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English for Exams

Pre-intermediate A2+

Get Ready for IELTS

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WRITING

Fiona Aish & Jo Tomlinson

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Test

IELTS is jointly managed by the British Council, Cambridge ESOL Examinations and IDP Education, Australia. There are two versions of the test:

- Academic
- General Training

Academic is for students wishing to study at undergraduate or postgraduate levels in an English-medium environment.

General Training is for people who wish to migrate to an English-speaking country.

This book is primarily for students taking the Academic version.

The Test

There are four modules:

Listening 30 minutes, plus 10 minutes for transferring answers to the answer sheet

NB: the audio is heard *only once*.

Approx. 10 questions per section

Section 1: two speakers discuss a social situation

Section 2: one speaker talks about a non-academic topic

Section 3: up to four speakers discuss an educational project

Section 4: one speaker gives a talk of general academic interest

Reading 60 minutes

3 texts, taken from authentic sources, on general, academic topics. They may contain diagrams, charts, etc.

40 questions: may include multiple choice, sentence completion, completing a diagram, graph or chart, choosing headings, yes/no, true/false questions, classification and matching exercises.

Writing Task 1: 20 minutes: description of a table, chart, graph or diagram (150 words minimum)

Task 2: 40 minutes: an essay in response to an argument or problem (250 words minimum)

Speaking 11–14 minutes

A three-part face-to-face oral interview with an examiner.

The interview is recorded.

Part 1: introductions and general questions (4–5 mins)

Part 2: individual long turn (3–4 mins) – the candidate is given a task, has one minute to prepare, then talks for 1–2 minutes, with some questions from the examiner.

Part 3: two-way discussion (4–5 mins): the examiner asks further questions on the topic from Part 2, and gives the candidate the opportunity to discuss more abstract issues or ideas.

Timetabling Listening, Reading and Writing must be taken on the same day, and in the order listed above. Speaking can be taken up to 7 days before or after the other modules.

Scoring Each section is given a band score. The average of the four scores produces the Overall Band Score. You do not pass or fail IELTS; you receive a score.

IELTS and the Common European Framework of Reference

The CEFR shows the level of the learner and is used for many English as a Foreign Language examinations. The table below shows the approximate CEFR level and the equivalent IELTS Overall Band Score:

CEFR description	CEFR code	IELTS Band Score
Proficient user	C2	9
(Advanced)	C1	7–8
Independent user	B2	5–6.5
(Intermediate – Upper Intermediate)	B1	4–5

1 Hobbies and interests

AIMS: Words describing hobbies and interests • The present simple • Quantifiers • Task 1 introductions • Analysing and describing a table for Task 1

Part 1: Language development



1 Look at the pictures of hobbies, then fill each gap below with the correct verb + noun.

Gabrielle: I have lots of hobbies. Every weekend I (1) *play golf* with my father. There is a club nearby, so we go there. It's really good fun, but it's much better being on the course if the weather is nice and sunny. My father is a better player than me. I usually take four or five shots to get the ball in the hole. In the evenings I (2) a lot. I especially like dramas and reality shows.

Yuan: I like sports quite a lot. I (3) three times a week! There is a pool near my house, so I usually go there before school. I really love it! I also (4) to a lot. My favourite singers are Justin Bieber and Miley Cyrus. I use my headphones at home because my mother doesn't like the loud noise!

2 It is important to use the correct verbs with hobbies and interests. Put the hobbies under the correct verbs in the table. (Some hobbies may be used with more than one verb.)

- ~~swimming~~ shopping football gymnastics sports karate yoga
computer games the violin the guitar skating TV horse riding golf

do	go	play	watch
	<i>swimming</i>		

Exam information | Describing tables

In Task 1 of the writing paper, you need to describe some visual information. This visual information might be a table. You need to identify and describe the key points in the table, using formal or semi-formal writing. You have 20 minutes to do this task and you must write 150 words or more.

