citizens were another 46%, while the elderly accounted only for less than 4%. (7) In contrast, in Italy, two-thirds of the population were in the 15-59 years group, the elderly were a quarter of the total, and very young people were only just under 15%.

Body paragraph 2

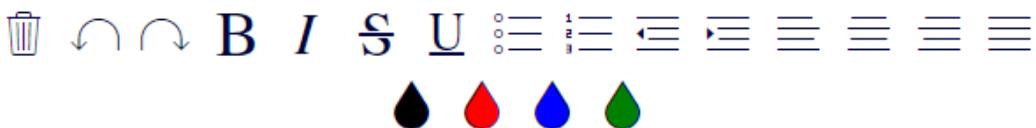
(8) Interestingly, experts forecast a different situation for 2050. (9) It is predicted that in Yemen the majority of the population will be middle-aged. (10) In addition, the youngest group will probably show a decrease of almost 13%, and the over 60 will have a slight increase of only 2%. (11) Conversely, in Italy we could witness a more balanced situation, where more than three-quarters of the population could be equally distributed over the two eldest categories, whereas the percentage for the first age-group will only be 11.5%.

QUESTION 1

Read through the comments and suggestions below. Then rewrite the introduction and overview to make the language more precise and help change this to a Band 8 answer.

Introduction:

- 1) The charts don't 'compare age groups', they compare or show the how the two populations are broken down, so the order or focus needs to change; age groups should be plural and should not be hyphenated; only use 'one' in this way in spoken language when making a choice between two previously mentioned things (e.g. I'll have the blue one). Refocus this sentence to begin with the populations – think about what the pie charts are being used to tell us about these populations.
- 2) The correct phrase is 'take into consideration' or 'take into account'. However, this isn't precise. These age ranges were 'chosen' by whoever created the pie chart. (You could also use 'divide into'). There are errors in the age ranges - can you fix them? Rewrite this using the verb 'to choose' or 'divide into' and address the age range problems. Can you combine this with the previous sentence using 'namely' and include the information in sentence two about 2050?



QUESTION 2

Overview:

- 3) The first phrase is unnecessary - it is better to delete this; the correct phrasal verb is: to be made up of – you can also

use 'consist of'; we need to say either' 'more variation in' or 'a greater difference between'; the difference is between the 'age groups'.

4) Instead of 'both the countries will have' start with 'the majority' and change 'to have' to 'to be'. NB We often leave out 'the' after 'both'.



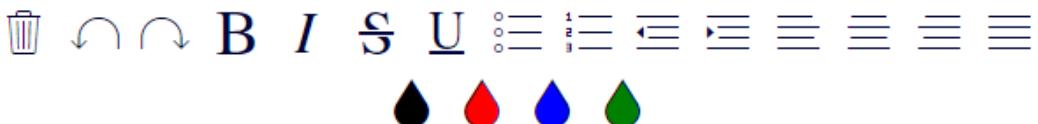
QUESTION 3
Body paragraph 1

5) The correct phrase is 'to take a closer look at' or 'to look at...in more detail'; 'situation' is not accurate here (and is used later) we can refer to the charts, the data, the populations; 'we can notice that' is again unnecessary – delete this. A 'youngster' is defined as a young person aged 14-21 and so is not accurate here, also, I would never naturally use this word – it is a word I only expect elderly people to use, often when complaining about 'You youngsters today!' Change this to 'the youngest group' and add supporting evidence.

6) This is better added to the previous sentence. Middle-aged means aged approximately 40 to 65, so this is not accurate; the verb 'were' needs to be replaced (use account for, constitute, or made up); the order needs to change so that the preposition 'for' is next to the verb 'accounted'. The use of 'only' seems odd next to 'less than' – change this to the precise data or remove 'only'.

7) Change the verb 'to be' as above and make the data more accurate and precise (e.g. by adding supporting evidence for 'two thirds' - is this two thirds?); how do we refer to these age

groups? (very young people is an odd way to refer to babies and small children, who are included in the 0-14 age group – it is better to just give the age range here). To avoid repeating the same structures (and verbs) throughout, change the final verb to either ‘there were’ or ‘were aged..’



QUESTION 4

Body paragraph 2

- 8) Make this passive so that the language is impersonal. This sentence is not very ‘interesting’ – we expect the populations to be ‘different’ after 50 years. Describing it as ‘very different’ or ‘completely different’ would be better (though this needs to be accurate). Or, it might be better to just signal the change in topic with: “In terms of 2050,” or ‘In 2050,...’
- 9) Change ‘middle-aged’ to make this more accurate and add a comparative here (there are not many in this answer).
- 10) Don’t use ‘will probably’ for predicted data in task 1. Rewrite this using ‘be estimated to’; we can’t say ‘show a decrease’ or ‘have an increase’ – use either: decrease / increase; experience a decrease / an increase, or see a decrease / an increase. If one decreases and the other increases this is a contrast – show this in the sentence. How do you accurately refer to the second age group mentioned (60+)? Add extra information to support the data in this sentence (what will the figures fall from – to?)

- 11) Make this impersonal (remove ‘we’); this is the third use of ‘situation’ – population is more accurate here. Do you agree

that Italy's population is more 'balanced'? It might be better to cut this sentence and go on to say what the majority of the Italian population is projected to be (to contrast with the first statement made about Yemen).

12) Begin 'Conversely, in....' and use a preparatory 'it...that' structure; 'the eldest' is used to describe the oldest person in a family and is not appropriate here. Give data to support these points and find a way to avoid the repetition of 'percentage...%' at the end. Can you address the final two errors in red?

Now write out your complete answer and check for any repetition then look at my complete version below.



Improving the language to make it more precise and adding clearer supporting evidence has turned this into a band 8 answer. It can be improved by presenting a clearer picture of the changes rather than just describing the two scenarios separately. Making more comparisons would help to prevent this.

New version:

The pie-charts show the populations of Italy and Yemen in 2000 broken down into three age groups, namely 0-14 years old, 15-59 years old and over 60 years old, and forecasts for 2050. Overall, in 2000 the population in Yemen was almost entirely made up of people aged from 0 to 59, while in Italy there was a greater difference between the age groups. Nevertheless, in the future it is likely that the majority of the inhabitants of both countries will be aged between 15 and 59 years old.

Looking at the data for 2000 in more detail, in Yemen the youngest group accounted for half the population at 50.1%, the middle group made up another 46%, while the elderly accounted for only 3.6%. In contrast, in Italy, almost two-thirds of the population were in the 15-59-year-old group (61.6%), the elderly constituted a quarter of the total (24.1%), and just under 15% were aged 0-14.

In 2050, a very different situation is forecast. It is predicted that in Yemen, the majority of the population will be older, aged 15 to 59. In addition, the youngest group is estimated to decrease by almost 13%, falling from 50.1% to 37%, while the over 60s will increase slightly from 3.6% to 5.7%. Conversely, In Italy, it is projected that most of the population will be almost equally distributed over the two oldest categories, at 42.3% and 46.2%, whereas the youngest age group will only constitute 11.5% of the population.

Show answers

Introduction and overview

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Body paragraph 1

(5) Having a deeper look at the 2000 situation, we can notice that in Yemen the youngsters accounted for half the population. (6) The middle-aged citizens were another 46%, while the elderly accounted only for less than 4%. (7) In contrast, in Italy, two-thirds of the population were in the 15-59 years group, the elderly were a quarter of the total, and very young people were only just under 15%.

Body paragraph 2

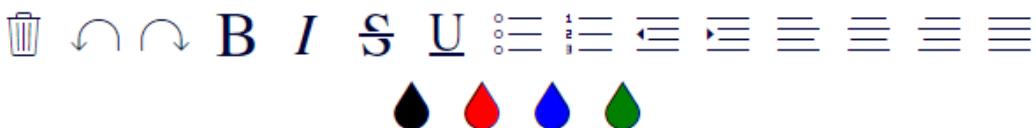
(8) Interestingly, experts forecast a different situation for 2050. (9) It is predicted that in Yemen the majority of the population will be middle-aged. (10) In addition, the youngest group will probably show a decrease of almost 13%, and the over 60 will have a slight increase of only 2%. (11) Conversely, in Italy we could witness a more balanced situation, where more than three-quarters of the population could be equally distributed over the two eldest categories, whereas the percentage for the first age-group will only be 11.5%.

QUESTION 1

Read through the comments and suggestions below. Then rewrite the introduction and overview to make the language more precise and help change this to a Band 8 answer.

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Possible ways to rewrite these sentences:

1)

The pie-charts give a breakdown of the populations of Italy and Yemen in 2000 according to age.

The pie-charts show the populations of Italy and Yemen in 2000 broken down into three age groups.

The pie-charts show the percentages of people in three age-groups of the Italian and Yemeni population in 2000.

2)

The age groups chosen are 0-14 years old, 15-59 years old and over 60 years old.

The information is divided into the following age groups: 0-14 years old, 15-59 years old and over 60 years old.

Combining all three sentences:

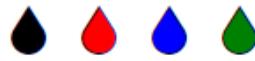
The pie-charts show the populations of Italy and Yemen in 2000 broken down into three age groups, namely 0-14 year old, 15-59 year old and over 60 year old, and forecasts for 2050.

QUESTION 2

Overview:

3) The first phrase is unnecessary - it is better to delete this; the correct phrasal verb is: to be made up of – you can also use ‘consist of’; we need to say either ‘more variation in’ or ‘a greater difference between’; the difference is between the ‘age groups’.

4) Instead of ‘both the countries will have’ start with ‘the majority’ and change ‘to have’ to ‘to be’. NB We often leave out ‘the’ after ‘both’.

**Overview:**

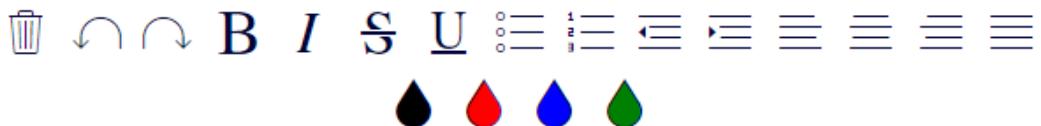
Overall, in 2000 the population in Yemen was almost entirely made up of people aged from 0 to 59, while in Italy there was a greater difference between the age groups. Nevertheless, in the future it is likely that the majority of the inhabitants of both countries will be aged between 15 and 59 years old.

QUESTION 3**Body paragraph 1**

5) The correct phrase is 'to take a closer look at' or 'to look at...in more detail'; 'situation' is not accurate here (and is used later) we can refer to the charts, the data, the populations; 'we can notice that' is again unnecessary – delete this. A 'youngster' is defined as a young person aged 14-21 and so is not accurate here, also, I would never naturally use this word – it is a word I only expect elderly people to use, often when complaining about 'You youngsters today!' Change this to 'the youngest group' and add supporting evidence.

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Body paragraph 1

Looking at the data for 2000 in more detail, in Yemen the youngest group accounted for half the population at 50.1%, the middle group made up another 46%, while the elderly accounted for less than 4% / for only 3.6%. In contrast, in Italy, almost two-thirds of the population were in the 15-59-year-old group (61.6%), the elderly constituted a quarter of the total (24.1%), and there were just under 15% aged 0-14 / and just under 15% were aged 0-14.

QUESTION 4

Body paragraph 2

8) Make this passive so that the language is impersonal. This sentence is not very 'interesting' – we expect the populations to be 'different' after 50 years. Describing it as 'very different' or 'completely different' would be better (though this needs to be accurate). Or, it might be better to just signal the change in topic with: "In terms of 2050," or 'In 2050,...'

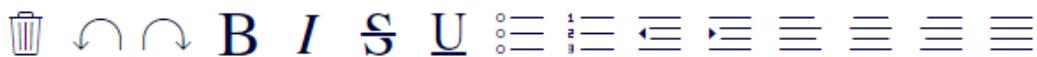
9) Change 'middle-aged' to make this more accurate and add a comparative here (there are not many in this answer).

10) Don't use 'will probably' for predicted data in task 1. Rewrite this using 'be estimated to'; we can't say 'show a decrease' or 'have an increase' – use either: decrease / increase; experience a decrease / an increase, or see a decrease / an increase. If one decreases and the other increases this is a contrast – show this in the sentence. How do you accurately refer to the second age group mentioned (60+)? Add extra information to support the data in this sentence (what will the figures fall from – to?)

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12) Begin 'Conversely, in....' and use a preparatory 'it...that' structure; 'the eldest' is used to describe the oldest person in a family and is not appropriate here. Give data to support these points and find a way to avoid the repetition of 'percentage...%' at the end. Can you address the final two errors in red?

Now write out your complete answer and check for any repetition then look at my complete version below.



Body paragraph 2

In 2050, a very different situation is forecast. It is predicted that in Yemen, the majority of the population will be older, aged 15 to 59. In addition, the youngest group is estimated to decrease by almost 13%, falling from 50.1% to 37%, while the over 60s will increase slightly from 3.6% to 5.7%. Conversely, In Italy, it is projected that most of the population will be almost equally distributed over the two oldest categories, at 42.3% and 46.2%, whereas the youngest age group will only constitute 11.5% of the population.

Improving the language to make it more precise and adding clearer supporting evidence has turned this into a band 8 answer. It can be improved by presenting a clearer picture of the changes rather than just describing the two scenarios separately. Making more comparisons would help to prevent this.

New version:

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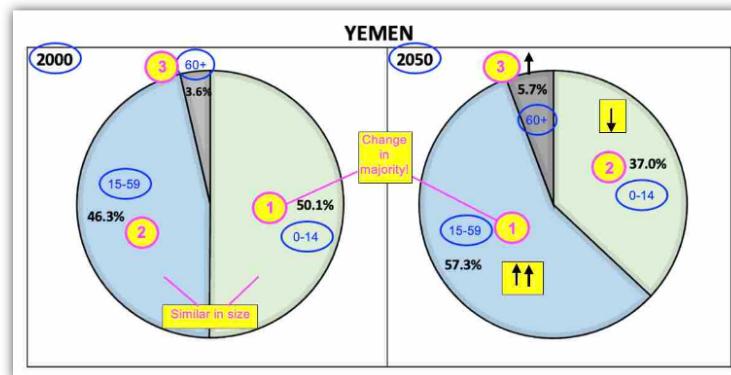
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All done !

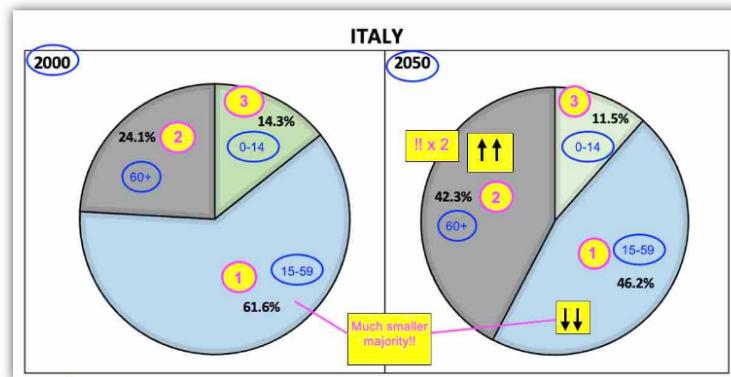
13.3 Model answer and Stacked bar charts

Before looking at my model, here are the details I noticed and the key features for each of the countries:

Key features - Yemen



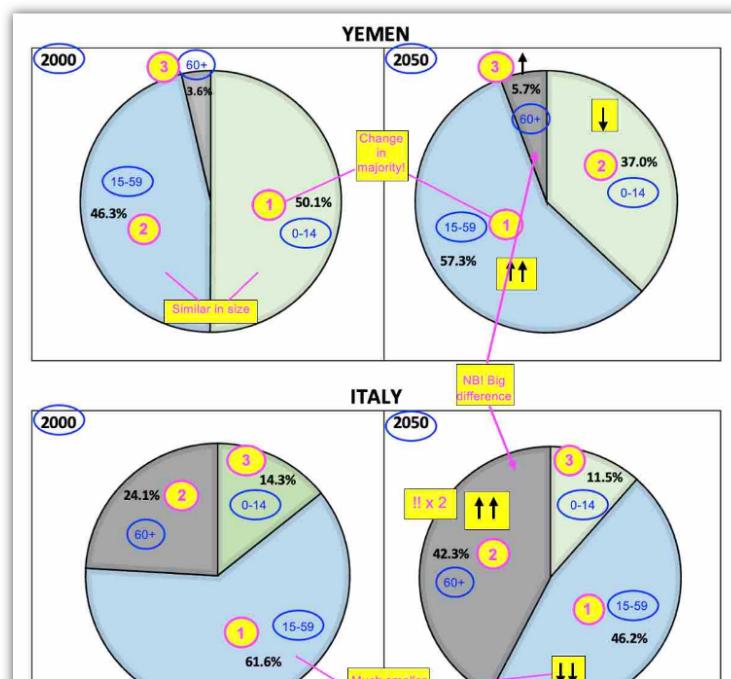
Key Features - Italy



In my notes, I ranked the portions in terms of size (biggest = 1 etc). This helped me to notice when the biggest and smallest changed. I also wrote the age ranges onto the relevant portion – this meant I didn't need to keep looking back at the key.

KEY IDEA: For questions where the data has a key or legend, write the information onto the relevant part of the chart so that you do not need to keep looking back.

In my final notes, you can see that I noticed the differences ***between the years*** and also ***between the countries***:





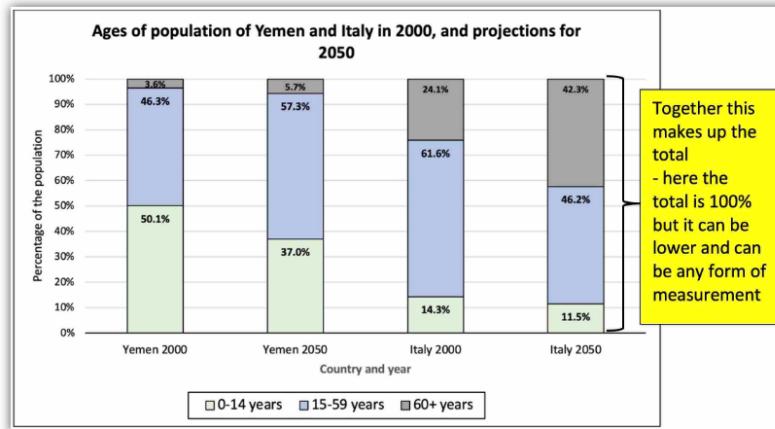
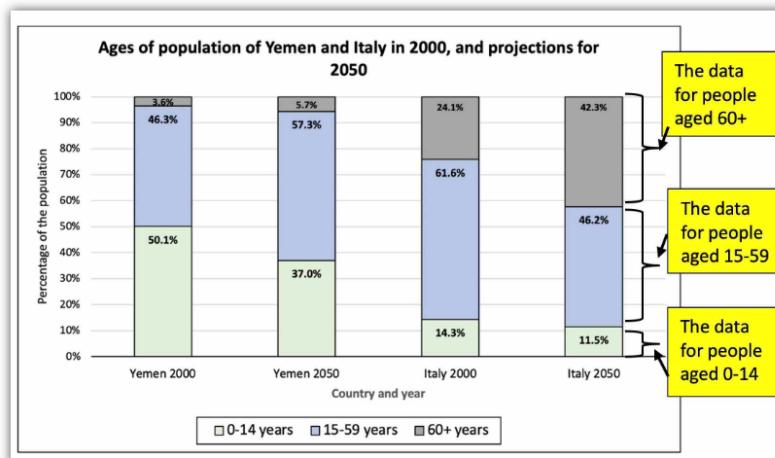
Practice

Fill in the gaps in my model answer to practise the verbs and tenses from this lesson.

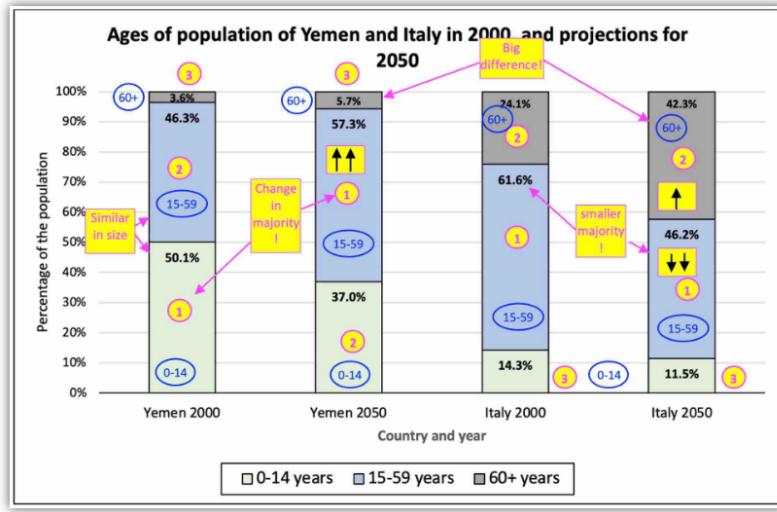
**Click Here
to Practise**

Stacked bar charts

Another type of chart you may find in the test is a stacked bar chart. A good way to think of these is like a pie chart but with the information stacked in a column rather than a circle. This is what the information about the populations of Yemen and Italy would look like:



If you are given a stacked bar chart, treat it the same way as pie chart. This is what my notes would look like:



My model answer also fits this data – I only need to change the first sentence:

Model answer

The stacked bar charts show the percentage of the population in three age groups in Italy and Yemen in 2000 and predictions for 2050. Overall, both countries are predicted to experience an ageing population, although Yemen will have a far younger population than Italy.

In 2000, the population of Yemen was relatively young, with just over half aged 14 and under (50.1%). This was followed closely by those aged 15-59 (46.4%), and only 3.6% were aged 60 or above. Over the next 50 years, the population is expected to change considerably, with a significant fall in the youngest category, which could drop to 37%, and corresponding increases in the two older groups. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that the majority of inhabitants will be aged 15 to 59 (57.3%).

In comparison, Italy had a much older population in 2000. This was dominated by the 15 to 59 age group, who made up two-thirds of the total (61.6%), while the 60 and over group accounted for almost a quarter (24.1%). By 2050, both the youngest and middle aged groups are predicted to have declined, falling to 11.5% and 46.2% respectively, while the oldest group is expected to double in size, reaching 42.3%. This is in stark contrast to Yemen, where less than 6% of the population will be 60 or older.

Extra practice

- Look back at any answers you have written in the past where the data gave future predictions. Are there any changes you could make to the language you use to describe the predictions?
- Do you combine fractions and percentages? If so, is this done in a clear way, without testing the examiner's mathematical ability?
- Do you tend to use extra unnecessary phrases in your task 1 answers?
- Try to rewrite some of your answers without the unnecessary phrases. If your answer is then too short, look again at the data and find some general points you need to make about the changes you can see.
- In your organisation of the data, did you manage to highlight important changes or did you describe the different sets of data separately?
- Rewrite your answer to help you make more comparisons and make general comments about the changes. Be sure to add supporting evidence from the data.

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in my model using the verbs in brackets. You will need to change the tense as well as adding any prepositions.

My model

The pie charts show the percentage of the population in three age groups in Italy and Yemen in 2000 and predictions for 2050. Overall, both countries [redacted] (predict, experience) an ageing population, although Yemen [redacted] (have) a far younger population than Italy.

In 2000, the population of Yemen was relatively young, with just over half aged 14 and under (50.1%). This was followed closely by those aged 15-59 (46.4%), and only 3.6% were aged 60 or above. Over the next 50 years, the population [redacted] (expect, change) considerably, with a significant fall in the youngest category, which could drop to 37%, and corresponding increases in the two older groups. Nevertheless, [redacted] (anticipate) the majority of inhabitants [redacted] (be) aged 15 to 59 (57.3%).

In comparison, Italy had a much older population in 2000. This was dominated by the 15 to 59 age group, who [redacted] (make up) two-thirds of the total (61.6%), while the 60 and over group [redacted] (account) almost a quarter (24.1%). By 2050, both the youngest and middle aged groups [redacted] (predict, decline), falling to 11.5% and 46.2% respectively, while the oldest group [redacted] (expect, double) in size, reaching 42.3%. This is in stark contrast to Yemen, where less than 6% of the population [redacted] (be) 60 or older.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in my model using the verbs in brackets. You will need to change the tense as well as adding any prepositions.

My model

The pie charts show the percentage of the population in three age groups in Italy and Yemen in 2000 and predictions for 2050. Overall, both countries [] (predict, experience) an ageing population, although Yemen [] (have) a far younger population than Italy.

In 2000, the population of Yemen was relatively young, with just over half aged 14 and under (50.1%). This was followed closely by those aged 15-59 (46.4%), and only 3.6% were aged 60 or above. Over the next 50 years, the population [] (expect, change) considerably, with a significant fall in the youngest category, which could drop to 37%, and corresponding increases in the two older groups. Nevertheless, [] (anticipate) the majority of inhabitants [] (be) aged 15 to 59 (57.3%).

In comparison, Italy had a much older population in 2000. This was dominated by the 15 to 59 age group, who [] (make up) two-thirds of the total (61.6%), while the 60 and over group [] (account) almost a quarter (24.1%). By 2050, both the youngest and middle aged groups [] (predict, decline), falling to 11.5% and 46.2% respectively, while the oldest group [] (expect, double) in size, reaching 42.3%. This is in stark contrast to Yemen, where less than 6% of the population [] (be) 60 or older.

The answer:

My model

The pie charts show the percentage of the population in three age groups in Italy and Yemen in 2000 and predictions for 2050. Overall, both countries **are predicted to experience** (predict, experience) an ageing population, although Yemen **will have** (have) a far younger population than Italy.

In 2000, the population of Yemen was relatively young, with just over half aged 14 and under (50.1%). This was followed closely by those aged 15-59 (46.4%), and only 3.6% were aged 60 or above. Over the next 50 years, the population **is expected to change** (expect, change) considerably, with a significant fall in the youngest category, which could drop to 37%, and corresponding increases in the two older groups. Nevertheless, **it is anticipated that** (anticipate) the majority of inhabitants **will be** (be) aged 15 to 59 (57.3%).

In comparison, Italy had a much older population in 2000. This was dominated by the 15 to 59 age group, who **made up** (make up) two-thirds of the total (61.6%), while the 60 and over group **accounted for** (account) almost a quarter (24.1%). By 2050, both the youngest and middle aged groups **are predicted to have declined** (predict, decline), falling to 11.5% and 46.2% respectively, while the oldest group **is expected to double** (expect, double) in size, reaching 42.3%. This is in stark contrast to Yemen, where less than 6% of the population **will be** (be) 60 or older.

All done !

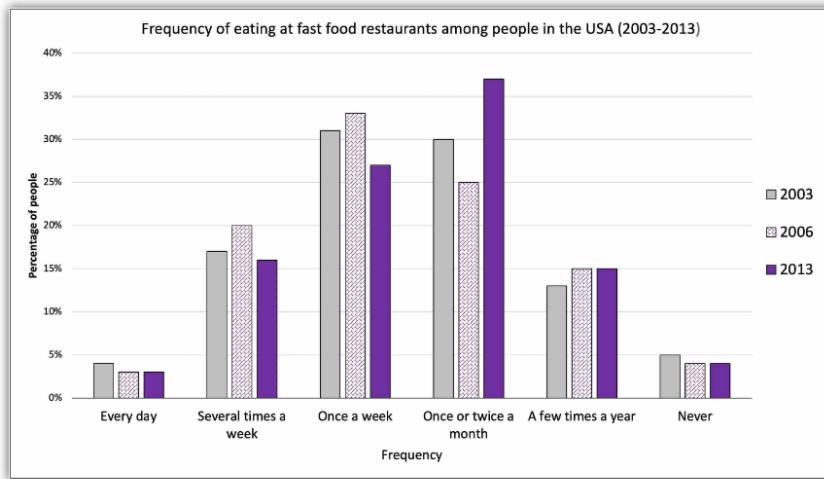
LESSON 14 - Frequency and Grouping information logically

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 14.1 Describing frequency
- 14.2 Grouping information logically
- 14.3 Model answer

14.1 Describing frequency

In this lesson we will look at how to deal with test questions that you may find difficult to write about. This test question looks straightforward at first. Begin by looking at the data, which is adapted from a test in Cambridge IELTS 12, page 71.