1 Look at the table. Circle the correct option in each sentence below.

Class Sports Survey

Sport	Number of students who like it	Number of students who don't like it
Tennis	8	2
Football	5	5
Hockey	3	7
Cricket	0	10

- 1 Football, Tennis is the most popular sport in the class.
- 2 A lot of students don't like *football / hockey*.
- 3 *Football / Hockey* is liked and disliked by the same number of students.
- 4 Few students dislike *tennis / football*.
- 5 All the students dislike *cricket / football*.

2 Now look at this table and write T (True) or F (False) next to each sentence. Give reasons for your answers.

Number of hours a week spent on activities by age range

Age range	Football	Swimming	Television	Computer games	Music
13–15 years	5	2	6	7	3
16–18 years	4	1.5	9	14	12

- 1 Older teenagers spend a lot of time swimming. **F**
- 2 All older teenagers like playing computer games.
- 3 Listening to music is more popular with older teenagers.
- 4 Teenagers don't spend much time swimming.
- 5 Younger teenagers spend a lot of hours listening to music.

Part 3: Exam Practice

Writing Task 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The table below shows the television viewing figures for sports by country, in millions.

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

Write at least 100 words.

Television viewing figures for sports by country, in millions

Country	Tennis	Golf	Motor racing	Athletics	Totals
Australia	6.2	4.5	3.7	3	17.4
UK	6.6	2.8	6.4	4.5	20.3
USA	7	11.2	1.5	5.5	25.2
Canada	6.1	3.4	1.1	3.9	14.5
Total	25.9	21.9	12.7	16.9	

Progress check

How many boxes can you tick? You should work towards being able to tick them all.

Did you ...

make sure you understood the title, headings and categories of the table?

use the present simple to describe the table (if the information in the table is about the present)?

use quantifiers accurately to describe quantities?

use the introduction to describe the table in general?

Complete the text with verbs from the table.

Mustafa: I have just finished school. I (1) ...*passed*..... all my exams so I am really happy! I'm going to go to university. I want to (2) Engineering. I have to (3) an entrance exam for my English because I want to study in Australia. The course sounds really good. It's at a really good university and has a mixture of assessments; I'll need to (4) essays, (5) presentations and (6) exams. I will also get some work experience! It's a lot of work but I think I will (7) a really good qualification.

Watch Out!

To pass an exam means to reach the required grade or pass mark, not to take the exam.

- 3** The notes show what the class of 2009 did after they left school. Because the information refers to a time in the past, we must use past tense verbs to describe it. Complete the sentences below with the correct past tense forms of the verbs in brackets and the correct numbers from the notes:

Destinations of school leavers, 2009

University: 12 boys 14 girls

Local college: 7 boys 1 girl

Work: 5 boys 8 girls

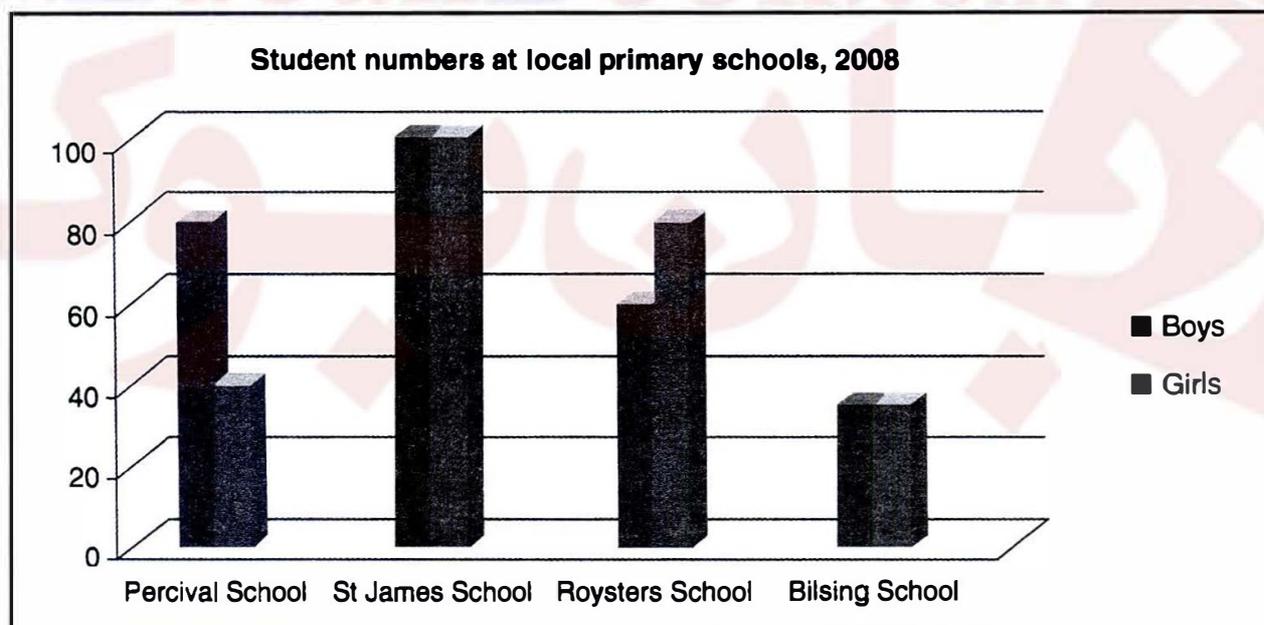
- 1 ...*Fourteen*... girls*went*..... (go) to university after leaving school.
- 2 girl (start) college.
- 3 boys and girls (start) work straight after school.
- 4 school leavers (continue) studying after leaving school.
- 5 Only school leavers (not go) to university or college.
- 6 school leavers (decide) to go to college.

Part 2: Skills development

Exam information Describing a bar chart

For Task 1 of the writing paper you may need to describe a bar chart. Bar charts are useful for comparing the quantities of different categories (shown in the form of bars). Bar charts usually show the numbers or percentages on the left-hand vertical axis and the different categories that are being measured along the horizontal or bottom *axis* (plural: *axes*). Both axes are labelled to show what they refer to. Sometimes each category along the horizontal axis can be divided into two further sub-groups, e.g. boys / girls, so that these different sub-groups can be compared.

- 1** The bar chart below shows the information about student numbers at primary schools from Exercise 4 in Part 1. Answer the questions about the bar chart.



- 1** What do the numbers on the vertical axis measure?
- 2** How is the information grouped on the horizontal axis?
- 3** What do the different shades of the bars show?
- 4** When was the data collected?

Exam tip Understanding a bar chart

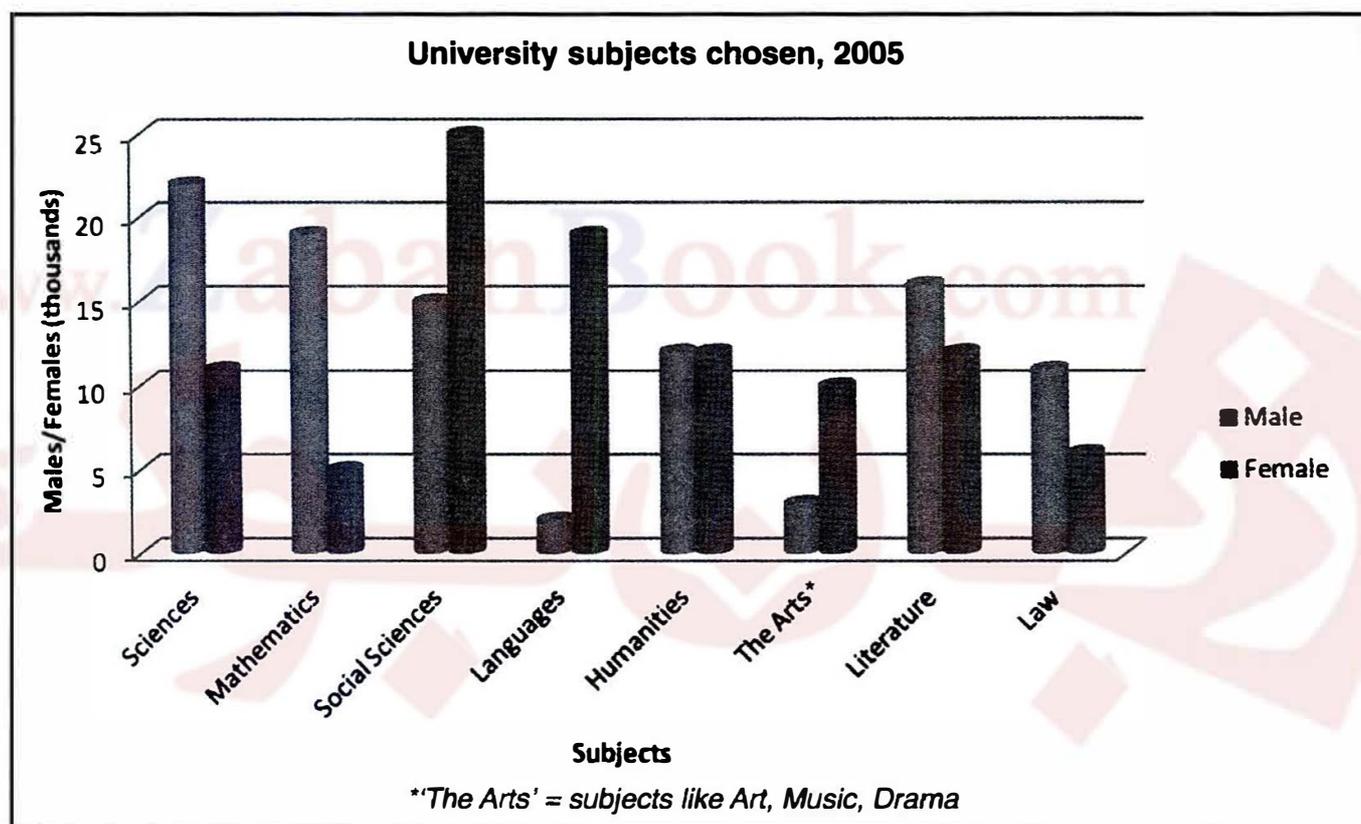
When you first see a bar chart, ask yourself the questions in Exercise 1 and the answers will give you the essential information for understanding it. Make sure you know which units are being used to measure quantities.

Writing Task 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The bar chart below shows the number of students who chose certain university subjects in 2005. Summarize the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 100 words.

**Progress check**

How many boxes can you tick? You should work towards being able to tick them all.

Did you ...

use common collocations (words that go together) correctly?

use comparison phrases to compare information?

make sure you understood which information the different axes of the bar chart show?

check the time period(s) shown in the bar chart?

write about the bar chart in general first, then add specific details afterwards?

Part 3: Exam Practice

Writing Task 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

Young people should spend more time on cultural activities such as music and theatre and less time on sport. How far do you agree with this statement?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 175 words.

Progress check

How many boxes can you tick? You should work towards being able to tick them all.

Did you ...