Compare this bar chart to those we saw in lesson 11 (changes in the proportion of people living in rental or owned accommodation over time) and lesson 12 (the percentage of men and women of different ages who did regular physical activity in one year). This bar chart has elements of both – changes over time and frequency of an activity. As with lesson 11, it is again helpful to think about where this data comes from. What question do you think these people answered in order to produce this data?

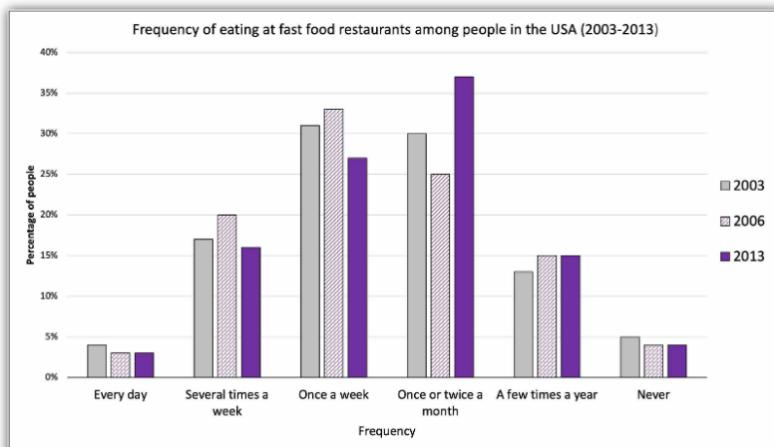
The survey question is likely to have looked like this:

How often do you eat at fast food restaurants?

- A. Every day
- B. Several times a week
- C. Once a week
- D. Once or twice a month
- E. A few times a year
- F. Never

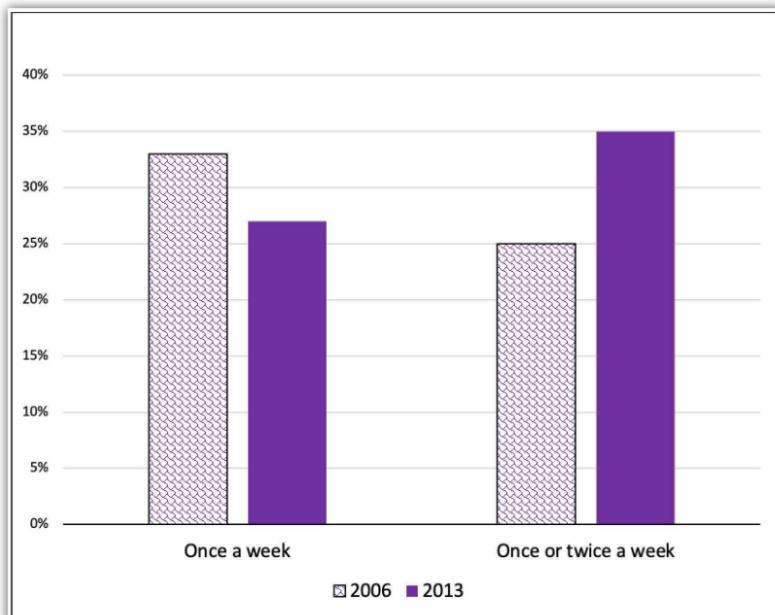
The same question would have been asked in 2003, 2006, and in 2013. However, we are not told that the same people were interviewed each time and so we cannot assume this. Our job is to represent the data as clearly and as accurately as possible. To do that, you should stick to the data you are given – don't change it by adding several of the percentages together, which I have seen in several sample answers. Doing this means you are giving the examiner an extra job of checking your maths, and you are also altering the data and the way it is presented.

To show the problem this causes, look at the data again and consider the statement below it:



Approximately 59% of people ate fast food between once and four times a month in 2006, increasing to approximately 64% in 2013

As the reader, what do you need to do to understand this sentence or check that it is accurate? The two percentages come from selecting and adding together these specific bar charts:



The examiner would need to do the same to follow the logic of this sentence. They also then need to puzzle over the sentence and decide whether or not it **accurately** describes the changes that occurred between 2006 and 2013. Your examiner does not need these extra jobs.

KEY IDEA: Don't alter the data. Doing that gives the examiner an extra job and also makes your answer less clear. Just represent the data you are given.

What does this data show us?

In lesson 4, we looked at your introductory statement, which is a paraphrase of the information in the question. With this question, we are told: '**The chart shows how frequently people in the USA ate in fast food restaurants between 2003 and 2013.**' Use the next exercise to practise paraphrasing this sentence – remember, you do not need to change every word:

Click Here
to Practise

We can paraphrase the sentence as follows:

The bar charts show how often people in the USA ate fast food in 2003, 2006, and 2013.

This tells us that we can use the data to make general statements about how often people in the USA ate fast food in these specific years. Remember, we shouldn't speculate about these changes as different people may have been involved and we do not know what change each person made. For example, a person may have answered 'Once a week' in 2003 but in 2006 and 2013 their habits may have changed to 'Never' or to 'Every day' - we do not know. We can only generalise about the populations in each year.

This data is describing **patterns** connected to **the eating** or **consumption of fast food**. We could also refer to these as **trends**.

A day, Per day etc.

'**Per**' is used to mean 'every' or 'each' when talking about a rate or cost. For example, if I tell you that a buffet costs '**\$20 per person**', this means that 'every person must pay \$20'.

We can use 'a' in the same way:

The buffet costs \$20 a person.

Per is more formal and we repeat it if necessary. For example:

- ***150 grams per person, per week (NOT 150 grams every person per week)***
- ***The hotel room is \$80 per person, per night.***

Practice

Use this exercise to match up the different ways of describing 'how often' people do something.

Click Here
to Practise

Making comparisons

Making comparisons is very important in task 1 and is often the key to 'highlighting key features'. You may think that using comparisons and superlatives is easy, but many people make mistakes when trying to compare figures. Look at the phrases in the box. Pay particular attention to the use of countable and uncountable nouns and prepositions.

Making comparisons

The phrases below include countable nouns (*people / sales / figures*) and uncountable nouns (*oil/money*)

- As many as: X had **as many sales as** Y
- As much as: X used **as much oil as** Y
- Not as many as: Y did **not have as many sales as** X
- Not as much as: Z did **not use as much oil as** Y
- Twice / three times (etc.) as many as: Z had **twice as many sales as** X
- Twice / three times (etc.) as much as: Z used **twice as much oil as** X
- (far/ slightly / significantly) more ...than: X had **far more sales than** Y; X spent **slightly more money than** Y
- (far/ slightly / significantly) fewerthan: X had **far fewer sales than** Y
- (far/ slightly/ significantly) less....than: X used **slightly less oil than** Y

In each case, we can also use '*in comparison to*' instead of '*than*': X had **far more sales in comparison to** Y; X used **slightly less oil in comparison to** Y

- X had the **highest/ lowest** (figures / sales etc.) **of all**
- X had the **highest / lowest** (figures / sales etc.) **in the** (e.g. table / world / region)
- do something **more frequently / more often than**
- do something **less frequently / often than**

Practice

Can you correct the errors in the sentence below?

- **In the end, there were significantly less renters than owners of accommodation.**
- **Ten years later, less people owned their home but the figure was still higher than 60%.**
- **In both years, scientists and technicians were far higher in industrialised countries.**
- **Almost same people never ate fast food than every day.**
- **Aged 66, nearly same number of women exercised than men.**
- **Far less people regularly eat fast food in Sweden comparing to the USA.**
- **Not many people ate fast food weekly in 2013 than in 2006.**
- **In 2020, much less amount of sugar was consumed per year than 1990.**
- **In 2020, not much sugar was consumed per year as in 1990.**

Use the exercise below to make the corrections.

Click Here
to Practise

QUESTION 1

Complete this paraphrase of the writing task question using the words from the box. NB there are more words than you need to use.

in of from in fast show soon ate compare and how regularly shows the

The bar charts () () () people () () USA () fast food () 2003, 2006, () 2013.

QUESTION 2

Now put the words in this introductory sentence in order.

in 2006, 2003, people charts fast The consumed living bar the USA in how often food show
2013 and

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Complete this paraphrase of the writing task question using the words from the box. NB there are more words than you need to use.

in of from in fast show soon ate compare and how regularly shows the

The bar charts [x] [x] [x] people [x] [x] USA [x] fast food [x] 2003, 2006, [x] 2013.

The answer:

The bar charts show how regularly people in the USA ate fast food in 2003, 2006, and 2013.

We can't use compare here because the charts are being used to compare the percentages in each category, not 'how regularly'.

QUESTION 2

Now put the words in this introductory sentence in order.

[in] [2006.] [2003.] [people] [charts] [fast] [The] [consumed] [living] [bar] [the] [USA] [in] [how] [often] [food]
[show] [2013.] [and] [x]

The answer:

The bar charts show how often people living in the USA consumed fast food in 2003, 2006, and 2013.

All done !

weekly	annually	a few times a year	rarely / seldom	every few weeks	once a week
once a year	once a month	twice a month	daily	monthly	every day

weekly

annually

a few times a year

rarely / seldom

every few weeks

once a week

Congratulations!

once a year

once a month

twice a month

daily

monthly

every day

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in the corrected sentences below (numbers 1 - 9) using one or two words.

In the end, there were significantly less renters than owners of accommodation.

(1) By the end of the period, there were significantly renters home owners.

Ten years later, less people owned their home but the figure was still higher than 60%.

(2) Ten years later, people owned their home but the figure was still higher 60%.

In both years, scientists and technicians were far higher in industrialised countries.

(3) In both years, far scientists and technicians in industrialised countries non-industrialised countries.

Almost same people never ate fast food than every day.

(4) Almost same people never ate fast food ate it every day.

Aged 66, nearly same number of women exercised than men.

(5) At the age of 66, almost as women exercised men.

Far less people regularly eat fast food in Sweden comparing to the USA.

(6) Far people regularly eat fast food in Sweden to the USA.

Not many people ate fast food weekly in 2013 than in 2006.

(7) Not people ate fast food weekly in 2013 2006.

In 2020, much less amount of sugar was consumed per year than 1990.

(8) In 2020, sugar was consumed per year 1990.

In 2020, not much sugar was consumed per year as in 1990.

(9) In 2020, not sugar was consumed per year 1990.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in the corrected sentences below (numbers 1 - 9) using one or two words.

In the end, there were significantly less renters than owners of accommodation.

(1) By the end of the period, there were significantly _____ renters _____ home owners.

Ten years later, less people owned their home but the figure was still higher that 60%.

(2) Ten years later, _____ people owned their home but the figure was still higher _____ 60%.

In both years, scientists and technicians were far higher in industrialised countries.

(3) In both years, _____ far _____ scientists and technicians in industrialised countries _____ non-industrialised countries.

Almost same people never ate fast food than every day.

(4) Almost _____ same _____ people never ate fast food _____ ate it every day.

Aged 66, nearly same number of women exercised than men.

(5) At the age of 66, almost as _____ women exercised _____ men.

Far less people regularly eat fast food in Sweden comparing to the USA.

(6) Far _____ people regularly eat fast food in Sweden _____ to the USA.

Not many people ate fast food weekly in 2013 than in 2006.

(7) Not _____ people ate fast food weekly in 2013 _____ 2006.

In 2020, much less amount of sugar was consumed per year than 1990.

(8) In 2020, _____ sugar was consumed per year _____ 1990.

In 2020, not much sugar was consumed per year as in 1990.

(9) In 2020, not _____ sugar was consumed per year _____ 1990.

The answer:

In the end, there were significantly less renters than owners of accommodation.

(1) By the end of the period, there were significantly *fewer* renters *than* home owners.

Ten years later, less people owned their home but the figure was still higher that 60%.

(2) Ten years later, *fewer* people owned their home but the figure was still higher *than* 60%.

In both years, scientists and technicians were far higher in industrialised countries.

(3) In both years, *there were* far *more* scientists and technicians in industrialised countries *than in* non-industrialised countries.

Almost same people never ate fast food than every day.

(4) Almost *the same number of / percentage of* people never ate fast food *as* ate it every day.

Aged 66, nearly same number of women exercised than men.

(5) At the age of 66, almost as *many* women exercised *as* men.

Far less people regularly eat fast food in Sweden comparing to the USA.

(6) Far *fewer* people regularly eat fast food in Sweden *in comparison* to the USA.

Not many people ate fast food weekly in 2013 than in 2006.

(7) Not *as many* people ate fast food weekly in 2013 *as in* 2006.

In 2020, much less amount of sugar was consumed per year than 1990.

(8) In 2020, *far less* sugar was consumed per year *than in* 1990.

In 2020, not much sugar was consumed per year as in 1990.

(9) In 2020, not *as much* sugar was consumed per year *as in* 1990.

All done !

14.2 Grouping information together logically

If you haven't used this question before, try writing an answer to it now. As usual, begin by making notes, which you can do directly on to the image in the exercise below, where you will also find the complete question.

Test Practice

Click Here
to Practise

You may have found this task difficult to write about and thus produced a confusing answer. This is what happened to me when I first attempted this question. Granted, it was late and I was tired from a day of writing, but I was also complacent – I assumed that, by now, I could do this automatically, without thinking. As with Task 2, this is never possible. We all need to take the time to think something through before we begin writing. If we don't, the result is confusing for the reader and a lower score.

KEY IDEA: No matter how high your level is, you always need to take the time to think before writing. If you don't, you will not receive the highest score that you can get. Writing is thinking we can see.

Less thinking = a lower writing score

Grouping information together

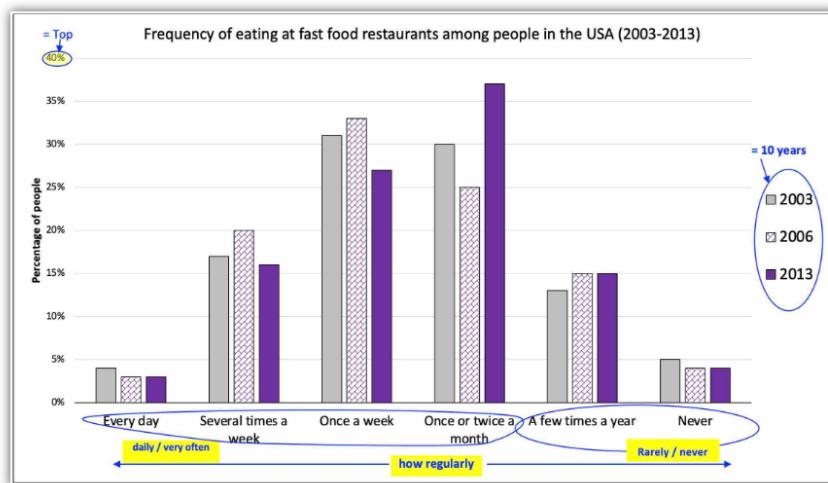
The main issue here is with organisation. In my first attempt, I began by organising the information by the different years. However, I soon realised that this wasn't easy to do without being repetitive or without writing a very long response. Summarising the main changes between 2003 and 2006, and then the main changes between 2006 and 2013 produces a repetitive answer because similar changes happened in several categories. I realised I needed to start again and think more before writing. This again shows the importance of planning and thinking about your response even for a few moments before you begin. The following questions will help.

Before you begin writing, ask yourself:

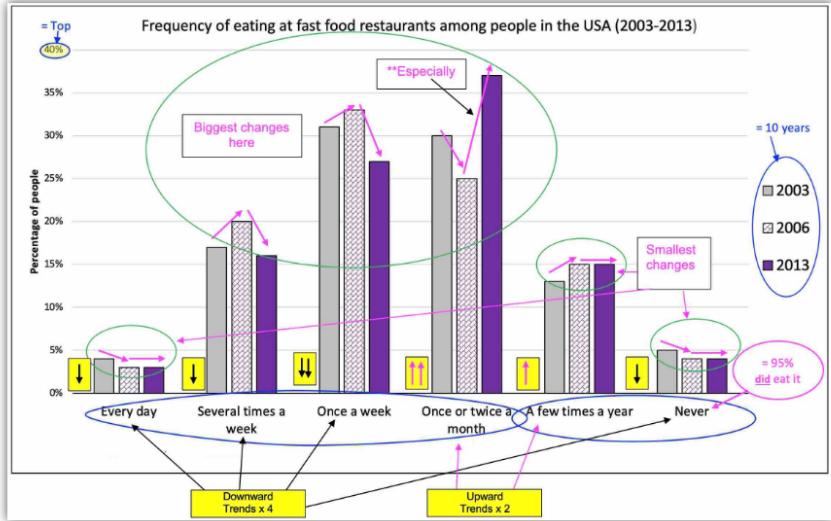
- *How will I organise the information?*
- *Does this organisation help me to make comparisons?*
- *Can I group similar information together so that I can write about the main trends, or will my organisation force me to make the same point repeatedly?*

This last point is very important. If we write about the changes in each year, we will repeat similar information in each paragraph. This tells us that it is better to group the similar information together and use a different way of organising it.

Look at my notes and see if you can spot the similar information and guess how I organised my second answer. Here are the details I noticed:



And here are the key features I identified:



Study my notes and try to predict the way that I summarised the main trends in my overview and how I grouped similar information together. What information do you think I included in each body paragraph?

Answer: I noticed that the information is presented on a scale, from the most frequent to the least frequent. In BP1 I wrote about the extreme ends of the scale, where there were few changes, and in BP2 I wrote about the more regular patterns, where most changes occurred.

Writing my answer this way helped me to summarise the main changes, make comparisons, and avoid repetition. If you did not use the same organisation as me, try writing a new answer using this organisation.

Test Practice Version 2

Click Here
to Practise

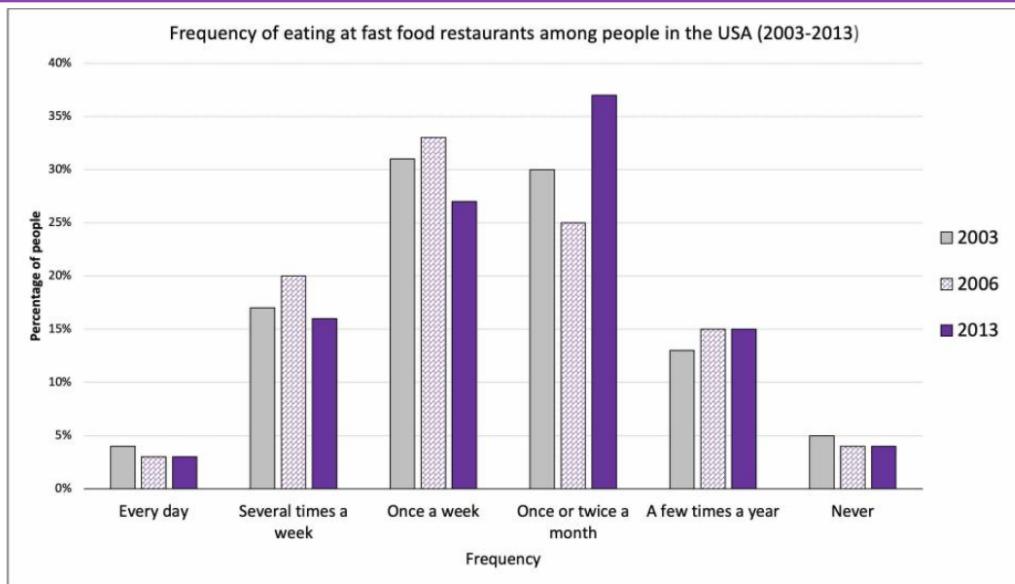
Compare your new answer with the one you wrote earlier. Read them aloud and count how many words you wrote in each one. Hopefully, your second answer is less repetitive, contains more comparisons, and is shorter. All of these features will improve your score.

KEY IDEA: In your test, don't begin writing before checking whether you have grouped similar information together. This will help you to summarise it and make comparisons without repeating the same ideas.

You can compare your version to mine in 14.3.

QUESTION 1

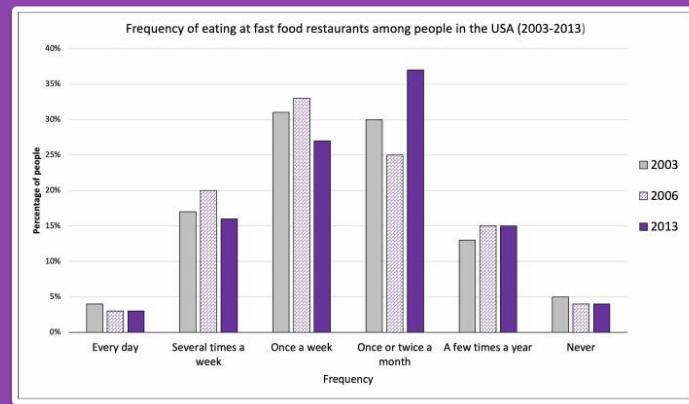
Spend a few moments studying the data and making notes on the image if you find this useful, then write your answer below.



QUESTION 2

The charts below show how frequently people in the USA ate in fast food restaurants between 2003 and 2013.

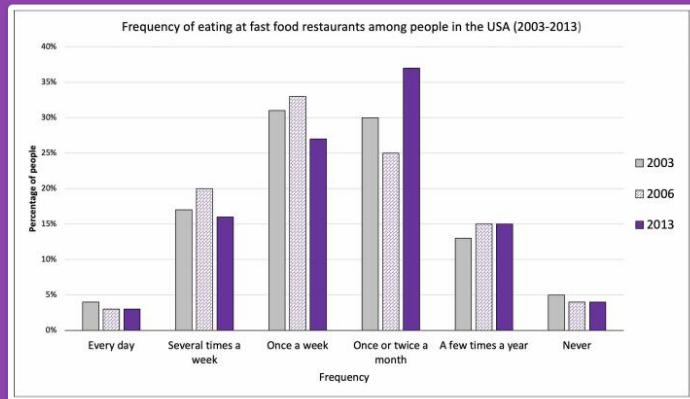
Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.



QUESTION 1

The charts below show how frequently people in the USA ate in fast food restaurants between 2003 and 2013.

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



14.3 Model answer and Language building

In the next exercise you can put the sentences in my answer into the correct order, then work on building your vocabulary.

Click Here
to Practise

Points to notice

- In my overview, I used the word 'generally' (**generally experienced a downward trend**). This is because the data actually increased in one year, but **overall**, there was a decrease.
- I used brackets more in this answer. This is because I wanted to make sure that I **highlighted the key features** but also **illustrated** them (by giving supporting evidence) (Band 8 Task achievement). I also made some clear general points that helped create a fully developed answer (Band 9 Task achievement). You can see these more clearly if I remove the data:

Overall, although most people ate fast food, frequent consumption generally experienced a downward trend, while there was an upward trend in less frequent consumption, and more extreme patterns remained relatively unchanged.

At the top and bottom ends of the scale, most patterns changed slightly in 2006 then remained stable. Over the ten-year period, the proportion of people who rarely included fast food in their diet increased, while the two most extreme patterns decreased. Interestingly, these had the lowest figures overall, with only slightly more people never eating fast food in comparison to those eating it daily.

More regular consumption had higher figures, and similar trends were observed in those who ate fast food once or multiple times a week. In contrast, the figures for once or twice per month fell initially before rising to around 37%. Notably, this marked a peak in the data, showing that most people ate fast food on a monthly rather than a weekly basis by the end of the period.

Checking your answer

Go back and look at the points you made in your answer, did you include any of the following key features?

Key Features

- frequent consumption of fast food generally declined
- less frequent consumption of fast food generally increased
- the more extreme patterns (eating fast food daily or never) remained relatively unchanged
- most of the population ate fast food (some far more frequently than others)
- the proportion of people who fast food rarely / a few times a year increased slightly
- the percentage who never ate fast food or ate it daily were the lowest overall
- only slightly more people never ate fast food compared to those who ate it daily
- the 'never' and 'daily' categories both decreased slightly
- more regular consumption had higher figures overall
- the figures for once or more than once a week rose initially then fell
- the figures for once or twice per month fell initially then rose
- most people ate fast food on a monthly basis in 2013

The first 4 features in the list are trends you can include in your overview.

KEY IDEA: Remember, to improve your Task achievement score, you need to make sure you include the most important key features in your answer. Make general statements about these and then provide supporting evidence from the data. Make sure your overview summarises the main trends, and that you make comparisons where relevant.

Extra practice

- Look back at any previous answers you have written and check the data you gave.
- Did you always use the data you were given or did you change it (e.g. changing a percentage to a fraction or adding numbers together)? In other words - did you make extra work for the examiner or your teacher?

- What changes can you make now to accurately represent ***the data you were given?***
 - Did you group information together logically? Try to do this now and rewrite one or two answers using a different organisation. Be careful to make the grouping clear to the reader at the beginning of each paragraph.
 - Look back at some of your previous answers and find any examples of comparatives. Did you use them accurately? What changes can you make?
 - If you cannot find many examples of comparatives, this is a good sign you are not highlighting key features – rewrite the answers so that you make comparisons where relevant.
 - The language of comparison is very important so be sure to review the language in this lesson in one or two weeks.
-
-

QUESTION 1

Put the sentences in my model answer into the correct order. Use the dotted lines (----) to show a space between the paragraphs.

Despite increasing in 2006 (from approximately 31% to 33% and 17% to 20% respectively), they both fell in 2013, to 27% and 16%.

Overall, although most people ate fast food, frequent consumption generally experienced a downward trend, while there was an upward trend in less frequent consumption, and more extreme patterns remained relatively unchanged.

Notably, this marked a peak in the data, showing that most people ate fast food on a monthly rather than a weekly basis by the end of the period.

Over the ten-year period, the proportion of people who rarely included fast food in their diet increased, rising from approximately 13% to 15%, while the two most extreme patterns decreased.

At the top and bottom ends of the scale, most patterns changed slightly in 2006 then remained stable.

Interestingly, these had the lowest figures overall, with only slightly more people never eating fast food (5% falling to 4%) in comparison to those eating it daily (4% declining to 3%).

More regular consumption had higher figures, and similar trends were observed in those who ate fast food once or multiple times a week.

The bar charts show how regularly people in the USA ate fast food in 2003, 2006, and 2013.

In contrast, the figures for once or twice per month fell initially (from 30% to 25%) before rising to around 37%.

QUESTION 2

Now fill in the blanks in my model answer. You will need to write TWO WORDS in each gap.

The bar charts show [REDACTED] people in the USA ate fast food in 2003, 2006, and 2013. Overall, although most people ate fast food, frequent consumption generally experienced [REDACTED] trend, while there was [REDACTED] trend [REDACTED] frequent consumption, and [REDACTED] patterns remained relatively unchanged.

At the top and [REDACTED] of [REDACTED], [REDACTED] changed slightly in 2006 then [REDACTED]. Over the [REDACTED], the proportion of people [REDACTED] included fast food in [REDACTED] increased, rising from approximately 13% to 15%, while the two [REDACTED] patterns decreased. Interestingly, these had [REDACTED] figures overall, with only slightly more people [REDACTED] fast food (5% falling to 4%) in [REDACTED] those eating [REDACTED] (4% declining to 3%).

More [REDACTED] had higher figures, and [REDACTED] were [REDACTED] those who ate fast food once or [REDACTED] a week. Despite [REDACTED] 2006 (from approximately 31% to 33% and 17% to 20% respectively), they both fell in 2013, to 27% and 16%. In contrast, the figures for once or twice per month fell initially (from 30% to 25%) before [REDACTED] around 37%. Notably, this [REDACTED] peak in the data, showing that most people ate fast food on [REDACTED] rather than a [REDACTED] by the end of the period.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Put the sentences in my model answer into the correct order. Use the dotted lines (----) to show a space between the paragraphs.

Despite increasing in 2006 (from approximately 31% to 33% and 17% to 20% respectively), they both fell in 2013, to 27% and 16%.

Overall, although most people ate fast food, frequent consumption generally experienced a downward trend, while there was an upward trend in less frequent consumption, and more extreme patterns remained relatively unchanged.

Notably, this marked a peak in the data, showing that most people ate fast food on a monthly rather than a weekly basis by the end of the period.

Over the ten-year period, the proportion of people who rarely included fast food in their diet increased, rising from approximately 13% to 15%, while the two most extreme patterns decreased.

At the top and bottom ends of the scale, most patterns changed slightly in 2006 then remained stable.

Interestingly, these had the lowest figures overall, with only slightly more people never eating fast food (5% falling to 4%) in comparison to those eating it daily (4% declining to 3%).

More regular consumption had higher figures, and similar trends were observed in those who ate fast food once or multiple times a week.