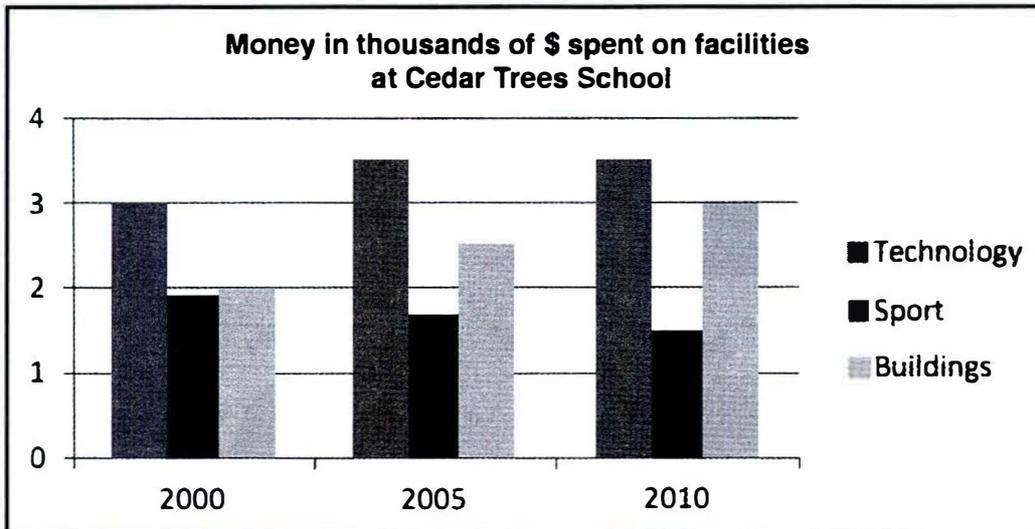
use correct word order?

use the correct conjunctions to connect ideas?

answer the question and not simply write about the topic in general?

give reasons for your opinions and support them with examples?

3 Put the sentences describing the bar chart in the correct order by numbering them 1-5.



- From 2000 to 2010 the school increased the money spent on technology from \$3,000 to \$3,500.
- We can see that in general the school spent most money on technology.
- The graph shows how much money Cedar Trees School spent on different facilities from 2000 to 2010.
- However, not as much money was spent on sport in 2010; the money for sport went down from \$2,000 to about \$1,500.
- Also, the money for buildings rose from \$2,000 to \$3,000.

4 Decide if ideas 1-5 agree or disagree with this essay question. Write A (agree) or D (disagree) next to each idea.

Computer games are a part of modern culture like art and cinema. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

- 1** Computer games are different from art but they are part of modern culture.
- 2** Art and cinema represent the culture of a country but computer games do not because they are not real.
- 3** Computer games are just entertainment so they are not part of modern culture.
- 4** Computer games often have excellent music and graphics so they are forms of art.
- 5** Computer games cannot be a part of modern culture because they are games.

2 Read the speech bubbles, then complete the sentences below with the words in bold.



My name is Clare and I'm 15 years old. I go to school and this year I **will** have my first exams. I want to be a doctor, but it's a difficult job, so I **must** study hard to pass my exams. To be a doctor, I **must** have a lot of qualifications, but I **don't need to** be very good at art or languages, just science.



I'm Clare's mother, Molly. Clare wants to be a doctor when she is older. I think she **needs to** study hard for this. She plays on her computer quite a lot, which she **shouldn't** do. I think she **should** study more. She is clever. I think she **might** be a doctor.

- 1 *will* – used to talk about something expected in the future
- 2 / *have to* / *need to* – used to say what is necessary
- 3 – used to say something is a good idea
- 4 – used to say something isn't a good idea
- 5 – used to say it isn't necessary to do something
- 6 / *can* / *could* – used to say what is possible
- 7 *mustn't* – used to say what isn't necessary

3 Rewrite the following sentences using the correct modal and semi-modal verbs from sentences 1–7 in Exercise 2.

- 1 It is a good idea for children to respect their parents.
Children should respect their parents.
- 2 I plan to go to university in the future.
- 3 It is not a good idea for parents to smoke near their children.
- 4 It is possible that children will have lessons on the Internet in the future.
- 5 It is necessary for all children to be taught basic skills like maths and reading.

4 Use modal and semi-modal verbs to give your opinions about events in the future. *Should* / *shouldn't*, *can*, *might* and *could* are less definite than *will*, *need to*, *must* and *have to*. Compare:

Children who disobey their parents will be punished. (= a definite future action)
Children who disobey their parents should be punished. (= a suggestion)
Children who disobey their parents might be punished. (= a possibility)

Rewrite these sentences to make them less definite.

- 1 Children who don't study will fail their exams. (→ a possibility)
- 2 University must prepare people for the best jobs. (→ a suggestion)
- 3 Children need to follow their parents' advice. (→ a suggestion)

Exam information | Paragraphs

An essay should be made up of separate paragraphs and the points within each paragraph should follow a logical order: firstly a main idea, followed by supporting ideas which explain or add to the main idea.

3 The first line of each paragraph below is missing. Write a first line which summarizes the main idea of the paragraph. The first one is done for you.

1 *Family structures are changing in the West...* Once, the traditional structure of two parents with two children was the most common family type in Western countries like the UK and the USA, but this is changing. New family structures include one-parent families and families with children from more than one marriage. These new family types are becoming increasingly common. Different family structures mean that many children live with a variety of full, step or half brothers and sisters.

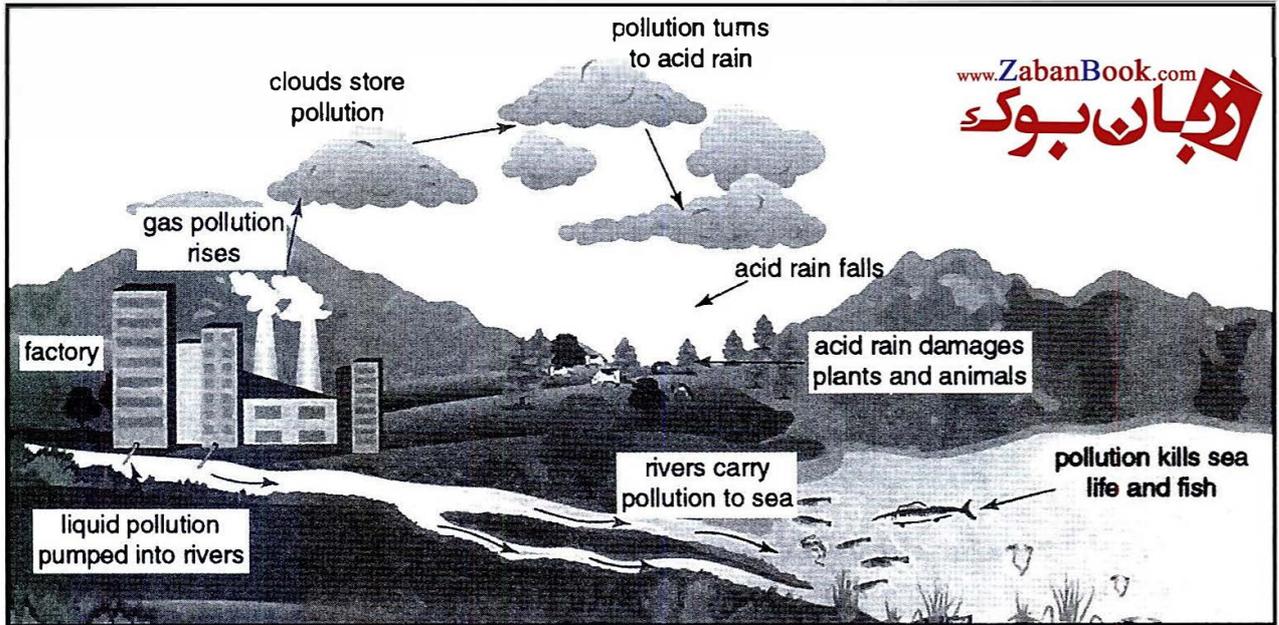
2
If more women go out to work, this could affect the children in the family because they are not receiving the attention they need. Many people claim that children are happy when both their parents are working, but someone needs to look after the children and the home, and women are often better at this role.