The bar charts show how regularly people in the USA ate fast food in 2003, 2006, and 2013.

In contrast, the figures for once or twice per month fell initially (from 30% to 25%) before rising to around 37%.

x

The answer:

The bar charts show how regularly people in the USA ate fast food in 2003, 2006, and 2013.

Overall, although most people ate fast food, frequent consumption generally experienced a downward trend, while there was an upward trend in less frequent consumption, and more extreme patterns remained relatively unchanged.

At the top and bottom ends of the scale, most patterns changed slightly in 2006 then remained stable.

Over the ten-year period, the proportion of people who rarely included fast food in their diet increased, rising from approximately 13% to 15%, while the two most extreme patterns decreased.

Interestingly, these had the lowest figures overall, with only slightly more people never eating fast food (5% falling to 4%) in comparison to those eating it daily (4% declining to 3%).

More regular consumption had higher figures, and similar trends were observed in those who ate fast food once or multiple times a week.

Despite increasing in 2006 (from approximately 31% to 33% and 17% to 20% respectively), they both fell in 2013, to 27% and 16%.

In contrast, the figures for once or twice per month fell initially (from 30% to 25%) before rising to around 37%.

Notably, this marked a peak in the data, showing that most people ate fast food on a monthly rather than a weekly basis by the end of the period.

QUESTION 2

Now fill in the blanks in my model answer. You will need to write TWO WORDS in each gap.

The bar charts show [REDACTED] people in the USA ate fast food in 2003, 2006, and 2013. Overall, although most people ate fast food, frequent consumption generally experienced [REDACTED] trend, while there was [REDACTED] trend [REDACTED] frequent consumption, and [REDACTED] patterns remained relatively unchanged.

At the top and [REDACTED] of [REDACTED], [REDACTED] changed slightly in 2006 then [REDACTED]. Over the [REDACTED], the proportion of people [REDACTED] included fast food in [REDACTED] increased, rising from approximately 13% to 15%, while the two [REDACTED] patterns decreased. Interestingly, these had [REDACTED] figures overall, with only slightly more people [REDACTED] fast food (5% falling to 4%) in [REDACTED] those eating [REDACTED] (4% declining to 3%).

More [REDACTED] had higher figures, and [REDACTED] were [REDACTED] those who ate fast food once or [REDACTED] a week.

Despite [REDACTED] 2006 (from approximately 31% to 33% and 17% to 20% respectively), they both fell in 2013, to 27% and 16%. In contrast, the figures for once or twice per month fell initially (from 30% to 25%) before [REDACTED] around 37%. Notably, this [REDACTED] peak in the data, showing that most people ate fast food on [REDACTED] rather than a [REDACTED] by the end of the period.

The answer:

The bar charts show *how regularly / how often* people in the USA ate fast food in 2003, 2006, and 2013. Overall, although most people ate fast food, frequent consumption generally experienced a *downward trend*, while there was an *upward trend in less* frequent consumption, and *more extreme* patterns remained relatively unchanged.

At the top and bottom ends of the scale, *most patterns* changed slightly in 2006 then *remained stable*. Over the *ten-year period*, the proportion of people who rarely included fast food in their diet increased, rising from approximately 13% to 15%, while the two *most extreme* patterns decreased. Interestingly, these had the *lowest* figures overall, with only slightly more people *never eating* fast food (5% falling to 4%) in comparison to those *eating it daily* (4% declining to 3%).

More *regular consumption* had higher figures, and *similar trends / similar patterns* were observed in / seen in those who ate fast food once or *multiple times* a week. Despite *increasing in / rising in* 2006 (from approximately 31% to 33% and 17% to 20% respectively), they both fell in 2013, to 27% and 16%. In contrast, the figures for once or twice per month fell initially (from 30% to 25%) before *rising to / increasing to* around 37%. Notably, this marked a peak in the data, showing that most people ate fast food on a *monthly* rather than a *weekly basis* by the end of the period.

All done !

LESSON 15 - Data about energy and problems

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 15.1 Data about energy
- 15.2 Model answer
- 15.3 Cause and effect in Task 1

15.1 Data about energy

In this lesson, we will complete our review of charts and data and focus on the topic of energy. This demonstrates the need to have a wide enough vocabulary to be able to write about data on any topic. Remember, a band 7 candidate has enough vocabulary to 'allow flexibility and precision'. In other words, they have enough vocabulary to describe data or write seriously about any topic.

We will complete three questions in this lesson, all of which require you to write about problems. Use these to review and practise all of the key points we have made so far about data and charts.

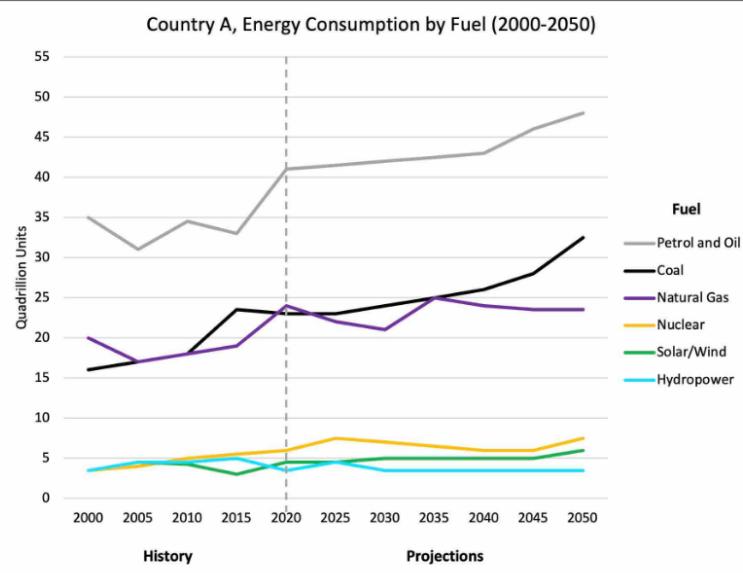
Key points to remember about data and charts

- Take the time to notice details – think about what is being shown and how
- Look for similarities and differences so that you can make comparisons
- Group information together logically
- Make a general point and support it with evidence from the data
- In a graph, look for overall trends (e.g. is the starting point higher or lower than the end point?)
- In a bar chart, pie chart, or table, look for the extremes (the biggest, smallest, etc)
- In your overview, don't give details – instead, take a broader view of the main trends or differences and use umbrella terms if you can.
- Your overview should reflect the key features in your body paragraphs

The first task for this lesson has been adapted from Cambridge 9 page 101. I have made some changes.

The graph below gives information about consumption of energy in one country between 2000 and 2020 with projections until 2050.

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



Points to notice

- This data is about energy use in a country referred to as 'Country A'. You may be given a chart with data about more than one country like this, labelled 'Country A, Country B, Country C' and so on. If you are given a chart like this, just use the labels in the same way as you would the country name. Compare the following examples:

In Switzerland, exports rose throughout, while Australia's exports consistently fell.

In Country A, exports rose throughout, while Country B's exports consistently fell.
- This data contains future predictions. However, unlike lesson 13, the predicted data is not in a separate chart. This means the data combines past and predicted uses of six types of fuel. That is a lot of information to summarise. In this way, it presents a similar problem to the task in lesson 14: we need to find a way to logically group the information so that we can summarise it easily.

Grouping information

Look at the data and think of a way to logically group this information. As we saw in lesson 14, this can be done by looking at which data is similar. Here there are two clear groups:

A	B
Petrol and oil	Nuclear
Coal	Solar and wind
Natural gas	Hydropower

What umbrella term/s could you use at the top of list A and list B?

Some possible answers are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fossil fuels• Non-renewable energy sources• Non-renewables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainable energy sources• Renewable energy sources• Renewables• Green energy• Clean energy• Environmentally friendly energy sources
Petrol and oil	Nuclear

Notes about energy

'Renewable' is an adjective used to mean that something can be made again. Coal and oil etc are finite – we cannot make them and when they are gone they are gone, so they are termed '**non-renewable**'.

Although nuclear energy is an **environmentally friendly** source of energy, it is not a 'renewable' energy source, because it relies on uranium, which is not renewable (we cannot make it). We can refer to it as '**sustainable**' because it doesn't have a negative impact on the environment.

When we understand that the whole context is 'energy', we can use the words '**renewable**' and '**renewables**' as a noun.

'Green' is used as an adjective to describe anything that is good for the environment.

NB The word '**environment**' is a commonly misspelt word! The term '**environmentally friendly**' is not hyphenated.

Ideally, we would want the environmentally friendly energy sources to increase and those that produce greenhouse gases to decrease. This highlights an important point: **not all increases are positive**. Can you see a problem with this extract?

From 2020, oil and petrol use recovered and finally managed to begin increasing again.

To help, think of this in the context of crime:

From 2020, violent crime recovered and finally managed to begin increasing again.

The language used in these examples ('**recovered**' and '**finally managed to**') suggests these are desirable increases, which is not the case. Because of this, the language choice seems odd and does not reflect an 'awareness of style'.

KEY IDEA: Be careful with the language you use to describe an increase or decrease. Not all increases are good, and not all decreases are bad. Remember, meaning matters. You need to be 'aware' of meaning to show 'an awareness of style' (Band 7).

Resource / source

When writing about energy, people often confuse the words '**resource**' and '**source**'. A resource is something a country or large organisation values and can use. There are '**natural resources**', such as water, oil, coal, (etc.); '**human resources**' (e.g. your staff; teachers, doctors, nurses etc.) and resources such as books and computers.

A '**source**' is a thing that something else comes from. So, a '**fuel source**' or '**a source of fuel**', refers to something we can use for fuel or energy. We can say that oil, petrol, and coal, are '**fuel sources**', but we cannot say they are '**fuel resources**'.

Looking back at the graph, can you correct the following errors?

- 1) Petrol and oil resources dropped initially.
- 2) With non-renewables, coal is the least popular fuel resource.

Answers:

- (1) Petrol and oil use / consumption dropped initially.
- (2) With non-renewables, coal is the least common fuel source.

Selecting information

It is important to remember that you must select relevant information and present it in a way that highlights the key features. Compare the following examples:

- A) In 1996, car sales made up 4.5% of all sales, then decreased to 4.3% in December, followed by a rise to 4.5% again in 1997.
- B) Despite a brief fall, car sales generally made up 4.5% of all sales between 1996 and 1997.

Sentence A lists all of the data, including minor details (the brief fall to 4.3%), while Sentence B selects the important information and reports it in a way that helps the reader to understand what is important. Make sure that you do not simply mechanically list all of the data for information in the graph. Instead, think about what you want to highlight, select the information that will help explain what you noticed, and write it in a way that makes the point clear.

Test Practice

Write your answer to this test question. Be sure to keep a record of your time. Compare your answer to mine in 15.2.

15.2 Model answer

Practice

Before you look at my complete model, use this exercise to think about the language I have used. Drag and drop the words in the box into the correct place. There are more words than you need.

Click Here
to Practise

Model answer

The line graph shows usage levels of different types of energy in one country from 2000 to 2020, and projections up to 2050. Overall, total energy use is predicted to rise, with fossil fuels consistently far exceeding green energy, and petrol and oil remaining the dominant source of fuel.

With non-renewables, in the first twenty years, petrol and oil consumption increased from 35 to just over 40 quadrillion units, despite several falls, and is expected to rise to just below 50 quadrillion in 2050. Coal use followed a similar pattern, albeit at a lower rate. It remained relatively stable at around 23 quadrillion units from 2015 and is predicted to increase from 2025, eventually reaching 33 quadrillion. In contrast, use of natural gas has fluctuated continually and is expected to peak at 25 quadrillion units in 2035 before declining.

Notably, more sustainable energy sources are used far less, all remaining close to 5 quadrillion units up to 2020. Nuclear energy has led this sector since 2010 and is expected to continue to do so with a peak of approximately 7 quadrillion units in 2025. Despite a predicted downward trend until 2045, it should regain this level in 2050. Solar and wind are forecast to mirror nuclear's rising trend, increasing to around six quadrillion units, while hydropower generally declined from 2015 and is projected to remain the lowest at around 3 quadrillion units.

Points to notice

- I organised my paragraphs into 1) non-renewables and 2) more sustainable energy sources. Within each paragraph, I highlighted the key features of 1) the first 20 years, then 2) the predictions for the future. This means my organisation is clear and logical.
- I used the word '**albeit**' to show contrast. This word is pronounced '*all be it*', and is used to add a comment that ***slightly changes what has just been said***. It is used to show contrast, and many dictionaries give the meaning as 'although'. So, '*Coal use followed a similar pattern, albeit at a lower rate*', means: '*Coal use followed a similar pattern, although at a lower rate*.' However, it is more limited than 'although' as it can only be used in the middle of a sentence (you cannot begin a sentence with this word) and it is generally only used to modify a previous comment, (*I found a flat, albeit a very small one.*) and is not used for contrast in general (*I like most fruits, albeit I don't like oranges.*)

Now test yourself so see how much you can remember from my model answer.

Practice

Click Here
to Practise

Checking your answer

Look back at your own answer and compare the key features and organisation to my answer. Remember there is more than one way to write or organise an answer, just be sure to check that your organisation allowed you to make comparisons and to write in a logical (chronological way).

Use the list below to see how many of these key features you mentioned. NB You will notice there are features here that I did not include – I selected the information I wanted to include and you need to do the same. There is no magic number you need to aim for, just be sure to write about more than two or three.

Key features

- total energy use is predicted to rise
- fossil fuels was always used more than green energy
- petrol and oil were always used more than any other type
- in the first 20 years, petrol and oil had some falls but increased from 35 to just over 40 quadrillion units
- petrol and oil is expected to rise to just below 50 quadrillion in 2050
- Coal use followed a similar pattern to oil and petrol
- Coal rose initially and was relatively stable from 2015
- coal is predicted to increase from 2025, reaching 33 quadrillion
- natural gas has fluctuated continually
- natural gas is expected to peak at 25 quadrillion units in 2035 then decline
- natural gas will increase very slightly overall
- from 2030, natural gas is predicted to be used the least of all fossil fuels
- green energy is used least of all
- green energy is predicted to remain low
- nuclear energy leads the green energy sector
- nuclear, solar and wind all increase slightly
- only hydropower falls over this period

The first three points can be used in your overview.

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in my model answer by dragging the words in the box into the correct place. NB There are six extra words you do not need to use.

Despite levels Notably from fluctuated since sources regain falls consumption more far mirror similar sector dominant total
eventually In non-renewables resources Regarding declining stable fossil rising although green until

The line graph shows usage [] of different types of energy in one country from 2000 to 2020, and projections up to 2050. Overall, [] energy use is predicted to rise, with [] fuels consistently [] exceeding [] energy, and petrol and oil remaining the [] source of fuel.

With [], in the first twenty years, petrol and oil [] increased from 35 to just over 40 quadrillion units, despite several [], and is expected to rise to just below 50 quadrillion in 2050. Coal use followed a [] pattern, albeit at a lower rate. It remained relatively [] at around 23 quadrillion units from 2015 and is predicted to increase from 2025, [] reaching 33 quadrillion. [] contrast, use of natural gas has [] continually and is expected to peak at 25 quadrillion units in 2035 before [].
[], more sustainable energy [] are used far less, all remaining close to 5 quadrillion units up to 2020. Nuclear energy has led this [] [] 2010 and is expected to continue to do so with a peak of approximately 7 quadrillion units in 2025. [] a predicted downward trend [] 2045, it should [] this level in 2050. Solar and wind are forecast to [] nuclear's rising trend, increasing to around six quadrillion units, while hydropower generally declined from 2015 and is projected to remain the lowest at around 3 quadrillion units.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in my model answer by dragging the words in the box into the correct place. NB There are six extra words you do not need to use.

Despite levels Notably from fluctuated since sources regain falls consumption more far mirror similar sector dominant total
eventually In non-renewables resources Regarding declining stable fossil rising although green until

The line graph shows usage [X] of different types of energy in one country from 2000 to 2020, and projections up to 2050. Overall, [X] energy use is predicted to rise, with [X] fuels consistently [X] exceeding [X] energy, and petrol and oil remaining the [X] source of fuel.

With [X], in the first twenty years, petrol and oil [X] increased from 35 to just over 40 quadrillion units, despite several [X], and is expected to rise to just below 50 quadrillion in 2050. Coal use followed a [X] pattern, albeit at a lower rate. It remained relatively [X] at around 23 quadrillion units from 2015 and is predicted to increase from 2025, [X] reaching 33 quadrillion. [X] contrast, use of natural gas has [X] continually and is expected to peak at 25 quadrillion units in 2035 before [X]

[X], more sustainable energy [X] are used far less, all remaining close to 5 quadrillion units up to 2020. Nuclear energy has led this [X] [X] 2010 and is expected to continue to do so with a peak of approximately 7 quadrillion units in 2025. [X] a predicted downward trend [X] 2045, it should [X] this level in 2050. Solar and wind are forecast to [X] nuclear's rising trend, increasing to around six quadrillion units, while hydropower generally declined from 2015 and is projected to remain the lowest at around 3 quadrillion units.

The answer:

The line graph shows usage levels of different types of energy in one country from 2000 to 2020, and projections up to 2050. Overall, total energy use is predicted to rise, with fossil fuels consistently far exceeding green energy, and petrol and oil remaining the dominant source of fuel.

With non-renewables, in the first twenty years, petrol and oil consumption increased from 35 to just over 40 quadrillion units, despite several falls, and is expected to rise to just below 50 quadrillion in 2050. Coal use followed a similar pattern, albeit at a lower rate. It remained relatively stable at around 23 quadrillion units from 2015 and is predicted to increase from 2025, eventually reaching 33 quadrillion. In contrast, use of natural gas has fluctuated continually and is expected to peak at 25 quadrillion units in 2035 before declining.

Notably, more sustainable energy sources are used far less, all remaining close to 5 quadrillion units up to 2020. Nuclear energy has led this sector since 2010 and is expected to continue to do so with a peak of approximately 7 quadrillion units in 2025. Despite a predicted downward trend until 2045, it should regain this level in 2050. Solar and wind are forecast to mirror nuclear's rising trend, increasing to around six quadrillion units, while hydropower generally declined from 2015 and is projected to remain the lowest at around 3 quadrillion units.

All done !

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in my model answer using no more than one word.

The line graph shows [redacted] of different types of energy in one country from 2000 to 2020, and [redacted] up to 2050. Overall, [redacted] energy use is predicted to rise, with [redacted] fuels consistently far [redacted] [redacted] energy, and petrol and oil remaining the [redacted] source of [redacted].

With [redacted], in the first twenty years, petrol and oil [redacted] increased from 35 to just over 40 quadrillion units, despite several [redacted], and is expected to rise to just below 50 quadrillion in 2050. Coal use [redacted] a [redacted] pattern, [redacted] at a lower [redacted]. It remained relatively [redacted] at around 23 quadrillion units from 2015 and is predicted to increase from 2025, [redacted] reaching 33 quadrillion. [redacted], use of natural gas has [redacted] continually and is expected to [redacted] at 25 quadrillion units in 2035 [redacted].

[redacted], [redacted] energy [redacted] are used far less, all remaining close to 5 quadrillion units up to 2020. Nuclear energy has [redacted] this [redacted] 2010 and is expected to continue to [redacted] [redacted] with a peak of approximately 7 quadrillion units in 2025. [redacted] a predicted [redacted] trend [redacted] 2045, it should [redacted] this level in 2050. Solar and wind are [redacted] to [redacted] nuclear's [redacted] trend, increasing to around six quadrillion units, while hydropower [redacted] declined from 2015 and is projected to remain [redacted] at around 3 quadrillion units.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in my model answer using no more than one word.

The line graph shows [redacted] of different types of energy in one country from 2000 to 2020, and [redacted] up to 2050. Overall, [redacted] energy use is predicted to rise, with [redacted] fuels consistently far [redacted] energy, and petrol and oil remaining the [redacted] source of [redacted].

With [redacted], in the first twenty years, petrol and oil [redacted] increased from 35 to just over 40 quadrillion units, despite several [redacted], and is expected to rise to just below 50 quadrillion in 2050. Coal use [redacted] a [redacted] pattern, [redacted] at a lower [redacted]. It remained relatively [redacted] at around 23 quadrillion units from 2015 and is predicted to increase from 2025, [redacted] reaching 33 quadrillion. [redacted], use of natural gas has [redacted] continually and is expected to [redacted] at 25 quadrillion units in 2035 [redacted].

[redacted], [redacted] energy [redacted] are used far less, all remaining close to 5 quadrillion units up to 2020. Nuclear energy has [redacted] this [redacted] 2010 and is expected to continue to [redacted] with a peak of approximately 7 quadrillion units in 2025. [redacted] a predicted [redacted] trend [redacted] 2045, it should [redacted] this level in 2050. Solar and wind are [redacted] to [redacted] nuclear's [redacted] trend, increasing to around six quadrillion units, while hydropower [redacted] declined from 2015 and is projected to remain [redacted] at around 3 quadrillion units.

The answer:

The line graph shows *usage levels* of different types of energy in one country from 2000 to 2020, and *projections* up to 2050. Overall, *total* energy use is predicted to rise, with *fossil* fuels consistently far *exceeding green* energy, and petrol and oil remaining the *dominant* source of *fuel*.

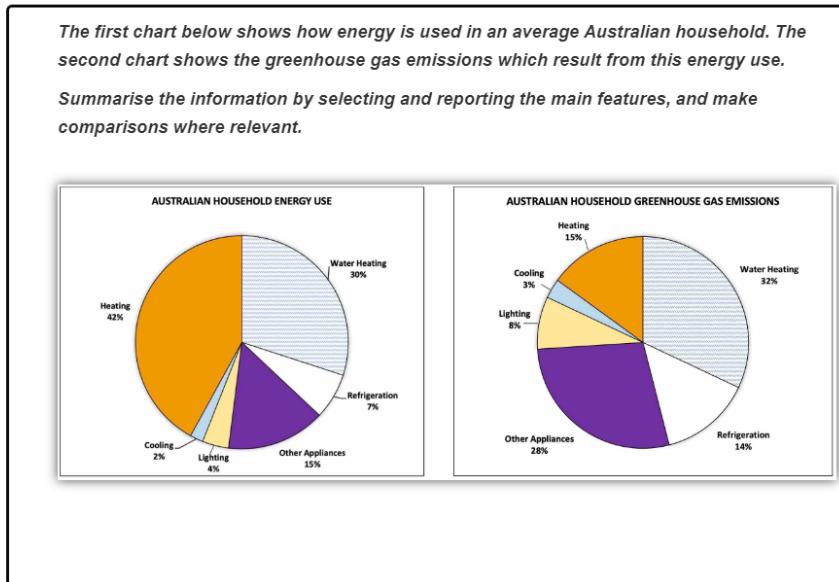
With *non-renewables*, in the first twenty years, petrol and oil *consumption* increased from 35 to just over 40 quadrillion units, despite several *falls*, and is expected to rise to just below 50 quadrillion in 2050. Coal use *followed a similar* pattern, *albeit* at a lower *rate*. It remained relatively *stable* at around 23 quadrillion units from 2015 and is predicted to increase from 2025, *eventually* reaching 33 quadrillion. *In contrast*, use of natural gas has *fluctuated* continually and is expected to *peak* at 25 quadrillion units in 2035 *before declining*.

Notably, more sustainable energy sources are used far less, all remaining close to 5 quadrillion units up to 2020. Nuclear energy has *led this sector since* 2010 and is expected to continue to *do so* with a peak of approximately 7 quadrillion units in 2025. *Despite* a predicted *downward trend until* 2045, it should *regain* this level in 2050. Solar and wind are *forecast to mirror* nuclear's *rising* trend, increasing to around six quadrillion units, while hydropower *generally* declined from 2015 and is projected to remain *the lowest* at around 3 quadrillion units.

All done !

15.3 Cause and effect in Task 1

Another common theme when discussing energy is the emissions produced. We will use the following writing task to practise this, adapted from Cambridge IELTS 10, page 30. Begin by studying the task.



We can see this task as presenting the cause of a problem and the effect the problem has. The language of cause and effect can help you to avoid repeating the same words and phrases. You can either skip ahead and write your answer now, or read through my comments first.

Emissions

When the topic is 'energy', the word '**emissions**' refers to harmful gases that are produced when a particular energy source is used. These are often called '**greenhouse gases**' or '**greenhouse gas emissions**', often, carbon dioxide (CO₂). We can use the verb '**emit**', though I tend to use '**produce**'. Be careful not to repeat the word 'emit' or 'emissions' too often in your answer, or within a sentence. For example, we do not write '**the emissions that are emitted...**'

As always, we need to try to compare the data in the pie charts. However, these charts present a new problem. The following extracts help to show this. Look at the extracts and decide what language changes you would make, then see if you can identify a further problem.

A)

According to the second chart, it is conspicuous that Australians emit 32% of greenhouse gas through water heating which is quite a high percentage comparing to others power consumptions such as cooling spreads only 3% gas to the nature.

B)

Another alluring change is on lighting and refrigeration usage purpose, that creates double proportion of gas emissions than it was consumed by them.

C)

Although light needed very less power, the emission of carbon was double its power rate.

My comments

A)

Corrected version:

'According to the second chart, 32% of the greenhouse gases produced by Australian homes comes from water heating, which is a much higher percentage compared to the other uses given. For example, heating and refrigeration produce half the emissions of water heating, and cooling and lighting emit only 3% and 8% respectively.'

Notice that I removed 'it is clear that', which is not necessary here. I also changed 'emit half the emissions' to 'produce half the emissions' to avoid repetition. I changed the order of the final sentence - to me it is more logical to go from biggest to smallest. NB This is only one way to rewrite this.

B)

To correct the language, we would need to write something like this:

'Another change is in lighting and refrigeration energy usage, which create double the proportion of emissions they consume.'

The word 'alluring' is not appropriate here. However, there are TA problems as well: 1) there are no changes shown and 2) we cannot compare the data in this way - emissions are not measured in the same way as energy use, so we cannot say that '*lighting and refrigeration create double the proportion of greenhouse gas emissions they consume*'. They consume energy (not greenhouse gases) and produce emissions as a result of this.

C)

The corrected version would be:

'Although light needed very little power, the emissions of CO₂ were double its power usage.'

Again, a bigger problem is that we cannot compare the data in this way as the two are not measured in the same way.

KEY IDEA: We cannot use 'double, twice, half etc.' when comparing amounts or quantities that are measured differently. Emissions are not measured in the same way as energy use, so we cannot say '**it produces double the amount of emissions in comparison to the energy it uses**'. This is like saying: '**My car uses twice as much petrol as the electricity needed to heat my home!**'

Write your own answer now and be sure to time yourself. Think carefully about how to contrast the data in the two pie charts. When you have finished, compare your answer to mine.

You can see my version below.

Model answer

The two pie charts give a breakdown of energy use in Australian homes and the greenhouse gas emissions this produces. Overall, heating and water heating are the two biggest users of energy, while water heating and other appliances are the largest emitters of greenhouse gases, showing that energy use does not always correlate with emissions.

In terms of energy use, Australians use far more for water heating and heating their homes than for any other purpose (30% and 42% respectively). This is in stark contrast to cooling and refrigeration, which together make up 9% of the total. Other appliances make up a significant 15%. Interestingly, lighting the home consumes twice as much energy as cooling it does (4% as compared to 2%).

With the emissions resulting from this energy use, water heating produces the most greenhouse gases at 32%, followed closely by other appliances, which are responsible for 28%. Refrigeration and lighting both produce a noticeably large amount of emissions in comparison to their low energy use, although these are still relatively low at 14% and 8%. Notably, cooling the home is the lowest in terms of both use of electricity and emissions at 2% and 3% respectively.

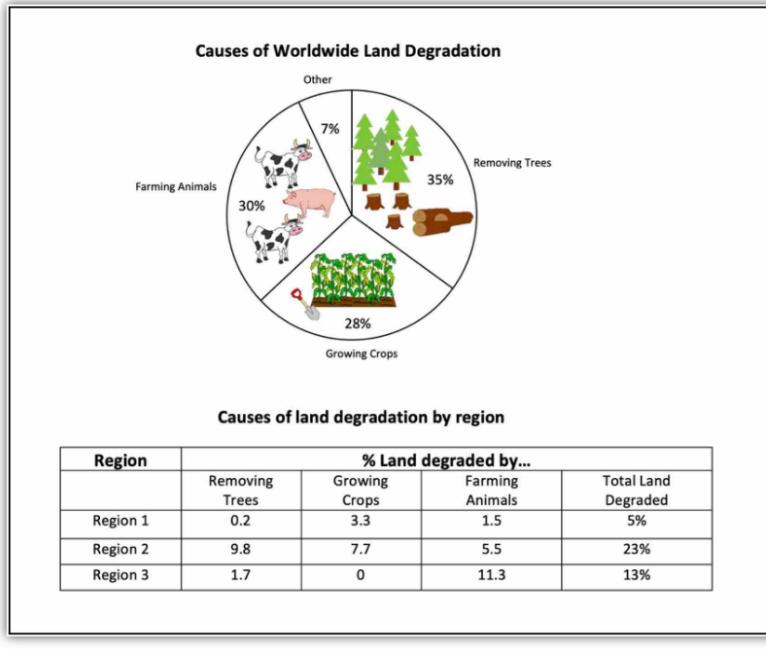
Points to notice.

- I contrasted the data in the two pie charts while also showing they are separate things. Look at these examples of this:
 - energy use does not always correlate with emissions**
 - Refrigeration and lighting both produce a noticeably large amount of emissions in comparison to their low energy use**
 - cooling the home is the lowest in terms of both use of electricity and emissions at 2% and 3% respectively.**
- I used the language of cause and effect to help me avoid repeating words. For example, I used the phrase '**are responsible for**' to refer to the production of greenhouse gases to avoid repeating the same words (**produce / emissions** etc.)

Practise using this language in the following task, which we first saw in Lesson 3.

*The chart below gives information about the causes of *land degradation worldwide and in three regions of the world.*

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



*Land degradation is the process of reducing the quality of land or soil.

Remember to:

- Take the time to notice details – think about what is being shown and how
- Look for similarities and differences so that you can make comparisons
- Group information together logically
- Make a general point and support it with evidence from the data
- In a pie chart or table, look for the extremes (the biggest, smallest, etc)
- In your overview, don't give details – instead, take a broader view of the main trends or differences and use umbrella terms if you can.
- Your overview should reflect the key features in your body paragraphs

When you have finished, look at my model below and notice the ways that I referred to the problems and causes. You can practise using this language in the extra practice section.

Model answer

The pie chart shows the main causes of land degradation around the world, while the table shows the impact these have had in three regions. Overall, while there are three main causes worldwide, the different regions are not affected equally by these. Notably, these causes are all linked to human activity.

According to the pie chart, although there are other factors leading to land degradation globally, logging appears to pose the greatest threat, at 35%. However, as the farming of crops and animals are responsible for a further 28% and 30% respectively, it is clear that agriculture is the main culprit, causing more than half of all such problems.

Looking at the table, region 2 has experienced the greatest problems, with 23% of its land degraded. Notably, it is affected by all three causes, and has the highest figures of the three regions for both logging (9.8%) and the growing of crops (7.7%). In contrast, region 3 is unaffected by crop farming and the vast majority of its land degradation is due to the farming of animals (11.3% of the total 13% degraded). Region 1 has the lowest proportion of land affected overall (5%), and has the lowest figures in almost all categories apart from crop farming, which causes more than half of its land issues at 3.3%.

Did you notice the footnote explaining the meaning of 'land degradation'?

Extra practice

- Study the language in the models from this lesson and make a note of any language you would like to learn.
- Group any words and phrases you want to learn into different topics. Here are some suggestions for headings to use:

- Energy
- Problems
- Numbers
- Types of charts
- Phrases used to move to a new topic
- People

- Practise using this language as often as you can.
- Review lessons 3, 4, 5 and 6 and add more words or phrases to your lists.
- Practice the language from the last model answer in the task below:

Click Here
to Practise

- Make sure to go back and repeat the exercises in previous lessons often to help review the language and main points you have learned.

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in my model answer using ONE WORD ONLY.

The pie chart shows the main causes of land degradation [REDACTED] the world, while the table shows the [REDACTED] these have had in three regions. Overall, while there are three [REDACTED] causes worldwide, the different regions are not [REDACTED] equally by [REDACTED]. Notably, the causes are all linked to human [REDACTED].

According to the pie chart, although there are other [REDACTED] leading to land degradation [REDACTED], logging appears to pose the greatest [REDACTED], at 35%. However, as the farming of crops and animals are [REDACTED] for a further 28% and 30% respectively, it is clear that [REDACTED] is the main [REDACTED], causing more than half of all [REDACTED] problems.

Looking at the table, region 2 has experienced the greatest problems, with 23% of its land [REDACTED]. Notably, it is affected by [REDACTED] three causes, and has the highest figures [REDACTED] the three regions for both [REDACTED] (9.8%) and the growing of [REDACTED] (7.7%). In contrast, region 3 is [REDACTED] by crop farming and the [REDACTED] majority of its land degradation is [REDACTED] to the farming of animals (11.3% of the total 13% degraded). Region 1 has the lowest proportion of land affected overall (5%), and has the lowest figures in almost all categories [REDACTED] from crop farming, which causes more than half of its land [REDACTED] at 3.3%.

[Show answers](#)

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks in my model answer using ONE WORD ONLY.

The pie chart shows the main causes of land degradation [REDACTED] the world, while the table shows the [REDACTED] these have had in three regions. Overall, while there are three [REDACTED] causes worldwide, the different regions are not [REDACTED] equally by [REDACTED]. Notably, the causes are all linked to human [REDACTED].

According to the pie chart, although there are other [REDACTED] leading to land degradation [REDACTED], logging appears to pose the greatest [REDACTED], at 35%. However, as the farming of crops and animals are [REDACTED] for a further 28% and 30% respectively, it is clear that [REDACTED] is the main [REDACTED], causing more than half of all [REDACTED] problems.

Looking at the table, region 2 has experienced the greatest problems, with 23% of its land [REDACTED]. Notably, it is affected by [REDACTED] three causes, and has the highest figures [REDACTED] the three regions for both [REDACTED] (9.8%) and the growing of [REDACTED] (7.7%). In contrast, region 3 is [REDACTED] by crop farming and the [REDACTED] majority of its land degradation is [REDACTED] to the farming of animals (11.3% of the total 13% degraded). Region 1 has the lowest proportion of land affected overall (5%), and has the lowest figures in almost all categories [REDACTED] from crop farming, which causes more than half of its land [REDACTED] at 3.3%.

The answer:

The pie chart shows the main causes of land degradation *around* the world, while the table shows the *impact* these have had in three regions. Overall, while there are three *main* causes worldwide, the different regions are not *affected* equally by *these*. Notably, the causes are all linked to human *activity*.

According to the pie chart, although there are other *factors* leading to land degradation *globally*, logging appears to pose the greatest *threat*, at 35%. However, as the farming of crops and animals are *responsible* for a further 28% and 30% respectively, it is clear that *agriculture* is the main *culprit*, causing more than half of all *such* problems.

Looking at the table, region 2 has experienced the greatest problems, with 23% of its land *degraded*. Notably, it is affected by *all* three causes, and has the highest figures *of* the three regions for both *logging* (9.8%) and the growing of *crops* (7.7%). In contrast, region 3 is *unaffected* by crop farming and the *vast* majority of its land degradation is *due* to the farming of animals (11.3% of the total 13% degraded). Region 1 has the lowest proportion of land affected overall (5%), and has the lowest figures in almost all categories *apart* from crop farming, which causes more than half of its land *issues* at 3.3%.

All done !

LESSON 16 - Reviewing Process Tasks

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 16.1 Dealing with technical details
- 16.2 Test practice 1: Energy
- 16.3 Test practice 2: Life cycle

16.1 Dealing with technical details

In this lesson, you can review process tasks and work on two more questions. Before we begin, check how much you can remember from lessons 9 and 10. Look at the following statements and decide whether they are True or False. Can you correct the false statements?

1. You need to identify the main trends in a process task.
2. In your overview, write about the first and last steps in the process.
3. For your overview, it can be a good idea to try to group several steps together.
4. A stage is the same as a step.
5. For your overview, look for changes in the form of a product or animal.
6. Try to include details from the diagram in your overview.
7. Start the sentences in your body paragraphs like this: First,.....Then,.....Next,..... Finally,.....
8. The diagram will often have labels with 'ing' forms of a verb.
9. You do not need to mention all of the steps in the process.
10. You are more likely to use the passive in a process task.
11. You can change any verb into a passive.
12. It's ok to use technical words from the diagram.

Check your answers in the quiz below.

See The
Answers

Working with technical diagrams

A process task can sometimes appear daunting, especially if the diagram looks very technical. The following exercises will help you to cope with diagrams like this. Try to see this as an opportunity to show your ability to be 'flexible', and to use the language you already know to be able to explain something you don't know the exact word/s for.

KEY IDEA: A technical diagram gives you the opportunity to show how flexible your language skills are. Don't be daunted, instead, approach it in the same way as any process task and see it as an opportunity to show band 7 skills.

Using what you know to write about any topic

In reading, one of the higher level skills is being able to work out the meaning of unknown words using what you **do** know. You can use a similar approach in writing by looking at the words given on the diagram and changing them in your writing. However, you need to be careful when you change a noun in the diagram to a verb.

In next task we look at, there is a label that says '**condenser**'. In a model answer from Cambridge IELTS 12 (p.130) a band-6 candidate has tried to use this as a verb, writing '**condensered**'. Look through the vocabulary note below to see how to fix this mistake.

Vocabulary note:

In English, the suffix 'er' or 'or' is often added to a verb to create the noun form. For example, the noun form of the verb '**to wash**' is '**washer**'.

Sometimes two nouns are combined: For example, **a dishwasher** washes dishes.

Important spelling rules:

If a verb ends in 'e', we just add 'r': **grate** => **grater**

We often double the letters 'l' and 'd' when they are followed by 'er' 'or' or 'ed'.

With nouns that end in 'ator', we need to add a final 'e' in the verb:
calculator => **calculate**.

We can use what we know about suffixes in reverse. What do you think the verb form of these nouns is? NB be careful with double letters such as 'll' 'dd' – these are single letters when they come at the end of the word.

- **controller**
- **feeder**
- **freezer**
- **propeller**
- **shredder**
- **divider**
- **grater**
- **grinder**
- **purifier**

- conveyor
- projector
- reflector
- accelerator
- calculator
- generator
- refrigerator
- ventilator

You can practise with these words in the next exercise.

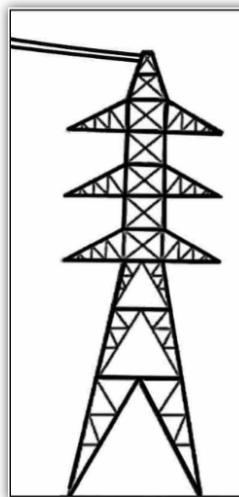
Practice

**Click Here
to Practise**

So, with the noun '**condenser**', the candidate in the example above should have removed the suffix (er) and written: '**condensed**'

Using what you know to write about what you don't know

If your diagram contains images you do not know the name for, again, this is a useful chance to show your flexibility. Look at the following image. How would you describe it?



Use the following strategies to help:

1) Start with the noun – what does it look like to you? (Hint: think about a famous structure in Paris)

2) Now add one or two adjectives. NB The order of these is important.

Order of adjectives:

1) Quantity or number 2) Size or quality 3) material

Look at the following examples:

I carry my lunch in a small plastic container.

The ingredients travel along two short conveyor belts.

The electricity is passed along cables attached to a tall metal tower.

3) You can also say what the 'thing' does:

The ingredients are put into a special machine that chops them up.

The electricity is sent to a tall metal tower that distributes it to other areas.

I don't recommend using more than two adjectives like this in task 1, more than this usually feels too much:

The ingredients travel along two short wide conveyor belts.

The electricity is passed along cables attached to a special tall metal tower.

Look at the following picture. How would you describe the truck and what it is doing? You can see the answer in the next task.



Practice

Practise using adjectives by putting the words in the sentences into the correct order. Then complete the sentence and make a note of any of the verbs you did not know.

Click Here
to Practise

QUESTION 1

Decide whether the statements are True or False. Can you correct the false statements? Click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

- | | True | False |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. You need to identify the main trends in a process task. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. In your overview, write about the first and last steps in the process. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. For your overview, it can be a good idea to try to group several steps together. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. A stage is the same as a step. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. For your overview, look for changes in the form of a product or animal. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Try to include details from the diagram in your overview. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Start the sentences in your body paragraphs like this: First,....Then,.....Next,..... Finally,..... | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. The diagram will often have labels with 'ing' forms of a verb. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. You do not need to mention all of the steps in the process. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. You are more likely to use the passive in a process task. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. You can change any verb into a passive. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. It's ok to use technical words from the diagram. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

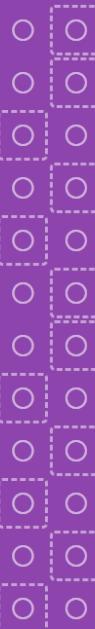
Show answers

QUESTION 1

Decide whether the statements are True or False. Can you correct the false statements? Click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

1. You need to identify the main trends in a process task.
2. In your overview, write about the first and last steps in the process.
3. For your overview, it can be a good idea to try to group several steps together.
4. A stage is the same as a step.
5. For your overview, look for changes in the form of a product or animal.
6. Try to include details from the diagram in your overview.
7. Start the sentences in your body paragraphs like this: First,....Then,.....Next,..... Finally,.....
8. The diagram will often have labels with 'ing' forms of a verb.
9. You do not need to mention all of the steps in the process.
10. You are more likely to use the passive in a process task.
11. You can change any verb into a passive.
12. It's ok to use technical words from the diagram.

True False

**Corrections to the false statements:**

1. You need to identify the main stages in a process task, not trends.
2. You can identify a trend by looking at the first and last figures in the data, but a process task is different. steps in the process.
4. A stage is broader than a step (a stage may have several steps). In your overview, summarise the main stages, and it can help to group several steps in the process together to do this.
6. Try NOT to include details from the diagram in your overview. Use umbrella terms instead if you can.
7. Repetitive and mechanical use of cohesive devices like this is characteristic of band 6. Vary the way your sentences start to get a higher score.
9. Don't miss out any steps in the process – these are key features.
11. Not all verbs can be used in the passive (e.g. verbs that cannot have a direct object such as 'fall')

All done !

QUESTION 1

Complete the table by removing the suffix in each noun to create the verb form. Remember the rules about double letters and nouns ending in 'ator'.

Noun	Verb form
feeder	
propeller	
shredder	
divider	
grater	
grinder	
conveyor	
projector	
reflector	
accelerator	
calculator	
generator	
refrigerator	
ventilator	

QUESTION 2

Fill in the blanks with a suitable verb based on the nouns below. NB Be careful with verbs ending in 'y' and 'l' and be sure to use the third person singular.

- a generator electricity
a propeller the plane
a freezer food
a paper shredder paper
an air traffic controller air traffic
a room divider the room
a salt grinder salt
a condenser the steam
a water filter water
a purifier the water

QUESTION 3

Now fill in the blanks with the passive form of these verbs. NB remember the rules about double letters with 'ed'. One of these verbs is irregular. (Hint, think about the verb 'find').

- electricity
the plane
the food
the paper
air traffic
the room
the salt
the steam
water
water

[Show answers](#)

QUESTION 1

Complete the table by removing the suffix in each noun to create the verb form. Remember the rules about double letters and nouns ending in 'ator'.

Noun	Verb form
feeder	(/ feed / to feed)
propeller	(/ propel / to propel)
shredder	(/ shred / to shred)
divider	(/ divide / to divide)
grater	(/ grate / to grate)
grinder	(/ grind / to grind)
conveyor	(/ convey / to convey)
projector	(/ project / to project)
reflector	(/ reflect / to reflect)
accelerator	(/ accelerate / to accelerate)
calculator	(/ calculate / to calculate)
generator	(/ generate / to generate)
refrigerator	(/ refrigerate / to refrigerate)
ventilator	(/ ventilate / to ventilate)

QUESTION 2

Fill in the blanks with a suitable verb based on the nouns below. NB Be careful with verbs ending in 'y' and 'l' and be sure to use the third person singular.

- a generator electricity
- a propeller the plane
- a freezer food
- a paper shredder paper
- an air traffic controller air traffic
- a room divider the room
- a salt grinder salt
- a condenser the steam
- a water filter water
- a purifier the water

The answer:

- a generator **generates** electricity
- a propeller **propels** the plane
- a freezer **freezes** food
- a paper shredder **shreds** paper
- an air traffic controller **controls** air traffic
- a room divider **divides** the room
- a salt grinder **grinds** salt
- a condenser **condenses** the steam
- a water filter **filters** water
- a purifier **purifies** the water

QUESTION 3

Now fill in the blanks with the passive form of these verbs. NB remember the rules about double letters with 'ed'. One of these verbs is irregular. (Hint, think about the verb 'find').

- electricity
- the plane
- the food
- the paper
- air traffic
- the room
- the salt
- the steam
- water
- water

The answer:

electricity *is generated*
the plane *is propelled*
the food *is frozen*
the paper *is shredded*
air traffic *is controlled*
the room *is divided*
the salt *is ground*
the steam *is condensed*
water *is filtered / is purified*
water *is purified / is filtered*

All done !

QUESTION 1

Drag the words into the correct place to complete the sentence. There are more words than you need.

lift mechanical empty inside turn equipped tip put contents technical container rise

The garbage truck is () with a () arm that can () the garbage bins, () them up, and then () the () into a separate ().

QUESTION 2

Now drag the words into the correct order in each sentence. Make a note of any words you do not know.

a metal large gas is stored in The tank.

QUESTION 3

liquid using metal stirred is tool. a The special

QUESTION 4

smaller using equipment. specialised chopped pieces stones are The up into

QUESTION 5

The spins mixture a machine very is that fast into put large

QUESTION 6

using cutting are a The sliced vegetables tool. special

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Drag the words into the correct place to complete the sentence. There are more words than you need.

lift mechanical empty inside turn equipped tip put contents technical container rise

The garbage truck is **X** with a **X** arm that can **X** the garbage bins, **X** them up, and then **X** the **X** into a separate **X**.

The answer:

The garbage truck is equipped with a mechanical arm that can lift the garbage bins, tip them up, and then empty the contents into a separate container.

QUESTION 2

Now drag the words into the correct order in each sentence. Make a note of any words you do not know.

a **metal** **large** **gas** **is** **stored** **in** **The** **tank.** **X**

The answer:

The gas is stored in a large metal tank.

QUESTION 3

liquid **using** **metal** **stirred** **is** **tool** **a** **The** **special** **X**

The answer:

The liquid is stirred using a special metal tool.

QUESTION 4

smaller **using** **equipment** **specialised** **chopped** **pieces** **stones** **are** **The** **up** **into** **X**

The answer:

The stones are chopped up into smaller pieces using specialised equipment.

QUESTION 5

The **spins** **mixture** **a** **machine** **very** **is** **that** **fast.** **into** **put** **large** **X**

The answer:

The mixture is put into a large machine that spins very fast.

QUESTION 6

using **cutting** **are** **a** **The** **sliced** **vegetables** **tool.** **special** **X**

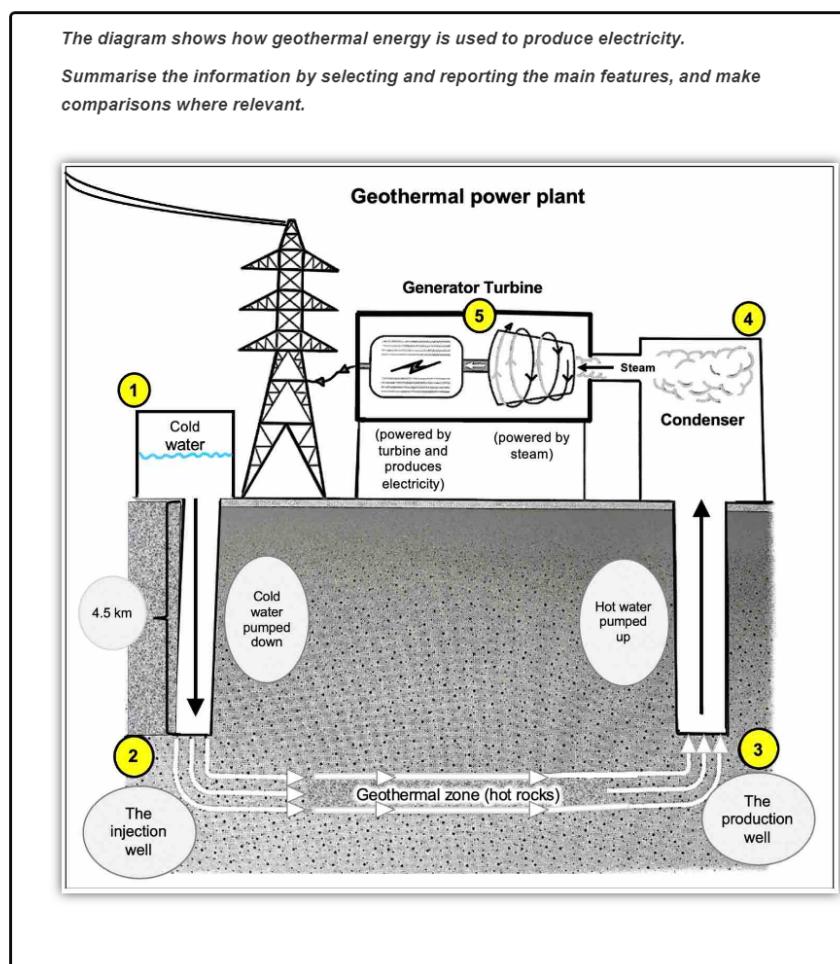
The answer:

The vegetables are sliced using a special cutting tool.

All done !

16.2 Test practice 1: Energy

Write an answer to the following text practice question, which has been adapted from Cambridge IELTS 12, page 92.



Remember to think about:

- what type of process it is (e.g. mechanical, manual)
- how many steps there are
- where the process takes place
- the raw material and how it changes
- whether any of the steps can be grouped together into key stages
- how you can group information together to form separate paragraphs
- how to vary the way you begin your sentences.

Practice

Now complete my model answer by filling in the blanks with the correct form of the verbs in the box.

Click Here
to Practise

Points to notice

- As we saw in the earlier lessons, producing an answer that is too short can often be a problem with tasks like this. I was able to write my first version very quickly (in just over 10 minutes), but it was short at only 142 words. To add more, I looked at the equipment and materials needed and added more information about this to my overview. It can help to think about what is needed before the process even begins (e.g. what infrastructure is required). I also added more information about the different stages, for example, adding that this makes use of a natural resource and that the water is heated up naturally.
- I organised my paragraphs into 1) below ground and 2) above ground
- Notice the way that I varied my sentences and tenses.

Some useful language to learn:

- *make use of*
- *a natural resource*
- *to require doing something*
- *to drill*
- *above ground*
- *below ground*
- *underground*
- *to give off*
- *in turn*
- *a pylon (UK)*
- *a transmitter (US)*
- *power cables*

KEY IDEA: If your answer is too short, look at the equipment needed and any infrastructure that is required before the process can start. For example, here, two wells needs to be drilled deep below ground.

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks using the correct tense of the verbs below. You may need to use to+infinitive, ing, or a passive form.

involve, heat, power, require, pump, run, pass, heat, reach, give off, use, spin, generate, pass,

The diagram shows the main stages [] in generating electricity using geothermal energy. This process makes use of a natural resource (geothermal energy) [] water, and the resulting steam is then used [] turbines and produce electricity. It [] the drilling of deep underground wells as well as specialised equipment and electricity generators above ground.

The first three stages of this process are largely below ground, and begin with cold water [] into an injection well that [] 4.5 kilometres deep below the earth. The water is then [] through hot rocks that lie in the geothermal zone, which [] up the water naturally. The hot water is now pumped back to the surface through a second well, known as the production well.

Above ground, the hot water [] a condenser, and [] steam. This steam [] to power a generator turbine, which [] and, in turn, [] electricity. In the final stage, the electricity [] on to a pylon for distribution through power cables.
(166 words)

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks using the correct tense of the verbs below. You may need to use to+infinitive, ing, or a passive form.

involve, heat, power, require, pump, run, pass, heat, reach, give off, use, spin, generate, pass,

The diagram shows the main stages [] in generating electricity using geothermal energy. This process makes use of a natural resource (geothermal energy) [] water, and the resulting steam is then used [] turbines and produce electricity. It [] the drilling of deep underground wells as well as specialised equipment and electricity generators above ground.

The first three stages of this process are largely below ground, and begin with cold water [] into an injection well that [] 4.5 kilometres deep below the earth. The water is then [] through hot rocks that lie in the geothermal zone, which [] up the water naturally. The hot water is now pumped back to the surface through a second well, known as the production well.

Above ground, the hot water [] a condenser, and [] steam. This steam [] to power a generator turbine, which [] and, in turn, [] electricity. In the final stage, the electricity [] on to a pylon for distribution through power cables.
(166 words)

The answer:

The diagram shows the main stages *involved* in generating electricity using geothermal energy. This process makes use of a natural resource (geothermal energy) *to heat* water, and the resulting steam is then used *to power* turbines and produce electricity. It *requires* the drilling of deep underground wells as well as specialised equipment and electricity generators above ground.

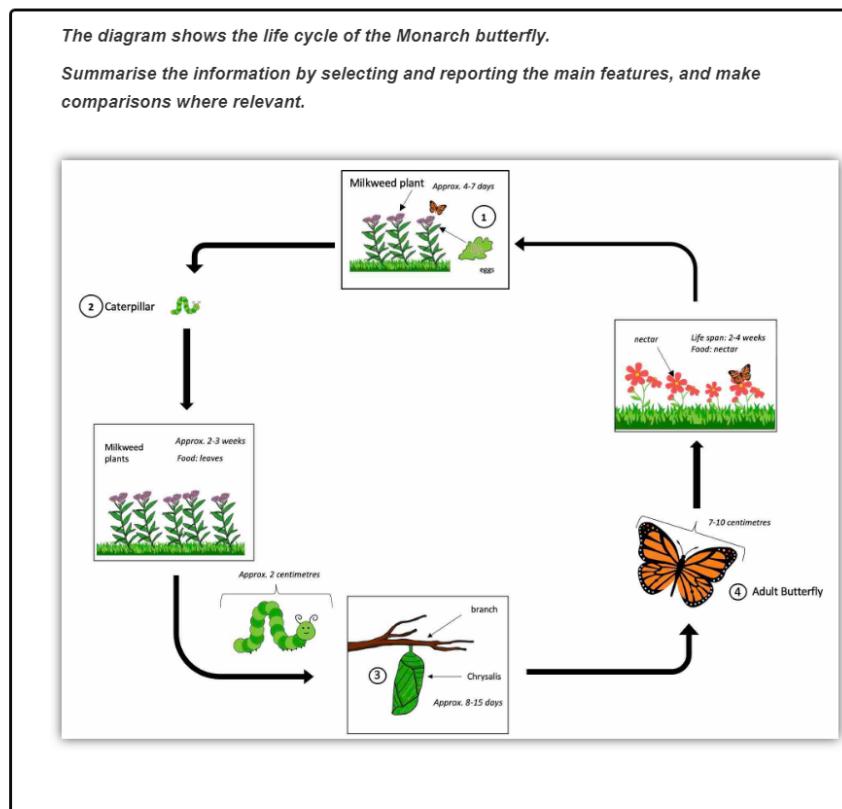
The first three stages of this process are largely below ground, and begin with cold water *being pumped* into an injection well that *runs* 4.5 kilometres deep below the earth. The water is then *passed* through hot rocks that lie in the geothermal zone, which *heat* up the water naturally. The hot water is now pumped back to the surface through a second well, known as the production well.

Above ground, the hot water *reaches* a condenser, and *gives off* steam. This steam *is used* to power a generator turbine, which *spins* and, in turn, *generates* electricity. In the final stage, the electricity *is passed* on to a pylon for distribution through power cables. (166 words)

All done !

16.3 Test practice 2: Life cycle

Another type of process is the life cycle of an animal. This is a natural or biological process. Write an answer to the following task. Remember to look at how the animal changes in form and to think about habitat and other changes. When it comes to linking your ideas, try to practise using the zig-zag pattern we saw in lesson 9.



Practice

Now complete my model answer by filling in the blanks with the correct form of the verbs in the box.