3
Having brothers and sisters means that a child learns how to socialize with other children from a young age and this is incredibly beneficial for them. They also grow up and grow old with an existing support network around them, which people with no brothers and sisters may not have. An only child can also be very lonely.

4
It is not a child's job to cook, clean or help in the home. Children should be playing and having fun because childhood is the only time when they will be free from work. Children should be developing rather than becoming tired doing housework. Although many argue that helping in the home teaches children to look after their environment and to be clean, children can learn these things in other ways than through housework.

Exam information | Structuring an essay

Structuring an essay is an important part of writing for IELTS. For a Task 2 essay, use a standard essay structure consisting of separate paragraphs: an introduction (one paragraph), followed by the main body of the essay (two or three paragraphs), then a conclusion (one paragraph).



3 To describe a process, you can expand the labels from a diagram into full sentences.

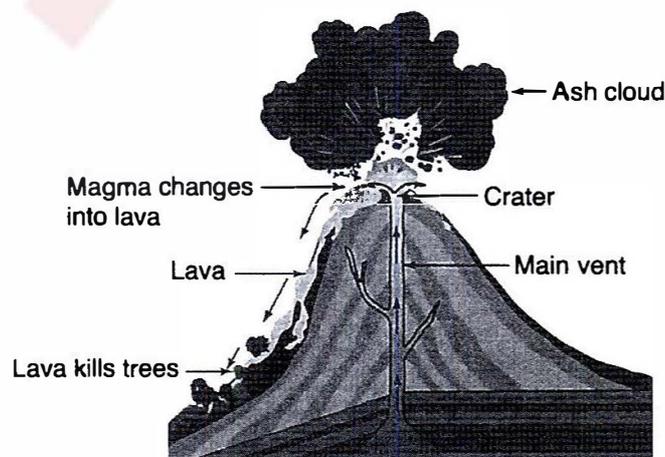
Label: Rivers carry pollution to sea. **Full sentence:** Pollution is carried to the sea by rivers.

Label: Clouds store pollution / pollution turns to acid rain / acid rain falls.

Full sentence: Pollution is stored in clouds and falls as acid rain.

Notice that the labels often do not include articles (*a / the*) or prepositions (*in / on / at*); some labels are just nouns or verbs. You will need to change these by making them full subject + verb + object sentences, and adding any other words that are necessary.

Look at the diagram below and use the labels and the notes below to write full sentences.



1 during / eruption / magma rises / volcano's main vent

During an eruption magma rises up the volcano's main vent.

2 magma / erupt from / crater / top / volcano

3 magma / change into / lava

4 ash cloud / form / above / volcano

5 lava flows down / side / volcano

6 many trees / killed / lava

12 Transport

AIMS: Verbs followed by infinitive with *to* or the *-ing* form • Zero article or plural forms for general nouns • Writing a problem and solution essay for Task 2 • Checking writing for common mistakes

Part 1: Language development

- 1** Complete the speech bubbles with the words from the box. Then match each person to the correct photo.



a



b



c



d

abroad commute fare pollution traffic jams rush hour service crowded

- 1** Generally, I like driving, but in the rush hour, when there is a lot of traffic, it can be really frustrating. The roads are really busy here so there are all the time.

- 3** I take the bus to school because the is cheap and there are discounts for students. Also, the is fast and reliable.

- 2** I work in the city and I to work by underground. It's really quick and easy, but it can also be extremely – I almost never get a seat!

- 4** I often travel with my work, so I spend a lot of time in airports. I like flying, but I worry about the amount of that is caused by the airline industry.

- 2** Some verbs can be followed by an infinitive with *to* or an *-ing* form.

Verb + infinitive with *to*

I **expect to see** him at the airport.
Everyone **wants to travel** to other countries.
I always **choose to travel** by train.
He **decided to buy** a new car.