Click Here
to Practise

Points to notice

- You are more likely to use simple present tenses in a life cycle task, so be careful with the endings of verbs.
- Notice that I was still able to use a variety of tenses.
- I used '**Once it has reached approximately two centimetres**', but this can also be expressed as '**Having reached approximately two centimetres...**'
- I grouped the stages into 1) the egg to caterpillar stage and 2) the caterpillar to adult stage.
- I was able to make comparisons by looking at the changes in appearance of the caterpillar (as it grew bigger) and the difference between the caterpillar and butterfly.
- I mentioned the different times given as well as the types of food.

If you find your answer is too short, check to see if you can add any comparisons, or add information about the physical appearance of the insect or the natural habitat.

KEY IDEA: If you are summarising a life cycle and your answer is too short, look for comparisons you can make. Think about: changes in appearance, changes in physical environment, changes in eating habits.

Extra practice

Look back at the two tasks you wrote in this lesson and consider the following:

Task achievement

- Did you include features such as:

- how many stages there are in the process
 - overall length of time
 - where the stages take place?
- Is your answer too short? If so, look back to see if you can add more information about the process (think about the infrastructure needed or the natural environment).
 - Remember to make comparisons if you can.

Coherence and cohesion

- Think about the coherence and cohesion of your answers. Read your answers aloud. Do you vary the beginning of your sentences, or do they always / mainly begin with a cohesive device?
- Can you trace the ideas in your summary using the zig-zag pattern from lesson 9?

Language

- Did you vary the language and change the language used in the diagrams?
 - Did you use a variety of tenses?
 - Make a note of any vocabulary you want to learn from this lesson and be sure to repeat the exercises after a week or two.
 - Review lesson 9 and 10 if you found it difficult to remember the points raised in this lesson.
-

QUESTION 1

Use the verbs below to fill in the blanks in the model answer. Make sure to use the correct tense.

transform, begin, lay, hatch, emerge, feed, grow, reach, form, attach, remain, transform, have, fly, feed, seek out, lay, begin

The diagram shows the different stages in the life cycle of one species of butterfly. Overall, there are four main stages in the life of this insect, which [] from an egg to a caterpillar and ultimately a butterfly over a period of approximately six to ten weeks.

The Monarch butterfly [] life as an egg, which [] on the leaves of the milkweed plant. After four to seven days, the egg [] and a small caterpillar []. The caterpillar [] on the leaves of the plant for up to three weeks, [] bigger in size. Once it [] approximately two centimetres in length, the caterpillar [] into a chrysalis and [] itself to a branch. It [] in this state for one to two weeks.

By the end of the chrysalis stage, the caterpillar [] into a butterfly. The adult insect [] a wing-span of seven to ten centimetres and is much more colourful in appearance. It can now [] in search of food, and [] on nectar found in flowering plants. With a life span of only two to four weeks, it eventually [] a milkweed plant [] the eggs of the next generation, and the cycle [] again.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Use the verbs below to fill in the blanks in the model answer. Make sure to use the correct tense.

transform, begin, lay, hatch, emerge, feed, grow, reach, form, attach, remain, transform, have, fly, feed, seek out, lay, begin

The diagram shows the different stages in the life cycle of one species of butterfly. Overall, there are four main stages in the life of this insect, which [] from an egg to a caterpillar and ultimately a butterfly over a period of approximately six to ten weeks.

The Monarch butterfly [] life as an egg, which [] on the leaves of the milkweed plant. After four to seven days, the egg [] and a small caterpillar []. The caterpillar [] on the leaves of the plant for up to three weeks, [] bigger in size. Once it [] approximately two centimetres in length, the caterpillar [] into a chrysalis and [] itself to a branch. It [] in this state for one to two weeks.

By the end of the chrysalis stage, the caterpillar [] into a butterfly. The adult insect [] a wing-span of seven to ten centimetres and is much more colourful in appearance. It can now [] in search of food, and [] on nectar found in flowering plants. With a life span of only two to four weeks, it eventually [] a milkweed plant [] the eggs of the next generation, and the cycle [] again.

The answer:

The diagram shows the different stages in the life cycle of one species of butterfly. Overall, there are four main stages in the life of this insect, which *transforms* from an egg to a caterpillar and ultimately a butterfly over a period of approximately six to ten weeks.

The Monarch butterfly *begins* life as an egg, which *is laid* on the leaves of the milkweed plant. After four to seven days, the egg *hatches* and a small caterpillar *emerges*. The caterpillar *feeds* on the leaves of the plant for up to three weeks, *growing* bigger in size. Once it *has reached* approximately two centimetres in length, the caterpillar *forms* into a chrysalis and *attaches* itself to a branch. It *remains* in this state for one to two weeks.

By the end of the chrysalis stage, the caterpillar *has transformed* into a butterfly. The adult insect *has* a wing-span of seven to ten centimetres and is much more colourful in appearance. It can now *fly* in search of food, and *feeds* on nectar found in flowering plants. With a life span of only two to four weeks, it eventually *seeks out* a milkweed plant *to lay* the eggs of the next generation, and the cycle *begins* again.

All done !

LESSON 17 - Review of Map tasks and Task 1 language

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 17.1 Reviewing Map and Plan Tasks
- 17.2 Taking a User approach to Maps and Plans
- 17.3 Review of Task 1 Language and Style

17.1 Reviewing Map and Plan Tasks

In this lesson, we will review map tasks and then take a final look at the writing style you need to use in task 1 before we begin test practice. We will also focus on timing and the most important things you need to bear in mind in this task.

What you can remember about map tasks? Are the following statements True or False? Try to correct any false statements.

Click Here
to Practise

Review of Language in map and plan tasks

In a map or plan task, you may need to describe large spaces or smaller ones. If these are internal, there may be special areas as well as what we refer to as 'fixtures and fittings' that you need to be able to describe. In the following task, you can review some of the vocabulary we learned in lessons 7 and 8 and test yourself to see what 'fixtures and fittings' you can label.

Practice

Click Here
to Practise

Common problems in map or plan tasks

Here is a reminder of some common language problems in map or plan tasks. Can you identify the errors in each sentence? What changes would you make?

- Overall, it is demonstrated that the main building is going to be expanded with removing outdoor courts and adding one more pool and some other sporting facilities such as dancing areas and more changing rooms.
- The university's main sports building is situated between two outdoor courts, which are planned to be removed.
- In the same side, a new changing room along with a sports shop are mapped out.
- The seats and the changing room will remain untouched in the center while in the northern part the gym is intended to be enlarged eastward.
- There are also going to be one more changing room in the southeast of the new center and a café next to it to the west.

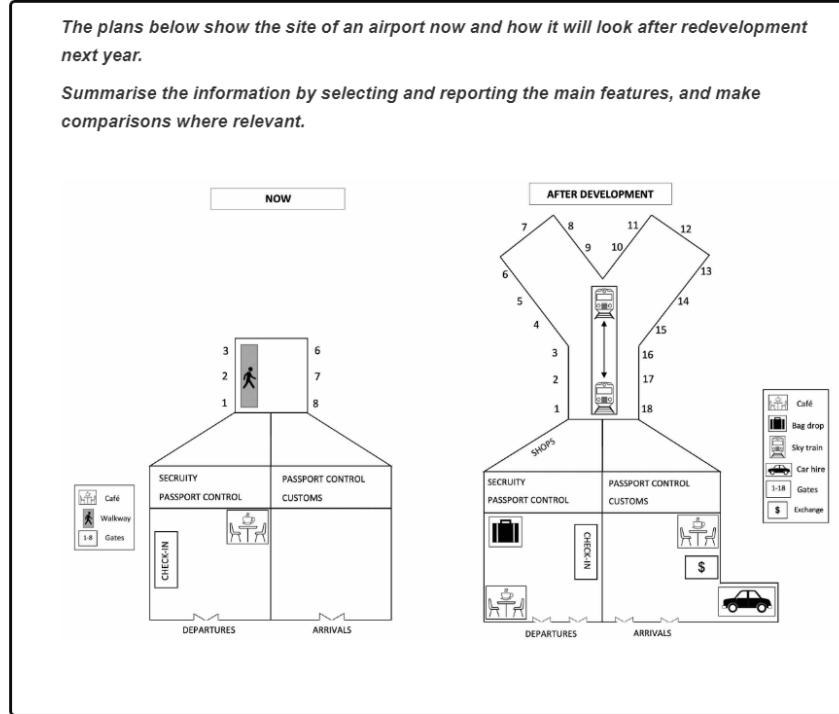
See The
Answers

Test Practice

Write an answer to the following test question, which is adapted from Cambridge 16, page 73.

The plans below show the site of an airport now and how it will look after redevelopment next year.

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



In your answer, remember to look for:

- anything that stayed the same
- anything that has been made bigger / smaller
- anything that has been removed

Be sure to highlight the main changes – don't just write about one plan and then the next plan as though they are separate. And vary your tenses by asking:

- What does it look like now?
- What will change?
- What will stay the same?
- What will be added?
- What will be removed?
- What will be extended / made bigger?

KEY IDEA: Vary the language and tenses you use in map or plan tasks by asking a variety of questions: **what has changed, what will change, what will be done, what will stay the same?**

QUESTION 1

Decide whether the statements are True or False. Can you correct the false statements? Click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

True False

1. In a map task, you will always be given two maps showing a place now and how it looked in the past.
2. You are less likely to use a passive in map tasks.
3. You may need to describe natural or outdoor areas.
4. A Map/plan task is the only task where you need to notice if something is missing.
5. It is a good idea to always use the compass points to explain where everything is located.
6. The best way to organise the information is to 1)describe what it looked like in the past, 2) describe what it looks like now.
7. For the overview, you only need to look at the second map or plan.
8. You do not need to give exact sizes if they are showing in the map or plan.
9. Map and plan tasks sometimes use special symbols.
10. It can help to think about how people will use the building or facilities.
11. In map/plan tasks, cohesive devices such as 'On the contrary' are useful.
12. In map/plan tasks, cohesive devices like 'Firstly,' and 'Finally,' are useful.

[Show answers](#)

QUESTION 1

Decide whether the statements are True or False. Can you correct the false statements? Click on 'show answers' to see my comments.

1. In a map task, you will always be given two maps showing a place now and how it looked in the past.
 True False
2. You are less likely to use a passive in map tasks.
 True False
3. You may need to describe natural or outdoor areas.
 True False
4. A Map/plan task is the only task where you need to notice if something is missing.
 True False
5. It is a good idea to always use the compass points to explain where everything is located.
 True False
6. The best way to organise the information is to 1) describe what it looked like in the past, 2) describe what it looks like now.
 True False
7. For the overview, you only need to look at the second map or plan.
 True False
8. You do not need to give exact sizes if they are showing in the map or plan.
 True False
9. Map and plan tasks sometimes use special symbols.
 True False
10. It can help to think about how people will use the building or facilities.
 True False
11. In map/plan tasks, cohesive devices such as 'On the contrary' are useful.
 True False
12. In map/plan tasks, cohesive devices like 'Firstly,' and 'Finally,' are useful.
 True False

Corrections to the false statements:

1. You might be given a past and present map/plan or you might be given a present and future map/plan.
2. You should use the passive to describe what was done / what has been done instead of active verbs (they did...etc.).
3. Make sure to look at ALL of the features shown, inside and outside of a building.
4. NB it is possible that something might be missing / removed at a later stage in a process task but this would be signalled by the label.
5. You can use the compass points if one is given, but this should only be for larger areas, not every detail.
6. If you do this you will not describe the main changes and this will lower your score. Don't describe the two plans/maps separately.
7. Your overview must sum up the main changes, so you need to look at both maps / plans to do that.
8. If sizes are given then this can be an important feature to include or it may be useful supporting evidence to show something is much bigger / smaller etc..
9. These will be explained in the key, so be sure to look for one and use the information.
10. We will look at this in more detail later in this lesson.
11. Cohesive devices like this are not appropriate for Task 1.
12. Cohesive devices like this are used in process tasks not map or plan tasks.

All done !

QUESTION 1

How much vocabulary can you remember from lessons 7 and 8? Fill in the blanks with the correct word.

A useful synonym for 'before' is

A useful synonym for 'after' is

A useful synonym for 'building' is

A useful synonym for 'facilities' is

The verb for 'to make longer' is and a useful synonym beginning with 'e' is

The verb for 'to make wider' is

The verb for 'to make shorter' is

The verb meaning 'to make better' is

If a natural or wild area has buildings etc. added to it then it is

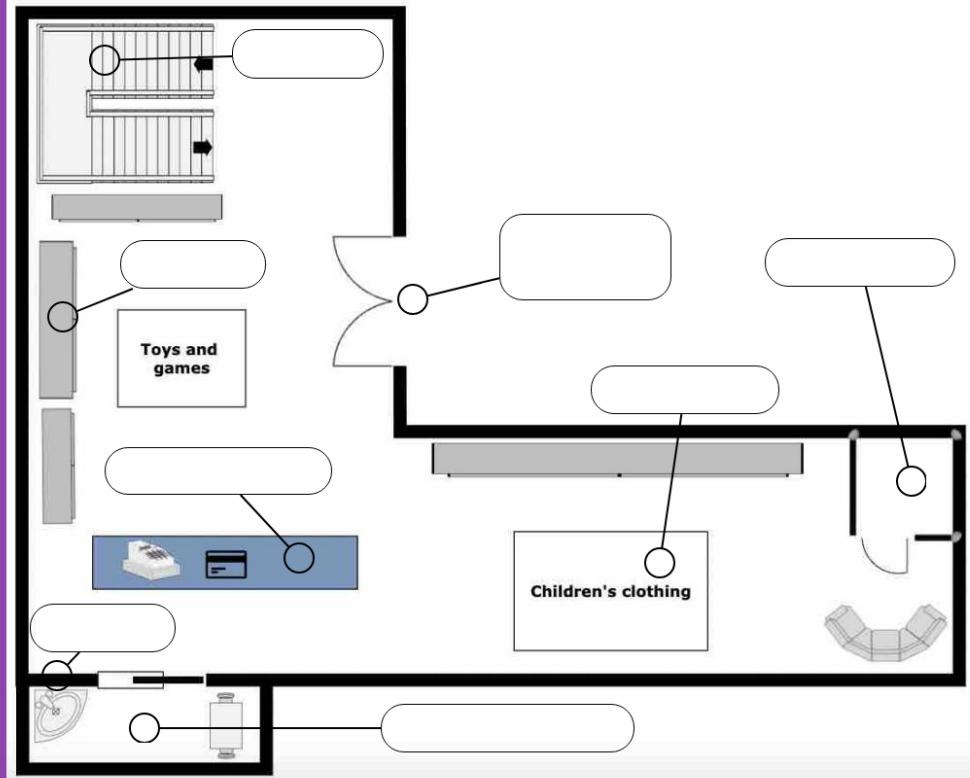
If a large building or area is changed by replacing the old buildings then it is

If a smaller building is updated to make it look 'new' again then it is

If the inside of a building has new furniture and decorations then it is

QUESTION 2

Can you label the diagram?



Show answers

QUESTION 1

How much vocabulary can you remember from lessons 7 and 8? Fill in the blanks with the correct word.

A useful synonym for 'before' is _____.

A useful synonym for 'after' is _____.

A useful synonym for 'building' is _____.

A useful synonym for 'facilities' is _____.

The verb for 'to make longer' is _____ and a useful synonym beginning with 'e' is _____.

The verb for 'to make wider' is _____.

The verb for 'to make shorter' is _____.

The verb meaning 'to make better' is _____.

If a natural or wild area has buildings etc. added to it then it is _____.

If a large building or area is changed by replacing the old buildings then it is _____.

If a smaller building is updated to make it look 'new' again then it is _____.

If the inside of a building has new furniture and decorations then it is _____.

The answer:

A useful synonym for 'before' is *prior to*.

A useful synonym for 'after' is *following*.

A useful synonym for 'building' is *construction*.

A useful synonym for 'facilities' is *amenities*.

The verb for 'to make longer' is *lengthen / to lengthen* and a useful synonym beginning with 'e' is *extend / to extend*

The verb for 'to make wider' is *to widen / widen*.

The verb for 'to make shorter' is *to shorten / shorten*.

The verb meaning 'to make better' is *to improve / improve*.

If a natural or wild area has buildings etc. added to it then it is *developed*.

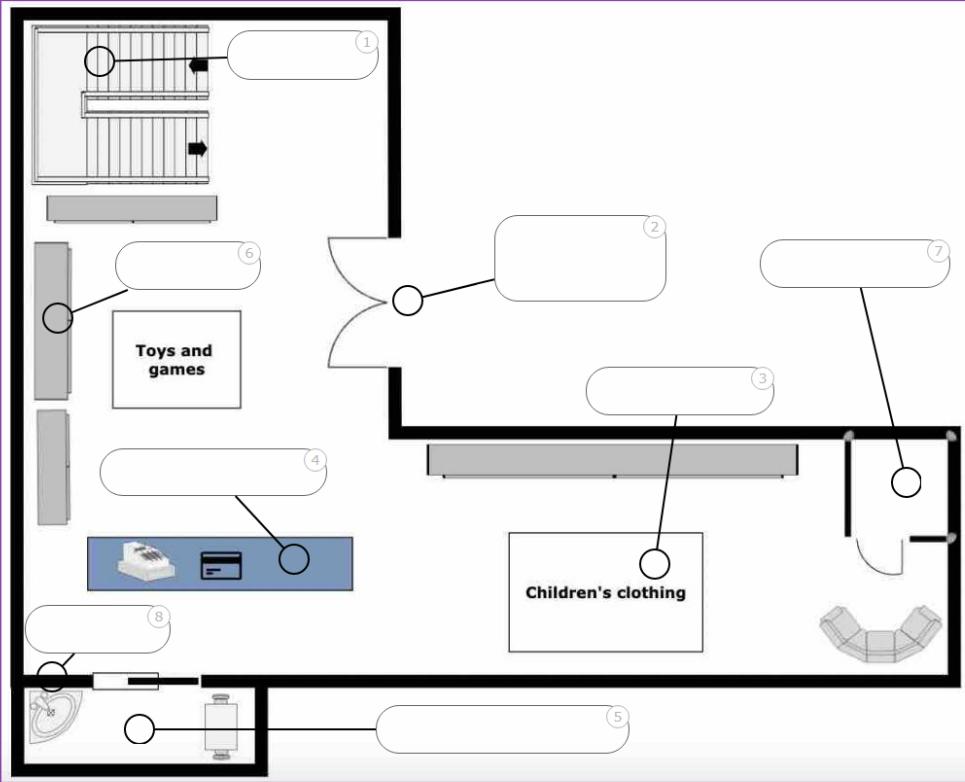
If a large building or area is changed by replacing the old buildings then it is *redeveloped*.

If a smaller building is updated to make it look 'new' again then it is *renovated*.

If the inside of a building has new furniture and decorations then it is *refurbished*.

QUESTION 2

Can you label the diagram?



The answers:

1. stairs / stairway / staircase, 2. doorway / entrance / doors, 3. section / children's clothing section / area, 4. sales desk / sales counter / counter, 5. Staff area / staff room, 6. shelving / storage / bookcase / cupboard / shelves, 7. changing room / changing cubicle / cubicle, 8. sink

All done !

QUESTION 1

Can you identify the problems underlined in the sentences below? What changes would you make?

1. Overall, it is demonstrated that the main building is going to be expanded with removing outdoor courts and adding one more pool and some other sporting facilities such as dancing areas and more changing rooms.
2. The university's main sports building is situated between two outdoor courts, which are planned to be removed.
3. In the same side, a new changing room along with a sports shop are mapped out.
4. The seats and the changing room will remain untouched in the center while in the northern part the gym is intended to be enlarged eastward.
5. There are also going to be one more changing room in the southeast of the new center and a café next to it to the west.



Show answers

QUESTION 1

Can you identify the problems underlined in the sentences below? What changes would you make?

1. Overall, it is demonstrated that the main building is going to be expanded with removing outdoor courts and adding one more pool and some other sporting facilities such as dancing areas and more changing rooms.
2. The university's main sports building is situated between two outdoor courts, which are planned to be removed.
3. In the same side, a new changing room along with a sports shop are mapped out.
4. The seats and the changing room will remain untouched in the center while in the northern part the gym is intended to be enlarged eastward.
5. There are also going to be one more changing room in the southeast of the new center and a café next to it to the west.



My comments and changes:

1) This overview is too detailed – you need to describe the main changes and use umbrella terms rather than giving concrete examples. The phrase 'it is demonstrated that' is not necessary or appropriate here (nothing is being 'demonstrated'). There are also some language problems. A better version would be:

'Overall, the main building is going to be expanded by removing the outdoor courts and more sports facilities and amenities will be added.'

2) Although we can 'plan to do something', we cannot use the verb in the passive like this. We say that 'something is planned' NOT 'something is planned to be done'. It is better not to use the verb 'to plan.' Instead, use a future tense. It is move 'at the moment' to the beginning here, so that the relative clause is closer to the thing it is giving extra information about:

'The university's main sports building is situated between two outdoor courts, which will be removed.'

3) Don't use 'map' as a verb – this is like saying 'they are shown on the map', which is not necessary. There is a preposition problem here: on the same side; 'along with a' suggests the sports shop is linked to the changing room, which is not the case.

'On the same side, there will be a new changing room and a sports shop.'

4) Be careful with points of a compass. This sentence has too many and 'enlarged eastward' is not accurate. We need to say 'lengthened' or 'made longer'; 'will remain untouched in the centre' is confusing. Give the location first, then the extra information; as with 'plan, don't use 'intend' in the passive:

'In the centre, the seats and the changing room will remain untouched, while in the northern part, the gym will be lengthened.'

5) Be careful with verb / subject agreement with 'there is / there are'. Make sure the directions you give are clear – just give one at a time and only when necessary (i.e. when you need to be specific or to avoid confusion). 'To the west' is not necessary here. Don't overuse the compass points to give a location.

'There is also going to be one more changing room in the southeast of the new center and a café next to it.'

All done !

17.2 Taking a User Approach to Maps and Plans

I was sent an answer to this question by a candidate who wanted to focus on the passengers. We saw an example of this in lesson 8. In my model answer, I used the visitor experience of the new sports centre to help vary my language: '**On arrival, visitors to the new centre will benefit from a third changing room, a sports shop and a café, all located around the reception area.'**

If you decide to do this, it is important to make sure that your answer still helps the reader to fully understand **the main changes**. Be careful with coherence and cohesion. Look at the following extract, can you follow the information easily?

Coming to the departure hall from the main gate in the southern end of the airport, passengers will see a new cafe immediately to their left, just before a new bag drop area built in place of the current check-in counter, which will be relocated across from this. As they proceed through passport control and security, departing passengers must walk across an empty area to get to the walkway and reach their gates. Next year, there will be some new shops here, and the walkway will be completely replaced by a modern sky train as this part of the terminal expands into a Y-shaped structure to accommodate ~~an over a more than~~ twofold increase in the number of departure gates, from 8 to 18.

The language control here is very good. I made one correction. The main problem is with Coherence and cohesion, specifically, with the way the information is grouped and organised. The paragraph jumps from the future plan (*passengers will see a new cafe ... just before a new bag drop area built in place of the current check-in counter, which will be relocated across from this*) to the present plan (*As they proceed through passport control and security, departing passengers must walk across an empty area to get to the walkway and reach their gates*).

The two paragraphs would work better if paragraph 1 describes the user experience now and paragraph 2 describes the user experience in the new airport. Notice that taking this approach can also force you to use extra words, which is why it may be better to limit this to one or two sentences. NB There is no benefit to this approach, and it will not automatically boost your score, it is simply a way to vary your language when writing about maps or plans.

Look at my model answer and try to identify where I focused on passengers.

Model answer

The two plans show Southwest Airport as it is now and redevelopment plans for next year. Overall, the number of gates will increase significantly, while the main building will generally remain unchanged apart from the addition of more passenger facilities.

The current airport has very few facilities for departing passengers, with only a coffee shop on the right-hand side, opposite a check-in counter. There are no facilities beyond passport control and security, and passengers have to walk to the eight departure gates. Arriving passengers have no amenities at all.

Following redevelopment, both arriving and departing visitors are better catered for, beginning with double the number of entrances and exits. In the departures area, the coffee shop will move to the opposite side, closer to the front, and the check-in desk will take its place, making room for a new baggage drop counter. Although the security area will not change, beyond this section, passengers will be able to shop and can use the new sky train service to reach the expanded gate area, with ten additional gates. Arriving passengers will also have access to a coffee shop and a currency exchange. The only structural change to the main building is a small annexe in the front right-hand corner, where passengers will be able to hire a car. (216)

Points to notice

- I did not focus on passengers in every sentence – doing that would either make my answer too long or would mean I don't point out the key changes. In order to achieve both, look at the changes I would need to make to the following sentence:

In the departures area, the coffee shop will move to the opposite side, closer to the front, and the check-in desk will take its place, making room for a new baggage drop counter.

- If I chose to focus on passengers throughout, this would need to say:

In the departures area, passengers will be able to have something to eat and drink at the coffee shop, which will move to the opposite side, closer to the front, and they can check in at the check-in desk that will take its place, making room for a new counter where they can drop off their luggage.

- Notice also that it is more difficult for the reader to keep track of the main changes – which is what I should be highlighting, and feels a little awkward and repetitive. The best approach is to only think about the user experience once or twice in your answer to vary your language.
- I'm sometimes asked how to describe the gates area in the second plan. If a structure looks like a letter, you can use this. For example, a T-shirt is so-called because it is the shape of a letter T. Here are some other examples:

L-shaped, T-shaped, Y-shaped.

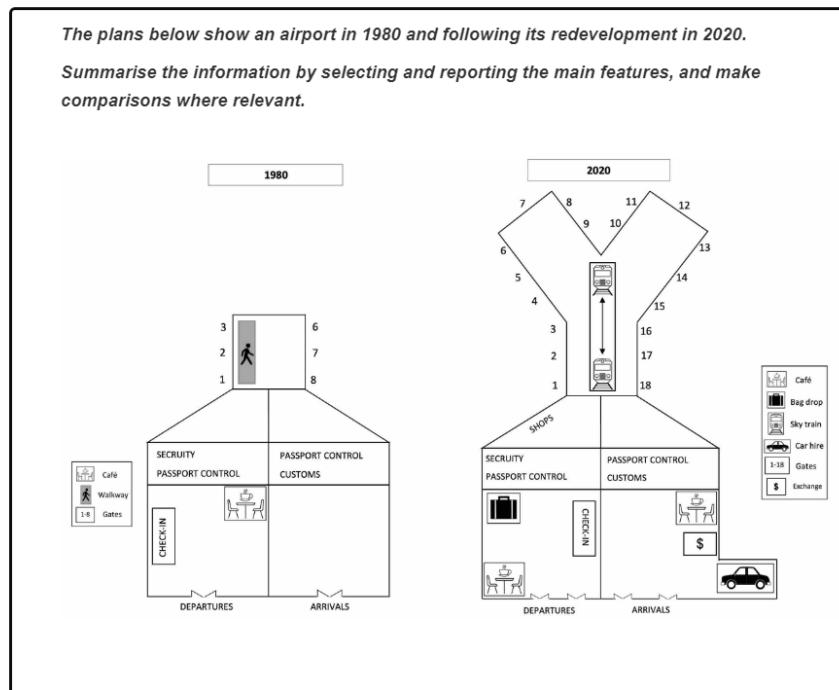
- With the second plan, you could also describe the gates as branches (like a tree). Like this:

The gates section will be significantly expanded, with ten additional gates branching off to the left and right.

KEY IDEA: Focusing on the user experience of a map or plan can help to vary your language. However, don't lose sight of the main purpose of your writing, which is always **to highlight the main changes**.

Test Practice 2

Practise your tenses by writing an answer to the following variation on this task.



Practice

Fill in the gaps in my model answer for this task using the correct tense of the verbs in brackets. NB Because this is a recent development, I was able to use the simple past (**what it looked like, what was done**), the present perfect (**what has changed / has been done**) and the simple present (**what the airport looks like now**) to vary my language. As time passes, this will need to change to the simple past (**what it looked like, the changes that were made etc.**), and the simple present (**what the airport looks like now**).

Click Here
to Practise

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks with the correct tense of the verbs in brackets. Use any additional words given. NB There are a range of tenses including passive, present perfect, simple past and simple present.

The two plans show Southwest Airport as it [] (be) in 1980 and after [] (redevelop) in 2020. Overall, the number of gates [] (increase) significantly, while the main building generally [] (remain) unchanged apart from the addition of more up-to-date facilities.

In 1980, the airport [] (have) very few facilities for departing passengers, with only a coffee shop on the right-hand side, opposite a check-in counter. [] (be) no facilities beyond passport control and security, and passengers [] to walk to the eight departure gates. Arriving passengers [] (have) no amenities at all.

Following redevelopment, both arriving and departing visitors [] (be) better catered for, beginning with double the number of entrances and exits. In the departures area, the coffee shop [] (move) to the opposite side, closer to the front, and the check-in desk [] (took) its place, making room for a new baggage drop counter. Although the security area [] (not change), beyond this section, passengers [] (now be able) shop and can use the new sky train service to reach the expanded gate area, with ten additional gates. Arriving passengers also now [] (have) access to a coffee shop and a currency exchange. The only structural change to the main building [] (be) a small annexe in the front right-hand corner, where passengers [] (hire) a car.

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks with the correct tense of the verbs in brackets. Use any additional words given. NB There are a range of tenses including passive, present perfect, simple past and simple present.

The two plans show Southwest Airport as it [] (be) in 1980 and after [] (redevelop) in 2020. Overall, the number of gates [] (increase) significantly, while the main building generally [] (remain) unchanged apart from the addition of more up-to-date facilities.

In 1980, the airport [] (have) very few facilities for departing passengers, with only a coffee shop on the right-hand side, opposite a check-in counter. [] (be) no facilities beyond passport control and security, and passengers [] to walk to the eight departure gates. Arriving passengers [] (have) no amenities at all.

Following redevelopment, both arriving and departing visitors [] (be) better catered for, beginning with double the number of entrances and exits. In the departures area, the coffee shop [] (move) to the opposite side, closer to the front, and the check-in desk [] (took) its place, making room for a new baggage drop counter. Although the security area [] (not change), beyond this section, passengers [] (now be able) shop and can use the new sky train service to reach the expanded gate area, with ten additional gates. Arriving passengers also now [] (have) access to a coffee shop and a currency exchange. The only structural change to the main building [] (be) a small annexe in the front right-hand corner, where passengers [] (hire) a car.

The answer:

The two plans show Southwest Airport as it *was* (be) in 1980 and after *being redeveloped* (redevelop) in 2020. Overall, the number of gates *was increased* (increase) significantly, while the main building generally *remains* (remain) unchanged apart from the addition of more up-to-date facilities.

In 1980, the airport *had* (have) very few facilities for departing passengers, with only a coffee shop on the right-hand side, opposite a check-in counter. *There were* (be) no facilities beyond passport control and security, and passengers *had* to walk to the eight departure gates. Arriving passengers *had* (have) no amenities at all.

Following redevelopment, both arriving and departing visitors *are* (be) better catered for, beginning with double the number of entrances and exits. In the departures area, the coffee shop *has been moved* (move) to the opposite side, closer to the front, and the check-in desk *has taken* (took) its place, making room for a new baggage drop counter. Although the security area *has not changed* (not change), beyond this section, passengers *are now able to* (now be able) shop and can use the new sky train service to reach the expanded gate area, with ten additional gates. Arriving passengers also now *have* (have) access to a coffee shop and a currency exchange. The only structural change to the main building *is / was* (be) a small annexe in the front right-hand corner, where passengers *can hire* (hire) a car.

All done !

17.3 Review of Task 1 Language and Style

Writing Style

Writing Task 1 is a summary. This is a very different genre of writing to Task 2 and requires a different style of writing. While both are formal, Task 1 must present an impersonal and neutral report on the visual information. This means you must not present a position or draw any conclusions about the information. A further difference is the tone of writing task 1 answers, which, to me, can feel rather clinical and cold, because there is nothing personal in them.

These differences are also reflected in the length. Remember, a Band 7 answer 'covers the requirements of the task'. This means, you must produce **a summary** (not an essay), that **selects and reports the main features, makes comparisons where relevant, and provides a clear overview** of the data or diagrams you are given. If your answers are consistently over 230 words, or close to 250, then look carefully at the style of writing you are using.

Wordiness and repetition

I am cautious about using the term 'wordiness' because it is often overused in language checking apps (e.g. grammarly). Incidentally, I do not recommend using this app to assess your writing as it calls many common phrases 'cliches' and is more likely to confuse you. Nevertheless, in Task 1, the idea of wordiness – using more words than necessary to express an idea – is an important one. Your writing should be concise and to the point, with no wasted words.

KEY IDEA: Your writing style in task 1 should be impersonal and neutral and should be **a summary** (not an essay). If your answers are consistently over 230 words, or close to 250, then look carefully at the style of writing you are using. Your writing should be concise and to the point. See the word limit (150 words) as a minimum, but also give yourself a maximum (e.g. 220-230) and do not waste your extra words.

Wasting words

When I say 'do not waste your words', I mean don't add extra words and phrases that serve no purpose and prevent you from being concise. Here are some examples:

- ***It is apparent that*** the centre and the northern parts of the building will undergo a slight change.
- ***Overall, it is demonstrated that*** the main building is going to be expanded and more facilities will be added.

Your task is to highlight what stands out in the data but you do not need to include phrases like this to achieve this. The following are more concise and to the point:

- ***The centre and the northern parts of the building will undergo a slight change.***
- ***Overall, the main building is going to be expanded, and more facilities will be added.***

I was recently sent an answer that was 350 words long. Compare the overview from the answer with my version. Try to notice the changes I have made to make it more concise:

Overall, while the ownership of these appliances increased almost continually throughout the period in question, the opposite was true in terms of the amount of time people spent on housework. It is also noticeable that the refrigerator and the washing machine had become more common than the washing machine by the end of the period, although this was initially not the case. (62 words)

My Version:

Overall, while the ownership of these appliances increased almost continually throughout, the opposite was true of time spent on housework. Notably, refrigerators and washing machines were in all homes by the end of the period. (35 words)

The next extract highlights a further problem with 'wordiness'.

In 1920, the washing machine was the most commonly used household appliance, with figure standing at 40%. This figure then increased steadily, reaching a peak of 70% in 1960. Although this was followed by a slight drop, the percentage of households who had washing machines went up again, and its 2019 figure was noticeably higher than its 1960 peak. (59 words)

My Version:

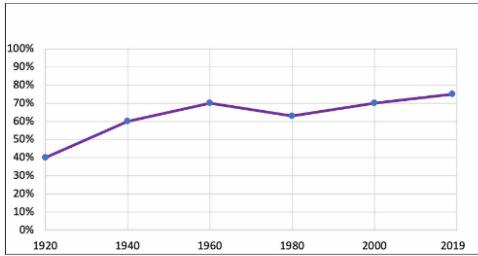
In 1920, the washing machine was the most common domestic appliance, with 40% of households owning one. This figure increased steadily, reaching 70% in 1960. Despite a slight drop in 1980, by 2019 they were found in approximately 75% of homes. (41 words)

Points to notice

- The extract refers to two peaks in this data (in 1960 and in 2019). The top of a mountain is called a peak, and looks like this:



That is what your data should look like if you refer to a 'peak'. However, in this task, the data looked like this:



- There are no 'peaks' shown here. Ownership of vacuum cleaners did reach its highest level in the final year (2019), but the slight rising trend would need to be steeper, and would also need to fall sharply following this to make this a peak. We don't know what happens next, this is all the data we have, so this is all we can describe.
- Notice the repetition of words or phrases in the original extract. This type of 'wordiness' detracts from Task achievement because the answer is too long to represent 'a summary'. However it also affects Coherence and cohesion, which assesses your ability to avoid repetition through the use of referencing and substitution. In fact, these problems are mentioned at band 5, where a candidate's answer 'may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution.' NB The samples above are **not** band 5 because the language level and control is generally very high, but these issues will lower the CC score for this answer.

The figure

A lot of this repetition occurs from overusing the word 'figure'. In lesson 6, we saw the following sentence:

Although the figure of lamb saw few increments during this period, it fell to 60 grams in 2004.

I corrected this to:

Although the figures for lamb fluctuated during this period, consumption fell to 60 grams in 2004.

This highlights another important point: discussing only the figures and what they are doing creates a repetitive and list-like answer. You can avoid this by remembering to focus on what the figures represent as well as the figures themselves. Above, I changed 'it fell' (i.e. the figure fell) to 'consumption fell'. This helped to make the writing less repetitive but it also helped to highlight the point more because it is less list-like (i.e. *The figure for X went up then the figure went down. The figure for y...*).

Here is my version again with the examples of substitution and referencing underlined.

My Version:

In 1920, the washing machine was the most common domestic appliance, with 40% of households owning one. This figure increased steadily, reaching 70% in 1960. Despite a slight drop in 1980, by 2019 they were found in approximately 75% of homes.

KEY IDEA: Don't overuse the words 'figure' and 'peak'. A peak is a clear high point in the data with noticeably lower figures before and after it. Vary your language by referring to what the figures represent, and use referencing and substitution to avoid repetition and improve your CC score.

Being concise - using 'at' and 'with'

A common way that I avoid wordiness in my model answers is through using **at**, **with**, or **brackets**.

At is used to give a precise amount. **With** is used to give some additional information (almost like a non-defining relative clause) and it can also be used instead of phrases like 'in terms of' to change the topic or focus. I sometimes add the supporting evidence from the data in brackets to avoid adding more word. Compare the examples below:

- *Although the three remaining countries also saw increases, these were marginal, with gains of between 0.2 and 0.7 million euros.*
- *Notably, cooling the home is the lowest in terms of both use of electricity and emissions at 2% and 3% respectively.*
- *In 2000, the population of Yemen was relatively young, with just over half aged 14 and under (50.1%).*
- *With Fairtrade bananas, Switzerland was the leader in both 1999 and 2004.*

Notice that more information is given after 'with', while only the figure is given after 'at'. Compare these examples:

- Sales of Fairtrade coffee were relatively modest in 1999, and Switzerland was the largest consumer, **with €3 million in sales.**
- In 1999, Switzerland led the table **at €3 million.**

Practice

Practise using **with** and **at** by filling in the blanks in the sentences with the correct word.

Click Here
to Practise

Timing

As you work through the practice tasks, try to improve your timing. For example, think about how it generally takes you to do the following:

1. **Noticing details**
2. **Identifying the key features**
3. **Grouping information together logically**
4. **Writing a clear overview**
5. **Paraphrasing the question**
6. **Writing your paragraphs**
7. **Counting your words**
8. **Checking your answer for mistakes**
9. **Editing your answer and make corrections**

You can afford to cut the last three items on this list as long as you do the first six items well.

KEY IDEA: You cannot afford to cut the following stages in Task 1:

- **Noticing details**
- **Identifying the key features**
- **Grouping information together logically**
- **Writing an introductory sentence**
- **Writing a clear overview**
- **Writing your paragraphs**

If you are spending too much time paraphrasing the question, review lesson 4, which shows you how to do this quickly.

My recommended timing for these tasks is as follows

Steps	Recommended timing
1	Noticing details
2	Identifying the key features Grouping information together logically
3	Writing an introductory sentence and a clear overview
4	Writing your paragraphs
5	Checking and editing

This means you should ideally be thinking and planning (steps 1 and 2) for no more than 3 minutes, writing (steps 3 and 4) for 14 to 16 minutes, and checking your answer if you have 1-2 minutes left at the end.

Here is a reminder of the key features to notice in step 2, and highlight in your overview and paragraphs:

KEY IDEA: You cannot afford to cut the following stages in Task 1:

Key features to look for and highlight in steps 2, 3 and 4:

- *big changes in the data (charts and graphs)*
- *the highest and lowest points (charts and graphs)*
- *any similarities (all tasks)*
- *anything that stayed the same (all tasks)*
- *how long something takes / lasts (process tasks)*
- *how long something takes / lasts (process tasks)*
- *physical changes / changes in form (process tasks)*
- *anything that has been made bigger / smaller (map /plan and process tasks)*
- *anything that has been removed (map and plan tasks)*

Be sure to practice your timing with Task 1 and Task 2 before your test.

Extra practice

Reviewing Task achievement

- Look back over all of the answers you have written so far in this book. Look in particular at your total word count for each answer and think about wordiness. Can you reduce any of your answers? Are there any words and phrases you use out of habit? (E.g. It is clearly demonstrated that...')
- Look back at one or two answers. Can you make the sentences more concise using, 'at', 'with' or putting data in brackets?
- Make sure you can
 - *Notice details*
 - *Identify the key features*
 - *Write a clear overview of the main changes, trends, or stages*
 - *Write concise paragraphs that highlight the key features and make comparisons where relevant.*

Reviewing Coherence and cohesion

- Look back at your previous answers and think about coherence and cohesion. Have you avoided repetition? Read your answers aloud to help you focus on this. Can you use referencing and substitution to improve your answer?
- When you write your answer, make sure you
 - *Group information together logically – both into separate paragraphs and within each paragraph.*
 - *Avoid repeating the same words (substitute it with a synonym or refer back with a pronoun).*
- Try to notice the way that I do this in my models.

Reviewing language

- Look back at the exercises in the previous lessons and repeat those that focus on vocabulary or grammar.
- Look back at the model answers in each lesson and make a note of any language you would like to learn. Think about specific topics (e.g. exercise, energy, land degradation) as well as language connected to describing data, charts, maps, and processes.
- Look back at your own answers and think about language. Can you make any changes now to practice the new language you noted?

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks with either '**at**' or '**with**'.

1. Switzerland was again the leader in 1999 and dominated this table in both years, sales increasing from €15 million to a striking €47 million.
2. Lamb almost exactly mirrored this fluctuating trend, falling from second highest initially (150 grams) to approximately 60 grams per week by the end of the period.
3. Fish was consistently eaten the least, beginning (around 60 grams per week then dropping to below 50 grams.
4. Overall, the two sectors followed opposite trends, renting generally declining as home ownership increased.
5. In the youngest age group, males outnumbered females, 52.8% of 15- to 24-year-olds taking part in regular activity compared to 47.7% of females.
6. Hydropower generally declined from 2015 and is projected to remain the lowest (around 3 quadrillion units.
7. Interestingly, these had the lowest figures overall, (only slightly more people never eating fast food (5% falling to 4%) in comparison to those eating it daily (4% declining to 3%).
8. Only from age 65 and over were the figures for both genders near parity (46.7% (males) and 47.1% (females).
9. However, this was the peak age range for men as numbers declined from this point on, reaching their lowest point (35 to 44 years, when just under 40% exercised regularly.
10. Sales of Fairtrade coffee were relatively modest in 1999, and Switzerland was the largest consumer, (€3 million in sales.
11. Region 1 has the lowest proportion of land affected overall (5%), and has the lowest figures in almost all categories apart from crop farming, which causes more than half of its land issues (3.3%.
12. (the emissions resulting from this energy use, water heating produces the most greenhouse gases (32%,

Show answers

QUESTION 1

Fill in the blanks with either '**at**' or '**with**'.

1. Switzerland was again the leader in 1999 and dominated this table in both years, **with** sales increasing from €15 million to a striking €47 million.
2. Lamb almost exactly mirrored this fluctuating trend, falling from second highest initially (**at** 150 grams) to approximately 60 grams per week by the end of the period.
3. Fish was consistently eaten the least, beginning **at** around 60 grams per week then dropping to below 50 grams.
4. Overall, the two sectors followed opposite trends, **with** renting generally declining as home ownership increased.
5. In the youngest age group, males outnumbered females, **with** 52.8% of 15- to 24-year-olds taking part in regular activity compared to 47.7% of females.
6. Hydropower generally declined from 2015 and is projected to remain the lowest **at** around 3 quadrillion units.
7. Interestingly, these had the lowest figures overall, **with** only slightly more people never eating fast food (5% falling to 4%) in comparison to those eating it daily (4% declining to 3%).
8. Only from age 65 and over were the figures for both genders near parity **at** 46.7% (males) and 47.1% (females).
9. However, this was the peak age range for men as numbers declined from this point on, reaching their lowest point **at** 35 to 44 years, when just under 40% exercised regularly.
10. Sales of Fairtrade coffee were relatively modest in 1999, and Switzerland was the largest consumer, **with** €3 million in sales.
11. Region 1 has the lowest proportion of land affected overall (5%), and has the lowest figures in almost all categories apart from crop farming, which causes more than half of its land issues **at** 3.3%.
12. **With** the emissions resulting from this energy use, water heating produces the most greenhouse gases **at** 32%,

The answer:

1. Switzerland was again the leader in 1999 and dominated this table in both years, **with** sales increasing from €15 million to a striking €47 million.
2. Lamb almost exactly mirrored this fluctuating trend, falling from second highest initially (**at** 150 grams) to approximately 60 grams per week by the end of the period.
3. Fish was consistently eaten the least, beginning **at** around 60 grams per week then dropping to below 50 grams.
4. Overall, the two sectors followed opposite trends, **with** renting generally declining as home ownership increased.
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12. **With** the emissions resulting from this energy use, water heating produces the most greenhouse gases **at** 32%,

All done !

LESSON 18 - Timed Test Practice 1: Bar charts, Map Task, Pie Charts

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 18.1 Getting ready: Test practice 1 (Bar chart)
- 18.2 Test practice 2 and 3 (Map task and Pie charts)
- 18.3 Model answers, points to notice and key features

18.1 Getting ready: Test practice 1

The final three lessons focus on test practice. If at any point you feel you are not ready, go back to the relevant lessons and review them. It takes time to learn a new skill and writing Task 1 is a particularly complex style of writing, so it is important not to rush yourself.

Being mentally prepared

To make the most of any test practice you do, it is important to have the right mindset. When doing physical exercise, you are always advised to 'warm up' your muscles. This involves doing some gentle stretches to get your muscles ready. When you are preparing for an important exam, it is just as important to mentally prepare as it is to physically prepare. In The Key to IELTS Writing Task 2 I told an anecdote about my daughter using peppermint oil to help her get into 'exam mode'. This helped both when she was studying and when she was actually taking the exams. You can activate your 'exam mode' in other ways too, such as by always treating test practise as though it is the real exam. This means taking the time to set up a quiet space with a clear desk for 20 minutes. If you are doing the paper-based test, print off plenty of exam sheets now so that you can make the most of any time you have. All of this will help to clear your mind so that you can think. Remember, writing is thinking we can see, so clear thinking will always be of benefit.

KEY IDEA: Clear thinking is an important part of clear writing. Making sure you have the right mindset before you begin will help you to think and write more clearly.

Mental checklist

When you sit down to start test practice, run through this mental checklist to engage the right thinking skills. Tell yourself you need to:

- **Notice details**
- **Identify key trends or stages: What stayed the same? What changed? How did it change?**
- **Group the information together**

When writing, remember to:

- **make a point about key information then give supporting evidence**
- **make comparisons when you can**
- **use the most logical order**
- **avoid wordiness (e.g. by using: reduced relative clauses, at and with, or brackets)**

Have a clock or timer ready and be aware of when you are taking too much time, or not enough time.

Assessing your writing

If possible, find a test buddy to work with. Ideally, someone who is taking the test at a similar time and is at a similar level to you. When you complete a test, make a copy or duplicate it if you can. At a later stage, return to it and continue to work on or improve one of the copies, swap your answer with your test buddy. When you are satisfied that you have improved your answer as much as possible, compare the new version to your test practice version and think about the changes you needed to make.

To assess whether you are reaching band 7 or above yet, think about the following:

Task achievement

- **Did you present, highlight, and illustrate key features? (Can you point to when you did this?) (Bands 7 to 9)**
- **Did you present a clear (complete) overview of the main trends, differences, or stages? (Bands 7 to 9)**
- **Did you make comparisons where relevant? (Bands 7 to 9)**
- **Did you need to correct or add any data or key features to your answer? (below Band 7)**
- **Did you need to add anything to your overview? (below Band 7)**
- **Did you need to delete any details from your overview? (below Band 7)**

Coherence and cohesion

- **Did you organise the information into clear paragraphs? (Can you show this?) (Bands 7 to 9)**
- **Is your organisation logical? (e.g. chronological; grouping information together clearly) and...**
- **Did you signal this organisation clearly? (e.g. how can the reader see the organisation listed above?) (Bands 7 to 9)**
- **Within each paragraph, did you signal a change in topic clearly (e.g. using 'With...' 'In terms of...' etc.)? (Bands 7 to 9)**
- **Did you use substitution and referencing skills (e.g. synonyms and pronouns) to avoid repeating the same words and phrases? (Bands 7 to 9)**
- **Did you often repeat the same words within one or two sentences? (below Band 7)**
- **Did your sentences always begin in a similar way (e.g. always with a time clause or cohesive device)? (below Band 7)**
- **Did you use inappropriate cohesive devices (e.g. using 'At first,... Then...Finally' in chart or map tasks) (below Band 7)**

Grammatical range and accuracy

- **Did you use a range of tenses? (Bands 7 to 9)**
- **Did you vary your sentence structure? (Bands 7 to 9)**
- **Do your sentences sound repetitive when you read your answer aloud? (below Band 7)**
- **Did you often make grammatical errors (e.g. with articles, tenses, or verb subject agreement?) (below Band 7)**

Lexical resource

- Did you explain the data or diagrams clearly and accurately? (Bands 7 to 9)
- Were you able to avoid always using the same words and phrases? (Bands 7 to 9)
- If there were any words you did not know, were you still able to explain using the words you do know? (Band 7)
- Did you try to use high-level words even though you are not sure if the meaning is exactly right? (below Band 7)
- Did you copy words from the question paper too often? (below Band 7)

Using the model answers

With each model answer, take the time to notice the following and compare it to yours:

- **the key features, stages, changes, or trends:** what did I include?
- **the overview:** the trends or stages I included and the language I used
- **the organisation:** how did I organise the answer? How did I make this clear?
- **the language:** make a note of any language you would like to learn – be sure to learn chunks rather than individual words (e.g. 'this increase corresponded with')

Test Practice 1

Practice all of these ideas by answering the following question, which is adapted from Cambridge 9, p.53.

The chart below shows the total number of minutes (in billions) of telephone calls in the UK, divided into three categories, from 1995-2002.

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

Year	Local - fixed line (billions)	National and international - fixed line (billions)	Mobiles (all calls) (billions)
1995	~73	~36	~3
1996	~81	~43	~5
1997	~85	~46	~8
1998	~90	~48	~10
1999	~90	~50	~14
2000	~85	~55	~24
2001	~80	~60	~35
2002	~75	~62	~45

Write at least 150 words.

In the next part of this lesson, you will find two new writing tasks to practice with. You can see all of the model answers at the end of this lesson.

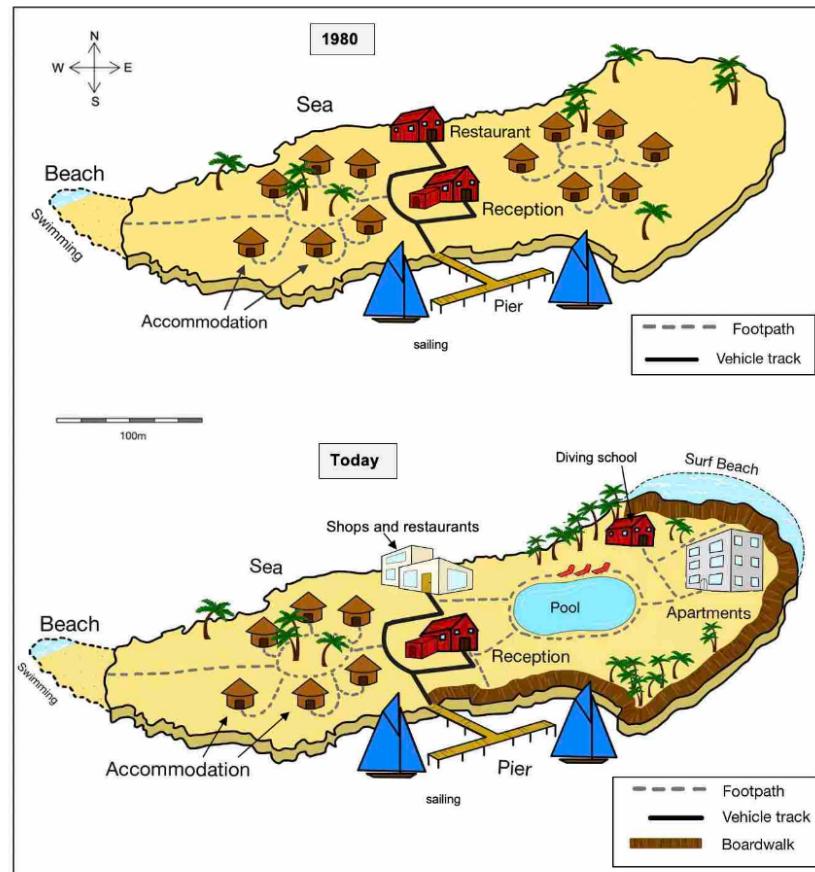
18.2 Test practice 2 (Map task) and 3 (Pie charts)

Complete these tasks in exam conditions taking no longer than 20 minutes.

Test Practice 2

The maps below show an island in 1980 and as it looks today.

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



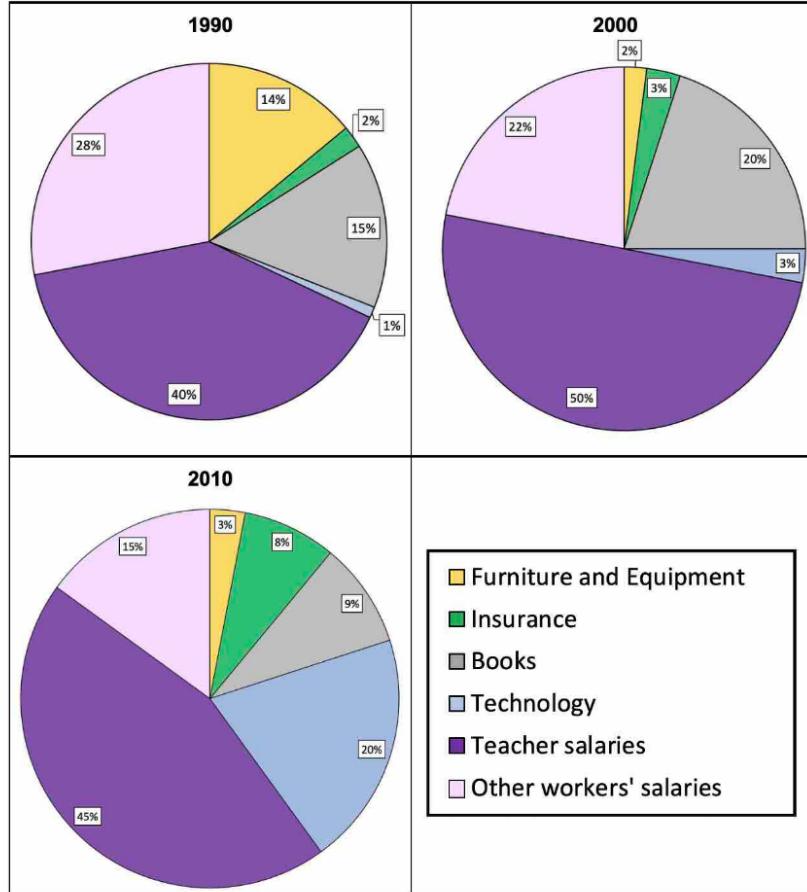
Write at least 150 words.

Test Practice 3

The charts below give information about annual spending in Springfield College in three years.

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

How the annual budget of Springfield College was spent, 1990, 2000, 2010



Write at least 150 words.

You can find the model answers in 18.3. as well as information about points to notice, key features, and language to notes.

18.3 Model answers, Points to notice and Key features

Model answer - Practice Test 1

The bar chart gives details of phone usage in the UK from 1995 to 2002 on three types of phone line. Overall, total phone use increased and the majority of calls were made using a fixed line. However, towards the end of the period, local fixed line calls declined as mobile phone use increased significantly.

During the first four years, all categories increased steadily, although usage was dominated by local fixed line calls. The data for these calls was consistently almost double that of national and international calls, with the former rising from over 70 billion to a peak of 90 billion minutes, while the latter rose from approximately 37 billion to 48 billion. These figures contrast starkly with the data for mobile phone calls in the same period, which began at approximately two billion minutes and saw only gradual increases, climbing to ten billion minutes in 1998.

The picture was very different from 1999 to 2002, when, despite retaining the top position, local fixed line calls dropped back to their initial level and ended the period only 10 billion higher than fixed line national and international calls, which increased consistently throughout. Notably, the drop in local calls corresponded with dramatic increases in mobile phone use, which, by 2002, had reached almost 45 billion minutes, considerably reducing the gap between all three categories.

Points to notice:

- Did you notice that the calls were measured in **billions** of minutes? This means we are looking at data showing how long people spent talking or communicating on these types of telephone calls.
- I looked at the totals as well as the individual figures. You don't need to test your mathematical skills by adding them up and you don't need to look at each year – just looking at the figures for 1995 and 2002 shows the individual bars are the same (for local fixed line) or much higher (for national and international and for mobile). This shows the total time spent increased. In other words, people used their phones more in 2002 than in 1995.
- I grouped the data according to the change in the trends. The first 4 years follow a similar trend and the last 4 years follow a different trend. So my paragraphs are organised into 1) 1995 to 1998, and 2) 1999 to 2002. You can organise it differently but make sure you can explain your reason – if you can't, your paragraphs are likely to be confusing.

Language to notice:

- In the introductory sentence, I used 'give details of' instead of 'show'. I find this is useful when the data needs a long, complicated description, which it is here because we need to say that it 'shows how many minutes people in the UK spent ... (etc.) which is a lot longer.'
- At the beginning of paragraph 2 I said, 'The picture was very different from 1999 to 2002'. I am using idiomatic language here, 'the picture' is being used to mean 'the situation'.
- I referred to the fact that increases in mobile calls 'reduced the gap between' the data in 2002. This is a nice way to mention the fact that there was a bigger difference (or gap) in the first year in comparison to the last year when the gaps between the data were much smaller.

Key features

Check your answer has key features similar to those in the list below. **NB** you do not need to have **all** of them - these are examples of the main key features to include. Remember to provide supporting evidence.

Key features to include:

*The first three are main trends to include in your overview.

- *The total number of minutes increased each year
- *Local fixed line calls dominated throughout
- *Mobile phone calls increased the most overall
- Local fixed line calls increased in the first half then decreased (no other type did this)
- Mobile phone use increased slightly in the first half then significantly in the second half
- The sharp increases in mobile phone calls corresponded with falls in local fixed line calls
- National and international fixed line calls increased steadily throughout
- There was a big difference between phone line usage in the first year but in the final year, the difference between the types of phone line was much smaller
- From 1995 to 1998, local fixed line calls accounted for almost twice as many / double the number of minutes as national and international fixed line calls
- Between 1995 and 2002, mobile phone use increased tenfold (x ten) from approximately 4 billion to 45 billion minutes - this increase was more than any other type of phone line / this was the biggest increase in the data overall.

Model answer - Practice test 2

The two maps show changes made to an island since 1980. Overall, while the western part of the island remains unchanged, the eastern side has undergone significant development, with the addition of new facilities and the modernisation of existing ones.

In 1980, the island had few tourist facilities and accommodation was limited to two groups of huts on either side of a central restaurant and reception. In terms of leisure activities, there was a swimming beach on the west coast, and tourists could go sailing from the pier on the southern coast. However, the east coast was undeveloped.

Today, the western half of the island remains unchanged and has the original accommodation. The reception and pier have also not been changed. In contrast, the untouched eastern part of the island now has a modern apartment block, which sits near a new surf beach and diving school. A wooden boardwalk runs along the east coast, connecting the diving school to the pier. To the right of the reception, where there was once a group of huts, there is now a swimming pool, and the single restaurant has been replaced with a larger block of shops and restaurants. Although the new buildings are more modern in style, more vegetation has been added and access to and around the island remains limited, with no extra vehicle tracks being built.

Points to notice:

- Did you notice changes in the style of buildings?
- Did you notice changes in the natural landscape? (e.g. the extra trees)
- Did you remember to look at the features that did not change? (e.g. the roads)
- I organised the information according to the dates – 1980 and today. However, I was careful to make comparisons. I did not describe the two maps as though they were pictures (saying what there is in each picture), I described the changes that have taken place and made comparisons. Make sure your answer does this too.
- Did you manage to use a range of tenses? Notice I used the present perfect because these are changes that happened in the past and are still true now.

Language to notice:

- In the second body paragraph, I used 'sits', which is a nice way to avoid always using 'is located'.
- I used 'where there was once a group of huts' to refer to what used to be there

Key features

Check your answer has key features similar to those in the list below. **NB** you do not need to have all of them - these are examples of the main key features to include. Remember to provide supporting evidence.

Key features to include:

*The first four are key changes to include in your overview.

- *The western part of the island has not changed
- *The eastern part of the island has been developed
- *New facilities have been added
- *Old facilities have been modernised

In 1980:

- there were few facilities and limited accommodation
- accommodation was all the same style and hut-style
- the east coast was undeveloped / left natural

Today:

- The western side of the island looks the same / is unchanged
- The eastern part of the island has new, modern accommodation (an apartment block)
- A swimming pool has replaced the huts in the centre
- The restaurant is now bigger and has shops
- The new buildings are more modern in style
- There is now a boardwalk around the east coast
- There are no new roads / access is the same
- There is more vegetation / more palm trees have been added

Model answer - Practice test 3

The three pie charts show how a college budget was apportioned in 1990, 2000, and 2010. Overall, the largest expense is for staff, and insurance and technology spending has consistently increased, while spending on other resources has declined or fluctuated.

In terms of human resources, paying staff takes up the majority of the college budget, with teacher salaries dominating this category, increasing initially from 40% to 50% before declining to 45%. However, in each decade, an increasingly smaller proportion was allocated to other staff pay, which fell from 28% in 1990 to 15% in 2010.

With other expenses, in 1990, almost as much was spent on furniture and equipment as on books, at 15% and 14% respectively. However, while book spending increased to 20% in 2000, furniture and equipment fell sharply to only 2% and, in 2010, remained the lowest cost at 3%. By the same year, book spending had fallen to 9%, almost half of its initial level. In contrast, technology and insurance were the lowest costs in 1990, at only 1% and 2%, but rose in each decade, with the largest increases occurring in 2010, when insurance reached 8% and technology 20%. Notably, in the final decade, a larger proportion of the budget was spent on technology than on books.

Points to notice:

- Did you remember to look for categories you could group together using an umbrella term? In my answer, I grouped together 'teacher salaries' and 'other worker's salaries' under the umbrella term 'human resources' but you could also refer to 'staff salaries' and you could group 'books' and 'furniture and equipment' under the umbrella term 'other resources' (which I did in my overview).
- How did you organise this information? If you decided to describe each year, then you are likely to have repeated the same information (you need to repeat the information in each pie chart, and thus the names of the categories, like this:
 - 1990 – budget spending on furniture and equipment, insurance, books, technology, teacher salaries, other worker's salaries
 - 2000 – budget spending on furniture and equipment, insurance, books, technology, teacher salaries, other worker's salaries
 - 2010 – budget spending on furniture and equipment, insurance, books, technology, teacher salaries, other worker's salaries
- This is not a good idea. Notice the repetition. It is very difficult to find a way to paraphrase these words, it also means you are less likely to write about changes or make comparisons. This will lower your score by making your writing repetitive and means you will not highlight the key features (the changes).
- Instead, look for the categories you can group together so that you are only repeating the years (these are easier to refer back to without repetition – e.g. you can say 'in the first year / in the final year etc.) I organised my answer as follows:
 - BP1 Staff pay and how this changed in 1990, 2000, and 2010 (because these are the biggest percentages and both involve paying staff).
 - BP2 Other expenses and key changes in 1990, 2000, and 2010
- Notice that my organisation helps me to highlight the changes and make comparisons but also reduces repetition. Rewrite your answer in a few weeks if you chose to organise your answer according to the year. Compare your two answers to see the difference.

Language to notice:

- We refer to 'a portion' meaning a slice or part of the whole. The verb form is 'to **apportion**' and refers to how the whole is divided up. Here, the pie charts show us how the total budget was divided up or 'apportioned' in each year.
- Because this is a budget, this means we know decisions are made about where to spend money, so I used the verb 'to allocate to' ('an increasingly smaller proportion **was allocated to** other staff pay'). This means the school chose to spend that percentage of the budget on staff pay.

Key features

Check your answer has key features similar to those in the list below. **NB** you do not need to have **all** of them - these are examples of the main key features to include. Remember to provide supporting evidence.

Key features to include:

*The first three are main trends to include in your overview.

- Staff is the largest expense
- Insurance and technology spending increased each year
- Other resources declined or varied
- Paying teachers makes up most of the budget - it increased at first, then fell
- 'Other salaries' fell each year
- Furniture and equipment dropped significantly in the first year then grew slightly.
- Books grew initially then fell
- The biggest fall in book spending corresponded with the biggest gain in technology spending

Extra practice

Review your answers to the three test questions from this lesson. Think about:

1) Task achievement

- Did you present, highlight, and illustrate key features? (Can you point to when you did this?) (Bands 7 to 9)
- Did you present a clear (complete) overview of the main trends, differences, or stages? (Bands 7 to 9)
- Did you make comparisons where relevant? (Bands 7 to 9)
- Did you need to correct or add any data or key features to your answer? (below Band 7)
- Did you need to add anything to your overview? (below Band 7)
- Did you need to delete any details from your overview? (below Band 7)

2) Coherence and cohesion

- Did you organise the information into clear paragraphs? (How did you show this?) (Bands 7 to 9)
- Is your organisation logical? (e.g. chronological; grouping information together clearly) and...
- Did you signal this organisation clearly? (e.g. how can the reader see the organisation listed above?) (Bands 7 to 9)
- Within each paragraph, did you signal a change in topic clearly (e.g. using 'With...' 'In terms of...' etc.)? (Bands 7 to 9)
- Did you use substitution and referencing skills (e.g. synonyms and pronouns) to avoid repeating the same words and phrases? (Bands 7 to 9)
- Did you often repeat the same words within one or two sentences? (below Band 7)
- Did your sentences always begin in a similar way (e.g. always with a time clause or cohesive device)? (below Band 7)
- Did you use inappropriate cohesive devices (e.g. using 'At first,... Then...Finally' in chart or map tasks) (below Band 7)

3) Grammatical range and accuracy

- Did you use a range of tenses? (Bands 7 to 9)
- Did you vary your sentence structure? (Bands 7 to 9)
- Do your sentences sound repetitive when you read your answer aloud? (below Band 7)
- Did you often make grammatical errors (e.g. with articles, tenses, or verb subject agreement?) (below Band 7)

4) Lexical resource

- Did you explain the data or diagrams clearly and accurately? (Bands 7 to 9)
- Were you able to avoid always using the same words and phrases? (Bands 7 to 9)
- If there were any words you did not know, were you still able to explain using the words you do know? (Band 7)
- Did you try to use high-level words even though you are not sure if the meaning is exactly right? (below Band 7)
- Did you copy words from the question paper too often? (below Band 7)

Review the model answers. Think about:

- the key features, stages, changes, or trends: what did I include?
- the overview: the trends or stages I included and the language I used
- the organisation: how did I organise the answer? How did I make this clear?
- the language: make a note of any language you would like to learn – be sure to learn chunks rather than individual words (e.g. 'this increase corresponded with')

LESSON 19 - Timed Test Practice 2: A table, process task, and line graph

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- 19.1 Test practice 4 - A Table
- 19.2 Test practice 5 - A Process task
- 19.3 Test practice 6 - A Line graph

19.1 Test practice 4: A table

If you find this task too difficult, below you will find the same information presented in a bar chart (Task B) . Try to write an answer using the table first, then write an answer using the bar chart and compare the two. Your two answers should highlight the same key information. The model answer below fits both tasks.

The table below shows the amount of three types of fish farmed in one region between 2008 and 2018.

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

Farmed Salmon, Arctic char, and Rainbow trout in Millions of tonnes, 2008-2018

Types of fish:	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018
Arctic char	3124	2427	3089	3411	4084	4914
Salmon	292	1068	2923	3965	8420	13448
Rainbow trout	6	88	422	603	2138	295

Write at least 150 words.

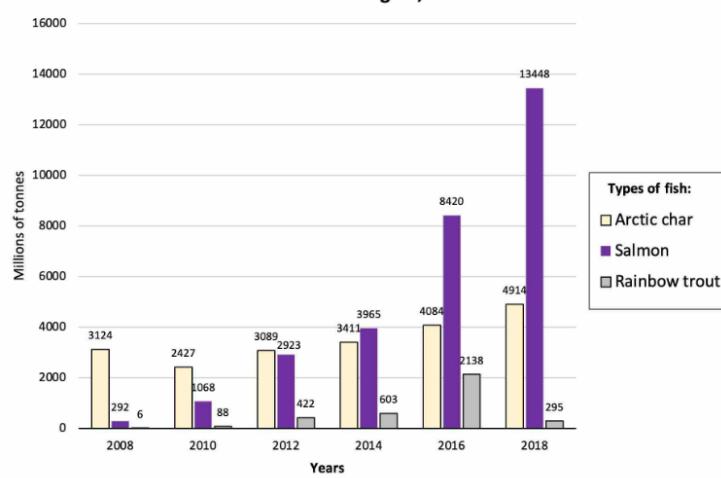
Here is the same information organised into a bar chart:

Task B

The table below shows the amount of three types of fish farmed in one region between 2008 and 2018.

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

Farmed fish in one region, 2008 - 2018



Write at least 150 words.

When you have finished, look at the model answer, and key points to notice below. Check your answer by looking at the list of key features to include.

Test practice 4 Model answer

Model answer - Practice Test 4

The table *compares the cultivation rates of three species of fish in one region over a ten-year period. Overall, while Arctic char dominated initially, salmon was cultivated in far greater numbers towards the end of the period, and rainbow trout has consistently been produced the least.

In 2008, 3124 million tonnes of Arctic char were produced in this region. As this figure was more than ten times greater than the next highest, farmed salmon at 292 million tonnes, this species clearly dominated at that time. However, Arctic char fell slightly in 2010 and rose only gradually from 2012 onwards, while salmon rose exponentially in almost every two-year period. In fact, in 2014, salmon overtook Arctic char, and reached a striking 13448 million in 2018, considerably more than any other species.

In contrast, rainbow trout was continually cultivated in relatively small amounts, beginning at only six million tonnes in 2008. Although it did increase steadily, reaching a peak of 2138 million tonnes in 2016, this level was short-lived, and by 2018 it had fallen to 295, which was almost the same as salmon's starting point ten years earlier.

NB This model answer fits both the table and the bar chart (Task B). Only the first line needs to change for the bar chart:

Model answer - Practice Test 4

The bar chart *compares the cultivation rates of three species of fish in one region over a ten-year period. Overall, while Arctic char dominated initially, salmon was cultivated in far greater numbers towards the end of the period, and rainbow trout has consistently been produced the least.

In 2008, 3124 million tonnes of Arctic char were produced in this region. As this figure was more than ten times greater than the next highest, farmed salmon at 292 million tonnes, this species clearly dominated at that time. However, Arctic char fell slightly in 2010 and rose only gradually from 2012 onwards, while salmon rose exponentially in almost every two-year period. In fact, in 2014, salmon overtook Arctic char, and reached a striking 13448 million in 2018, considerably more than any other species.

In contrast, rainbow trout was continually cultivated in relatively small amounts, beginning at only six million tonnes in 2008. Although it did increase steadily, reaching a peak of 2138 million tonnes in 2016, this level was short-lived, and by 2018 it had fallen to 295, which was almost the same as salmon's starting point ten years earlier.

Points to notice:

- Did you notice that the numbers are '**millions** of tonnes'?
- Notice the way that I refer to the data in my answer. As I did here, make sure to mention the complete figure early on in your summary, e.g. referring to '**3124 million tonnes** of Arctic char'. Later, you can reduce this to just the number, without using 'tonnes' each time (e.g. **13448 million**). Towards the end, you can also reduce this to just the number in the table **if you have just mentioned 'million'**. For example: '**Although it did increase steadily, reaching a peak of 2138 million tonnes in 2016, this level was short-lived, and by 2018 it had fallen to 295.**'
- Did you remember to rank the data in each year to see which type of fish is 1st, 2nd, 3rd? Remember, this helps you to track the changes, which is what you are describing.
- I grouped my information according to 1) the two highest 2) the lowest. This helped me to describe the changing trends between the top two in my first paragraph, then the lowest, Rainbow trout, which followed a completely different trend or pattern.
- If you organised your answer according to the years, check to make sure that your answer is not repetitive (repeating the names of the fish many times), and you were able to summarise the changes clearly and make comparisons. (We saw this problem in practice test 3.)
- There is no rule or single correct answer regarding organisation. You should just aim to **organise your data in a way that groups the information logically and helps you to make comparisons and summarise the changes**. For example, in practice test 1 (the line graph about phone line use), I noticed a clear pattern connected to time, so I organised my answer based on the pattern I noticed. When you decide what you want to compare, you can then organise your information and summarise it clearly, logically, and without repeating information. Again, we cannot make a rule for this – you must choose the best organisation for the data you are given - it will vary with the data and the way you choose to compare it.

KEY IDEA: There is no rule for about how to organise your paragraphs. Just aim to organise your data in a way that:

- *groups the information logically*
- *helps you to make comparisons and summarise the changes.*

The organisation will vary based on 1) the data you are given on the day and 2) the way that you decide to compare the data. There is no single correct answer. However, the 'best' way is usually easier to write about and easier to read. Practice organising your information in different ways then compare the results. Is one easier to write about and easier to read and follow? Is one more repetitive and confusing than the other? The more you do this, the more confident you will become in making the right choice. **Don't begin writing until you have made a clear decision.**

Language to notice:

- I used '**compares**' instead of 'shows' in the first sentence because the information is displayed in a way to help us to 'compare' the different amounts. The word 'shows' is perfectly fine to use here: 'The table shows..../ The bar chart shows...!'
- I used '**the next highest**' to refer to the second highest figure.
- I used '**exponentially**' to describe the increases made by salmon: '*salmon rose exponentially in almost every two-year period.*' We can only use this word if the figures rise **increasingly sharply** in each period (the bar chart shows this visually).
- Notice the use of '**relativelyIn contrast, rainbow trout was continually cultivated in relatively small amounts, beginning at only six million tonnes in 2008.' Six million tonnes is not a 'small amount', it is only 'small' relative to (i.e. compared to) the other figures here.**
- I used '**short-lived**' to show that an increase did not last long and was soon over.

Key features

Check your answer has key features similar to those in the list below. **NB** you do not need to have **all** of them - these are examples of the main key features to include. Remember to provide supporting evidence.

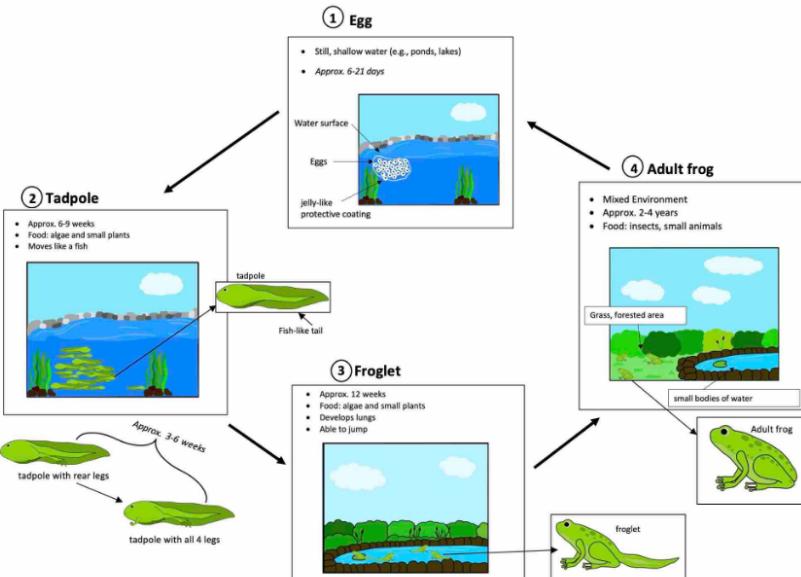
Key features to include:

- *The first four are main trends to include in your overview.
- *Arctic char had the highest figures in the beginning
- *Salmon had the biggest figures at the end
- *The figures for salmon were far higher than for any other
- *Rainbow trout was by far the lowest throughout
- Significantly more Arctic char was produced in 2008 than any other fish
- Arctic char fell in 2010 and climbed slowly but steadily between 2012 and 2018.
- Salmon rose sharply in every 2-year period
- Salmon overtook Arctic char in 2014 and dominated in 2016 and 2018
- Rainbow trout rose steadily from 2008 to 2014, then sharply in 2016.
- Rainbow trout peaked in 2016 and fell sharply in 2018

19.2 Test practice 5: A process task

The diagram below shows the stages in the life cycle of a frog.

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



Write at least 150 words.

When you have finished, look at the model answer, and key points to notice below. Check your answer by looking at the list of key features to include.

Test practice 5 Model answer

Model answer - Practice Test 5

The diagrams show the four stages in the life cycle of a frog. Overall, the frog undergoes several transformations that enable it to leave its original underwater environment to live on land for most of its life.

The frog begins its life as an egg, on the surface of a pond or lake. The eggs are laid in large quantities and protected by a jelly-like substance. Between six and twelve days later, the eggs hatch and tadpoles emerge. These small fish-like creatures can swim and feed on small plants and algae. This second stage lasts for up to nine weeks, during which time the tadpole develops rear and fore legs.

In the third stage, the tadpole grows into a froglet, which has longer legs and can jump. It now develops lungs, allowing it to breathe out of the water, where it continues to live and feed. The froglet's long tail will disappear over the next 12 weeks as, approximately six months after hatching, it matures into an adult frog. In this final stage, the frog can live in and out of the water, among nearby vegetation. As well as changing habitat, the adult frog also has a different diet, feeding on small animals and insects. Living up to four years, the adult will return to the still waters of a pond to lay eggs and begin the cycle again.

Points to notice:

- Did you remember to think about time span and how long the changes last or take? For example, it takes 3 to 6 weeks for the tadpole to grow all 4 legs.
- You could add the total time span to the overview if you want – I added this at the end of my answer.
- Did you notice the changes in habitat and food/diet?
- Did you remember to use the zig-zag approach to help with coherence and cohesion? You can review this in lessons 9.2, 9.3, 10.3, and 16.3.
- I organised my answer into the following stages: 1) egg to tadpole, and 2) froglet to adult frog. As we saw with the previous model, there is no single 'correct' way to organise your information – just do it in a way that is logical and helps you to summarise changes and make comparisons.

Language to notice:

- I used the verb 'undergo': 'the frog **undergoes** several transformations'. This verb follows the same pattern as the verb 'to go' (**underwent, undergone** etc.) and has two meanings: 1) 'to experience a change' and 2) to experience something bad or unpleasant (so we cannot say 'The company **underwent** a great success.'
- I used the verb 'to enable' (the 'transformations **enable** it to leave ...'). **Enable** means to make something possible
- I added 'like' to several nouns to create an adjective (**jelly-like** and **fish-like**). This is a good way to explain something you don't know the precise word for.
- I used the verb 'to mature' (it **matures** into an adult frog'), meaning to become completely grown physically or (in humans) to develop / grow physically and mentally.

Key features

Check your answer has key features similar to those in the list below. **NB** you do not need to have **all** of them - these are examples of the main key features to include. Remember to provide supporting evidence.

Key features to include:

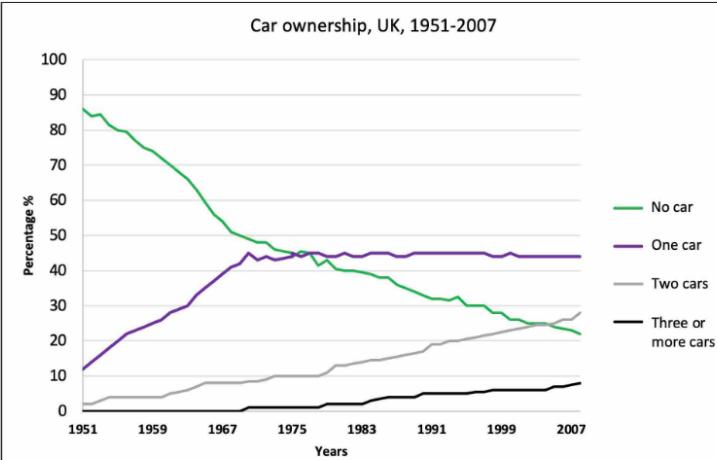
*The first three are key stages or changes to include in your overview.

- ***There are four stages in the frog's life cycle**
- ***It changes / transforms several times**
- ***Its habitat changes from underwater to land / it begins living in the water and moves to the land**
- The frog begins as an egg in a pond or lake (where the water is still)
- There are a lot of eggs
- The eggs are protected
- After 6-12 days the eggs hatch into tadpoles
- The tadpoles eat small plants and algae and can swim
- The first stage lasts 6-9 weeks
- The tadpole develops front and back legs – this takes 3-6 weeks
- It develops into a froglet, which looks more like a frog but has a long tail
- The froglet can jump and develops lungs (so it can breathe out of water)
- The froglet still eats the same diet as the tadpole
- This stage lasts 12 weeks (3 months)
- After 12 weeks, the froglet becomes a mature adult
- It lives in and out of the water – in grass or vegetation near a pond
- The frog has a different diet – it eats insects and small animals
- The adult frog can live 2-4 years
- The adult frog goes back to a pond or lake to lay more eggs

19.3 Test practice 6: A Line graph

The chart below gives information about car ownership in households in the UK between 1951 and 2007.

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



Write at least 150 words.

When you have finished, look at the model answer, and key points to notice below. Check your answer by looking at the list of key features to include.

Test practice 6 Model answer

Model answer - Practice Test 6

The line graph shows changing trends in car ownership in the UK from 1951 to 2007. Overall, car ownership increased significantly during this period and there is an increasing trend for households to have more than one car.

At the beginning of this period, in 1951, car ownership was uncommon in the UK, with only just over 10% of the population owning one car and approximately 2% of households owning two cars. However, the situation changed quite rapidly over the next 16 years and by 1967, approximately 45% of household owned a car and just under 10% had two cars.

Over the next 40 years, from 1967 to 2007, single-car families remained relatively stable at around 45%. In contrast, the percentage of households without a car continued to fall, albeit slightly less sharply. This continued decline corresponded with increases in the ownership of multiple cars, with owning two cars rising to just under 30% in 2007, while three or more cars accounted for just under 10%. Notably, households having two cars increased to a greater degree than three or more cars during this period, and the trend for three or more did not begin until towards the end of the 1960s.

Points to notice:

- Did you stop to think about what the data shows or tells us? For example, we can say that more and more households had a car because the data shows that the percentage with 'no car' declined. However, we can't say that **more people** owned two or three cars because this data is for 'households' – it is possible that more adults were living together in one household and each one owned a car (e.g. if an adult son or daughter is living with their parents and each adult owns a car then **the household** has 3 cars).

- With my organisation, I noticed a changing pattern connected to the dates, so this is how I decided to organise my answer. Remember, choose the organisation that helps you to make comparisons, summarise the main changes or trends, and avoid repetition. Practise writing your answer with a different organisation and compare the two.

Language to notice:

- I made a compound adjective by joining 'single' and 'car' with a hyphen: **single-car**. We can only do this when something is being counted in small numbers, but this is a nice way to vary your language. NB For numbers above one, you need to use the number (i.e. use '**two**' not '**double**': **single-parent families; two-car households**.)
- I compared two different increases by saying 'increased **to a greater degree than**'. You can use this will decrease also: 'decreased to a greater degree'. You can also say increase / decrease **by a larger amount**.

Key features

Check your answer has key features similar to those in the list below. **NB** you do not need to have **all** of them - these are examples of the main key features to include. Remember to provide supporting evidence.

Key features to include:

*The first two are main trends to include in your overview.

- ***Total car ownership increased significantly/ the majority of households had a car by the end of the period**
- ***There was a growing trend for households to have more than one car**
- Car ownership was not common in 1951 / Few UK households had a car in 1951
- Owning one car increased sharply / significantly between 1951 and just after 1967
- Households with one car plateaued / remained stable at below 50% from the late 1960s / From 1967 to 2007 there was little change in the data for households with one car
- The number of households with no car declined continually
- The percentage of households with two or more cars increased steadily then more sharply from the mid-1970s
- Households with three or more cars only began in the late 1960s
- Households with three or more cars increased steadily but remained the lowest overall
- The continued rise in households with more than one car corresponded with the fall in the data for no car.

LESSON 20 - Timed Test Practice 3: A bar chart, a process task, and a stacked bar chart

In this lesson, you will learn about:

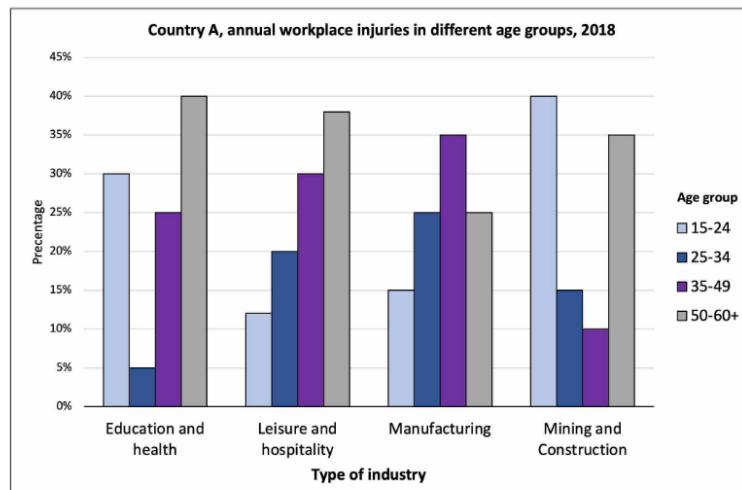
- 20.1 Test practice 7 - A Bar chart
- 20.2 Test practice 8 - A Process task
- 20.3 Test practice 9 - A stacked bar chart

20.1 Test practice 7: A bar chart

You may find the final three tasks a little more difficult. Take the time to stop and think, notice the differences, and think carefully about what you are being shown before you begin to write. I deliberately used 'challenging' data in this final lesson to force you to think a little more. I did this because the real test often feels more difficult than the tests you practise at home. However, you should not see these as reflecting the real test or conclude that 'the test is becoming more difficult'. Instead, use them to put your analysing and critical thinking skills to the test.

The charts below give information about workplace injuries in one country in 2018.

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



Write at least 150 words.

When you have finished, look at the model answer, and key points to notice below. Check your answer by looking at the list of key features to include.

Test practice 7 Model answer

Model answer - Practice Test 7

The bar chart shows the ages of people injured at work across four sectors, in one country, in 2018. Overall, while there is no clear trend connected to age, there are some similarities, with the injured more likely to be in the oldest category in three of the four sectors, and 25- to 34-year-olds appearing generally less affected.

In leisure and hospitality and manufacturing, injuries generally increased with age, with approximately 10% more in each age group. In leisure and hospitality, around 12% of those injured were in the youngest category and 38% in the oldest. In manufacturing, slightly more appeared in the younger groups, with 15% aged 15 to 24 and 25% in the 25 to 34 group. However, the increase peaked at 35% in workers aged 35 to 49, and as many 50- to 60-year-olds were among the injured as those aged 25 to 34.

Mining and construction and education and health also followed similar age-related patterns albeit in reverse. In both sectors, the youngest and oldest groups were more affected than the middle groups, though injuries appear more common in older workers in education and health, with 40% aged 50 to 60. In contrast, in mining and construction, the youngest were most affected, again making up 40% of the total. Notably, the lowest figure occurred in 25- to 34-year-olds working in education and health, with only 5% among those injured at work.

Points to notice:

- You need to think very carefully about what this chart actually shows us. To produce the bar chart someone has collected data about people injured in four different industries, then taken that data and divided it according to age. This means that we can say that, of the people who were injured in 2018 in education and health, 30% were aged 15-24, 5% were aged 25-34, 25% were aged 35 to 49, and 40% were aged 50-60. The data **does not tell us what percentage of people of these ages were hurt** – it tells us what percentage of the injured were in these age groups. So, we cannot say **40% of people aged 50-60 were injured**.
- We also cannot compare the 'numbers' of injured in different fields. To see why, here is a table showing the total number of people injured in each sector:

Country A, total workplace injuries, 2018	
Mining and construction	5,029
Manufacturing	3250
Education and health	1554
Leisure and hospitality	1080

As you can see, the total number of people injured in mining and construction was much higher than the total number of people injured in education and health. The table shows that:

40% of the 1554 people who were injured in education and health = 621 people aged 50-60

35% of the 5029 people who were injured in mining and construction = 1760 people aged 50-60

So, although 35% **is** a smaller percentage, it is a smaller percentage **of a much larger total**. This shows the danger of comparing percentages - we cannot talk about the 'number' of people being greater or smaller, or 'more people' being injured in one sector than another. We can only do this within the same sector (e.g. we can say that 'In manufacturing, as many 25-34 year olds were injured as those aged 50 to 60' because both represent 25% of the same total.) This means that you cannot make a point about one sector being more or less dangerous for a particular age group than another. For example, you cannot say '**Education and health is riskier / more dangerous for people aged 50 to 60 than mining and construction.**' Or '**More 50-60-year-olds are injured in Education and health than in mining and construction.**'

- In the first sentence, I decided not to include 'percentage' because this chart is about the age of the people injured not about percentages of people. It is not accurate to say: '**The bar chart shows the percentage of people of different ages injured at work across four sectors, in one country in 2018.**' Be careful with this in your own first sentence.
- Pay close attention to how I made comparisons and what I compared. You may need to rewrite your answer if you have compared different sectors inaccurately (see the comment above). Don't worry about having to rewrite an answer – this is great deliberate practice. This book helps you to make these mistakes now so that you can avoid making them in the test.
- In my overview, I mentioned that 'there is no clear trend' but there are some similarities. When the trend is not consistent, remember to use 'generally' (**25- to 34-year-olds appearing generally less affected**).
- In organising my answer, I grouped together the sectors that followed similar patterns. This helped me to compare and contrast them and to highlight key features in the trends (e.g. in two sectors injuries increases with age and in two sectors the oldest and youngest were most affected).

KEY IDEA: When summarising percentages is it very important to remember that each set or group of figures represents a different total, and we often do not know what these totals are. This means we cannot compare 'the number' of people in one group with that of another. Be careful when comparing data that is not within the same total.

Language to notice:

- I used the phrase '**across four sectors**'. The word '**across**' has the meaning of 'covering' here. For example, if we say, 'There were clouds across the entire country'. This means that the clouds are covering the whole country.
- I used '**appearing**' in my overview, meaning of 'seeming to be'. I did this because I wanted to make a point about a trend that I noticed in the data but as this is data from only one year, I did not want to appear to be making a conclusion about it. We could also use the verb 'suggest' in this way: 'The data **suggests** that the injured are more likely to be in the oldest category in three of the four sectors, and that 25- to 34-year-olds are generally less affected.'
- Later in my answer, I used 'appearing' in a different way – to refer to the different age groups 'appearing' among the injuries. The meaning here is 'to be present'.
- When talking about the trends and patterns, I created a compound adjective by adding 'age' and 'related' and joining them together with a hyphen: **age-related**. If the data was comparing genders, we could use '**gender-related**' as an adjective.

Practice

To help you notice the ways that I avoided repetition when writing about work and injuries, and then about age, fill in the blanks in my models in the exercise below. Look back at the model above to help you. NB The aim here is not to test your memory – the aim is to help you notice these features, which will help improve your Coherence and cohesion score as well as your lexical resource score.

Click Here
to Practise

Key features

Check your answer has key features similar to those in the list below. **NB** you do not need to have **all** of them - these are examples of the main key features to include. Remember to provide supporting evidence.

Key features to include:

*The first three are main trends to include in your overview.

- ***There are some similarities in the different sectors**
 - ***In three of the four sectors the injured were in the oldest category**
 - ***25- to 34-year-olds were generally affected / injured the least**
 - In leisure and hospitality, injuries increased with age – increasing by almost 10% in each age group
 - In manufacturing, injuries increased with age until 35-49 year olds then dropped in the oldest group
 - In education and health the injured were mostly in the oldest and youngest groups but the oldest made up the biggest proportion
 - In manufacturing, the same number / proportion of workers aged 25-34 were injured as those aged 50 to 60.
 - In mining and construction, the injured were mostly in the youngest and oldest groups but the youngest made up the biggest proportion (this is the opposite or reverse of education and health).
 - The lowest proportion overall was 25- to 34-year-olds working in education and health
-
-

QUESTION 1

We can use substitution and referencing to avoid repeating the same words and phrases and also to show good Coherence and cohesion in writing.

To help you notice the ways that I avoided repeating the same words and phrases when talking about workers and injuries, fill in the blanks in my model below.

The bar chart shows the ages of [REDACTED] across four sectors, in one country in 2018. Overall, while there is no clear trend connected to age, there are some similarities, with [REDACTED] more likely to be in the oldest category in three of the four sectors, and 25- to 34-year-olds appearing generally less affected.

In leisure and hospitality and manufacturing, [REDACTED] generally increased with age, with approximately 10% more in each age group. In leisure and hospitality, around 12% of [REDACTED] were in the youngest category and 38% in the oldest. In manufacturing, slightly more appeared in the younger groups, with 15% aged 15 to 24 and 25% in the 25 to 34 group. However, the increase peaked at 35% in [REDACTED] aged 35 to 49, and as many 50- to 60-year-olds were among [REDACTED] as [REDACTED] aged 25 to 34.

Mining and construction and education and health followed similar age-related patterns albeit in reverse. In both sectors, the youngest and oldest groups were more affected than the middle groups, though [REDACTED] appear more common in older [REDACTED] in education and health, with 40% aged 50 to 60. In contrast, in mining and construction, the youngest were most affected, again making up 40% of [REDACTED]. Notably, the lowest figure occurred in 25- to 34-year-olds [REDACTED] education and health, with only 5% among [REDACTED].

QUESTION 2

Now do the same for age.

The bar chart shows [REDACTED] of people injured at work across four sectors, in one country in 2018. Overall, while there is no clear trend connected to [REDACTED], there are some similarities, with the injured more likely to be in [REDACTED] in three of the four sectors, and [REDACTED] appearing generally less affected.

In leisure and hospitality and manufacturing, injuries generally increased [REDACTED], with approximately 10% more in each [REDACTED]. In leisure and hospitality, around 12% of those injured were in [REDACTED] and 38% in [REDACTED]. In manufacturing, slightly more appeared in [REDACTED], with 15% [REDACTED] and 25% in [REDACTED]. However, the increase peaked at 35% in workers [REDACTED], and as many [REDACTED] were among the injured as those [REDACTED].

Mining and construction and education and health followed similar [REDACTED] patterns albeit in reverse. In both sectors, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were more affected than [REDACTED], though injuries appear more common in [REDACTED] workers in education and health, with 40% [REDACTED]. In contrast, in mining and construction, [REDACTED] were most affected, again making up 40% of the total. Notably, the lowest figure occurred in [REDACTED] working in education and health, with only 5% among those injured at work.

[Show answers](#)

QUESTION 1

We can use substitution and referencing to avoid repeating the same words and phrases and also to show good Coherence and cohesion in writing.

To help you notice the ways that I avoided repeating the same words and phrases when talking about workers and injuries, fill in the blanks in my model below.

The bar chart shows the ages of [REDACTED] across four sectors, in one country in 2018. Overall, while there is no clear trend connected to age, there are some similarities, with [REDACTED] more likely to be in the oldest category in three of the four sectors, and 25- to 34-year-olds appearing generally less affected.

In leisure and hospitality and manufacturing, [REDACTED] generally increased with age, with approximately 10% more in each age group. In leisure and hospitality, around 12% of [REDACTED] were in the youngest category and 38% in the oldest. In manufacturing, slightly more appeared in the younger groups, with 15% aged 15 to 24 and 25% in the 25 to 34 group. However, the increase peaked at 35% in [REDACTED] aged 35 to 49, and as many 50- to 60-year-olds were among [REDACTED] as [REDACTED] aged 25 to 34.

Mining and construction and education and health followed similar age-related patterns albeit in reverse. In both sectors, the youngest and oldest groups were more affected than the middle groups, though [REDACTED] appear more common in older [REDACTED] in education and health, with 40% aged 50 to 60. In contrast, in mining and construction, the youngest were most affected, again making up 40% of [REDACTED]. Notably, the lowest figure occurred in 25- to 34-year-olds [REDACTED] education and health, with only 5% among [REDACTED].

The answer:

The bar chart shows the ages of *people injured at work* across four sectors, in one country in 2018. Overall, while there is no clear trend connected to age, there are some similarities, with *the injured* more likely to be in the oldest category in three of the four sectors, and 25- to 34-year-olds appearing generally less affected.

In leisure and hospitality and manufacturing, *injuries* generally increased with age, with approximately 10% more in each age group. In leisure and hospitality, around 12% of *those injured* were in the youngest category and 38% in the oldest. In manufacturing, slightly more appeared in the younger groups, with 15% aged 15 to 24 and 25% in the 25 to 34 group. However, the increase peaked at 35% in *workers* aged 35 to 49, and as many 50- to 60-year-olds were among *the injured* as *those* aged 25 to 34.

Mining and construction and education and health followed similar age-related patterns albeit in reverse. In both sectors, the youngest and oldest groups were more affected than the middle groups, though *injuries* appear more common in *older workers* in education and health, with 40% aged 50 to 60. In contrast, in mining and construction, the youngest were most affected, again making up 40% of *the total*. Notably, the lowest figure occurred in 25- to 34-year-olds *working in* education and health, with only 5% among *those injured at work*.

QUESTION 2

Now do the same for age.

The bar chart shows [REDACTED] of people injured at work across four sectors, in one country in 2018. Overall, while there is no clear trend connected to [REDACTED], there are some similarities, with the injured more likely to be in [REDACTED] in three of the four sectors, and [REDACTED] appearing generally less affected.

In leisure and hospitality and manufacturing, injuries generally increased [REDACTED], with approximately 10% more in each [REDACTED]. In leisure and hospitality, around 12% of those injured were in [REDACTED] and 38% in [REDACTED]. In manufacturing, slightly more appeared in [REDACTED], with 15% [REDACTED] and 25% in [REDACTED]. However, the increase peaked at 35% in workers [REDACTED], and as many [REDACTED] were among the injured as [REDACTED].

Mining and construction and education and health followed similar [REDACTED] patterns albeit in reverse. In both sectors, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were more affected than [REDACTED], though injuries appear more common in [REDACTED] workers in education and health, with 40% [REDACTED]. In contrast, in mining and construction, [REDACTED] were most affected, again making up 40% of the total. Notably, the lowest figure occurred in [REDACTED] working in education and health, with only 5% among those injured at work.

The answer:

The bar chart shows *the ages* of people injured at work across four sectors, in one country in 2018. Overall, while there is no clear trend connected to *age*, there are some similarities, with the injured more likely to be in *the oldest category* in three of the four sectors, and *25- to 34-year-olds* appearing generally less affected.

In leisure and hospitality and manufacturing, injuries generally increased *with age*, with approximately 10% more in each *age group*. In leisure and hospitality, around 12% of those injured were in *the youngest category* and 38% in *the oldest*. In manufacturing, slightly more appeared in *the younger groups*, with 15% *aged 15 to 24* and 25% in *the 25 to 34 group*. However, the increase peaked at 35% in *workers aged 35 to 49*, and as many 50- to 60-year-olds were among the injured as *those aged 25 to 34*.

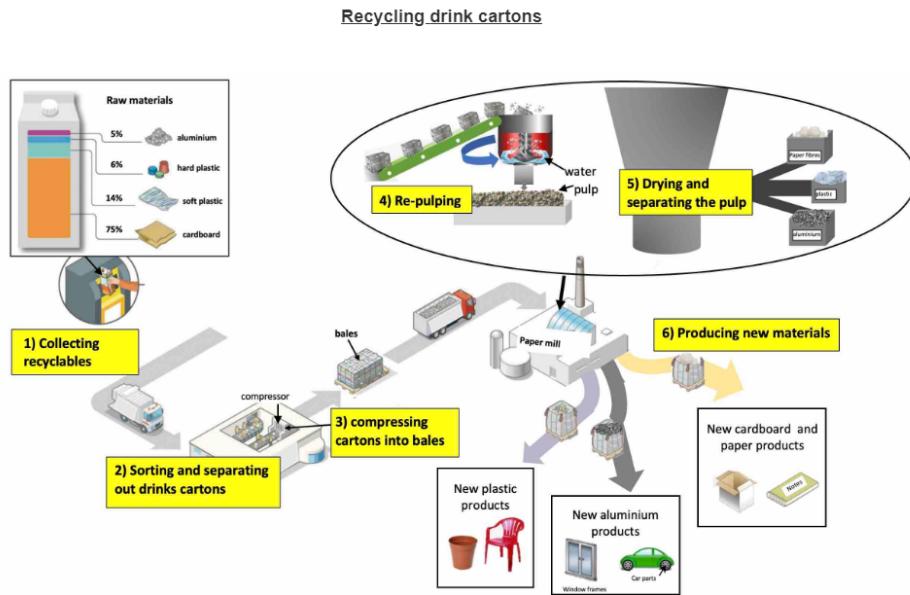
Mining and construction and education and health followed similar *age-related* patterns albeit in reverse. In both sectors, *the youngest* and *oldest groups* were more affected than *the middle groups*, though injuries appear more common in *older workers* in education and health, with 40% *aged 50 to 60*. In contrast, in mining and construction, *the youngest* were most affected, again making up 40% of the total. Notably, the lowest figure occurred in *25- to 34-year-olds* *working in* education and health, with only 5% among *those injured at work*.

All done !

20.2 Test practice 8: A process task

The diagram below shows how drink cartons are recycled.

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



Write at least 150 words.

When you have finished, look at the model answer, and key points to notice below. Check your answer by looking at the list of key features to include.

Test practice 8 Model answer

Model answer - Practice Test 8

The diagram shows the process used to recycle drink cartons. Overall, this is a six-step, largely mechanical process that extracts three main raw materials from the cartons allowing a variety of new products to be made.

Cartons such as those used for milk and juice are composed of several useful raw materials, including aluminium, hard and soft plastics, and cardboard, which makes up the majority of the product. Recycling these cartons begins when consumers put used cartons in a recycling bin ready for collection. Next, the recyclables are collected and taken to a sorting depot, where they are sorted and separated either manually or mechanically. The drinks cartons are then compressed, forming bales, which can now be transported to the paper mill.

At the paper mill, the cartons are turned back into pulp by adding water and spinning at high speed. The pulp is then dried, after which it can be separated into three main materials: paper fibres, aluminium, and plastic. The materials can now be used to produce various new products, including garden furniture, house and car parts, and cardboard or paper products.

Points to notice:

- In my overview I referred to the total number of steps in the process and the type of process involved – largely mechanical. Alternatively, I could have referred the key stages in the process (extracting the raw materials and then processing them so that new products could be made.)
- I said 'largely mechanical' because I could see people involved in the sorting and separating process. As it was unclear, I described this as the recyclables being 'sorted and separated either manually or mechanically.'

- As well as the stages of the process, we are given information about the raw materials that are in a drink carton. You need to include this in your answer.
- I used a zig-zig pattern to help me connect my ideas. This also helped me to avoid always beginning my sentences with a connecting word or phrase, which makes your writing mechanical and repetitive.
- For my organisation, I chose a point at which there was a major change (here it was a change in location). So my answer is organised into 1) collecting and preparing the cartons ready for the paper mill 2) what happens at the paper mill and afterwards.
- Remember, it isn't always 'relevant' to make comparisons in a process task.

Language to notice:

- '**Largely**' is used in a similar way to '**generally**'
- '**Recyclables**' are materials (usually packaging e.g. empty cans, bottles, or cartons) that can be recycled.
- I used '**consumers**' to refer to the people using these products.
- We can use the adverbs '**by hand**' or '**manually**' to refer to a process done by people rather than using a machine.
- Did you remember to use the term '**raw materials**'? Remember, the raw materials of a product are similar to the 'ingredients' in cooking. We can talk about '**the composition**' of a product, meaning what it is 'made up of' or 'composed of'.
- Two words that are commonly confused are: **comprise** and **compose**. **To comprise** = 'to consist of' or 'to be made up of'. We can only use 'compose' in a passive way with the same meaning ('**to be composed of**'). ('To compose' means to produce some music or some formal writing.) Look at the following examples:
 - A drinks carton is **made up of** several key **raw materials**, namely
 - A drinks carton **comprises** several useful **raw materials**, including aluminium, hard and soft plastics, and cardboard.
 - A drinks carton **is composed of** the following **raw materials**: aluminium, hard and soft plastics, and cardboard.
 - In terms of its **composition**, a drinks carton is **made up of** aluminium, hard and soft plastics, and cardboard.
- When I was checking and editing, I realised I had repeated '**a variety of new products**' in my overview and in my final sentence, so I changed the final sentence to '**various new products**'.

Key features

Check your answer has key features similar to those in the list below. **NB** you do not need to have **all** of them - these are examples of the main key features to include. Remember to provide supporting evidence.

Key features to include:

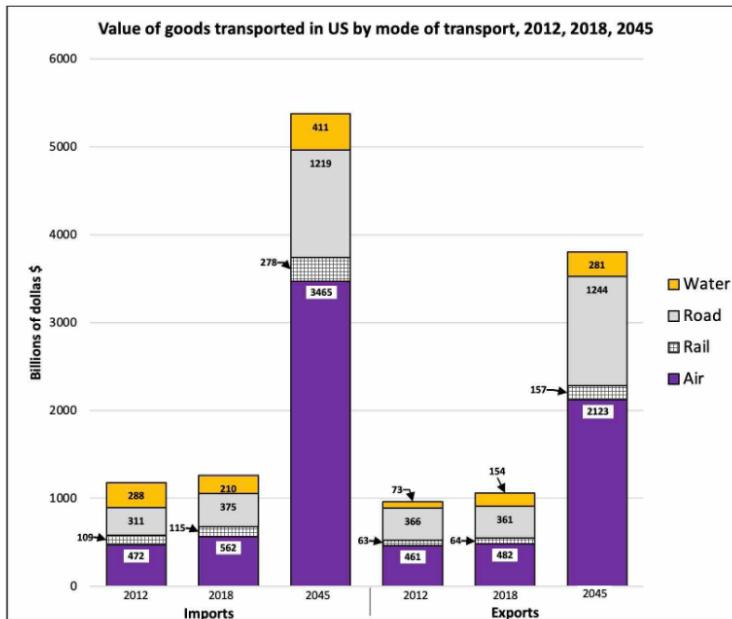
*The first three are main features or stages to include in your overview.

- ***This is a six-step process**
- ***The process is mostly mechanical**
- ***Three of the raw materials in the drinks cartons are extracted so that other products can be made**
- ***OR: / This process has two main stages extracting the raw materials then processing the raw materials so that new products can be made**
- Drinks cartons are composed of aluminium, hard and soft plastics, and cardboard
- The main raw material is cardboard // cardboard makes up the majority of the carton
- The empty cartons are put into / deposited in recycling bins and the collected
- The cartons are taken to a recycling centre (or depot) where they are sorted and separated either by hand or by machine
- The drinks cartons are compressed forming bales
- The bales are transported to / taken to the paper mill.
- At the paper mill, the cartons are turned back into a pulp (repulped) by spinning them at high speed with water
- The pulp is then dried and separated into aluminium, plastic, and paper fibres
- The raw materials are used to produce new products

20.3 Test practice 9: A stacked bar chart

The chart shows the value of goods in the US transported by different modes of transport in 2012, 2018, and predictions for 2045.

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



Write at least 150 words.

When you have finished, look at the model answer, and key points to notice below. Check your answer by looking at the list of key features to include.

Test practice 9 Model answer

Model answer - Practice Test 9

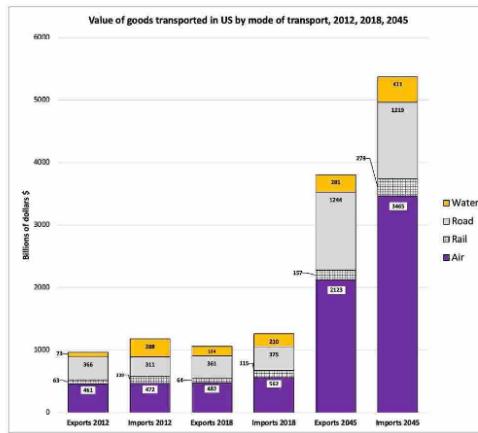
The bar chart shows the value of imports and exports in the US categorised by mode of transport in 2012, 2018, and predicted figures for 2045. Overall, imports generally exceed the value of exports, and there is continued growth in almost all areas, although air is predicted to remain dominant, while rail carries the lowest value of goods.

In terms of imported goods, air transport had the highest values and increases, carrying goods valued at \$472 billion in 2012 and rising to \$562 billion in 2018. Road transport was the second highest, with figures climbing from \$311 to \$375 billion. In comparison, the figures for rail and water were significantly lower, with rail rising only slightly from \$109 to \$115 billion and water actually declining from \$288 to \$210 billion. Nevertheless, by 2045, all values are predicted to have increased and air will continue to dominate, reaching a striking \$3465 billion, significantly higher than any other sector.

With exports, similar trends and positions can be seen albeit at a lower level, and the figures for 2012 and 2018 were generally much closer, with air rising from \$461 to \$482 billion, and rail from \$63 to \$64 billion. However, notably, water more than doubled in value (from \$73 to \$154 billion) and, while exports are expected to increase across all modes of transport in 2045, road alone will exceed the equivalent value of imports at \$1244 and \$1219 billion respectively.

Points to notice:

- Remember, a stacked bar chart shows similar information to a pie chart – the different colours or shading in each bar represent a proportion of the total, the whole bar represents the total.
- This chart is a good example of why a stacked bar chart might be used - if these were pie charts, they would take up a lot of space on the page and you would need to look at 6 separate pie charts to compare the data. Stacked bar charts can present this information in a more efficient way.
- In the overview, it is useful to compare totals (i.e. total imports and exports) as well as the main trends within the modes of transport.
- We are told the 'value' of the imports and exports in 'billions of dollars'. We are not told about quantities (how much or how many goods are being transported this way – only the value of these goods).
- We have past figures as well as predicted figures, so we can be sure to vary the tenses we use.
- I wrote my answer to this task twice and actually changed the data as a result. The data I used for the first version had the information organised by year, like this:



- Seeing the data presented like this encouraged me to organise my answer according to the years. This resulted in a long answer (243 words) that was repetitive and confusing to read. There was one long and rather confusing and repetitive paragraph about imports and exports in 2012 and 2018, and then a very short paragraph about predictions for 2045. In the real test, the pre-test review process helps to identify problems like this. As a result, I reorganised the data, grouping together the imports and then the exports. This shows just how important it is to use the right materials for your test practice - the wrong materials encourage you to write in a confusing and repetitive way.
- In my second version (the model you can see above), I organised my paragraphs according to 1) imports and then 2) exports and this helped me to solve the problem - my answer was now easier to read and less repetitive. If you organised your paragraphs according to the year (rather than 1) imports, 2) exports) try writing your answer again then compare both answers to see if you had the same problem of a repetitive and confusing answer.

Language to notice:

- Mode of transport is not the same as means of transport. Think of 'mode' as meaning 'style'. So 'rail' is a mode of transport while a 'train' is a means of transport.
- Notice how I used 'the equivalent' in this sentence: '**exports are expected to increase across all modes of transport in 2045, road alone will exceed the equivalent value of imports at \$1244 and \$1219 billion respectively.**' Here, I am comparing 'road transport' in exports with 'the equivalent' (i.e. road transport) in imports.

Key features

Check your answer has key features similar to those in the list below. **NB** you do not need to have **all** of them - these are examples of the main key features to include. Remember to provide supporting evidence.

Key features to include:

*The first three are main trends to include in your overview.

- ***The total value of imports generally exceeded the total value of exports.**
- ***The figures generally grew in all areas and are predicted to continue growing / all modes increased consistently apart from water**
- ***Air will continue to dominate and rail will continue to carry the lowest values of goods**

With imports

- air transport had the highest values and the highest increases between 2012 and 2018
- road transport had the second highest figures and also increased between 2012 and 2018
- rail and water figures were lower
- rail increased only slightly and water decreased – the only figure to do this
- by 2045 all figures will have risen and air will dominate
- the figure for imports transported by air in 2045 is far greater than for any other figure given

With exports

- the trends will be similar to imports but at a lower value
- the increases between 2012 and 2018 are relatively small
- the value of water exports more than doubled between 2012 and 2018
- road exports will exceed the value of road imports in 2045 – the only figure to do this