I **promise to visit** you next week.
He **appears to be** travel sick!
We **planned to catch** the 10.30 bus.

Verb + *-ing*

I **enjoy travelling** by train.
She **suggested driving** to the airport.

Some people cannot **resist driving** everywhere.
They **considered taking** the underground.

Exam information | A problem and solution essay

For Task 2 you might need to write a problem and solution essay. For this essay you will need to think about and explain the problems of a situation or issue and consider and evaluate more than one possible solution.

There are two possible structures for a problem and solution essay:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Introduce the situation in the introduction | 2 Introduce the situation in the introduction |
| Paragraph 1 = problem 1 + solution(s) | Paragraph 1 = all problems |
| Paragraph 2 = problem 2 + solution(s) | Paragraph 2 = all solutions |
| Conclusion | Conclusion |

- 1** Read the essay title and the list of problems and solutions below. Decide which are problems and which are solutions. Write P (problem) or S (solution) next to each idea.

Many cities suffer from traffic-related problems. What problems does traffic cause in cities and what are the possible solutions?

- 1 The government should increase road tax. ...S.
- 2 People should use their cars less and public transport more.
- 3 Traffic jams create stress in people's lives.
- 4 The cost of travelling by bus or train needs to be cheaper.
- 5 There is a lot of air pollution in cities.
- 6 Public transport is too crowded.
- 7 Many accidents happen because there are so many cars on the roads.
- 8 If driving tests were more difficult, there would be fewer cars on the roads.

- 2** Look at these ideas for the essay in Exercise 1 and match problems 1–4 to solutions a–d.

Problems	Solutions
1 Traffic jams are caused by too many cars and lorries.	a People should pay to drive into cities during busy times such as mornings and evenings.
2 Public transport is expensive so people do not use it.	b The government could help reduce train and bus fares.
3 Air pollution caused by traffic has increased health problems.	c The number of vehicles allowed into city centres should be limited to reduce the amount of traffic.
4 Traffic problems in cities increase journey times to work and school.	d Environmentally-friendly cars should be cheaper.

4

It is important to check your writing for common mistakes before the end of the exam because it could improve your score. Here are some key areas where mistakes often occur:

Singular / plural: There are many **type** of transport. type ✗ types ✓

Subject / verb agreement: Train fares **costs** too much money. costs ✗ cost ✓

Incorrect part of speech: Traffic jams make people **anger**. anger ✗ angry ✓

Underline and correct six errors in the paragraph for this essay title.

Air travel causes a variety of problems in the world and we should find alternative means of transport. Describe some of the problems caused by air travel and suggest some solutions.

First of all, air travel is a major causes of air pollution. The number of flights have increased dramatically over the last thirty years because people travel more for business, holidays and to visit friends and family. The pollution from air travel contributes significant to climate change. To reduce the effect of air travel on the environment, governments should spend most money on scientific research. Scientists must try to find a different type of fuel which does not harming the environment as much. In addition, governments could offer tax reduce to airline companies that are more environmentally friendly.

5

Read the paragraph below and match the underlined mistakes 1-6 to the categories a-f below. Then correct the mistakes.

Secondly, air travel is too (1) cheaper so many people choose to fly rather than take other (2) form of transport. Governments should introduce new laws to increase the cost of flying. If airline companies decided (3) charging passengers more, people (4) must decide to use other forms of (5) the public transport such as trains or ships. Another solution could be to limit the number of flights in specific parts of the world or limit the number of flights each person (6) take in one year.

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--|-------|
| 1 | ^e | a | singular / plural | ..... |
| 2 | ..... | b | infinitive with <i>to</i> / <i>-ing</i> form | ..... |
| 3 | ..... | c | incorrect article | ..... |
| 4 | ..... | d | subject / verb agreement | ..... |
| 5 | ..... | e | incorrect word form | ..... |
| 6 | ..... | f | incorrect modal verb | ..... |

Exam tip | Checking mistakes

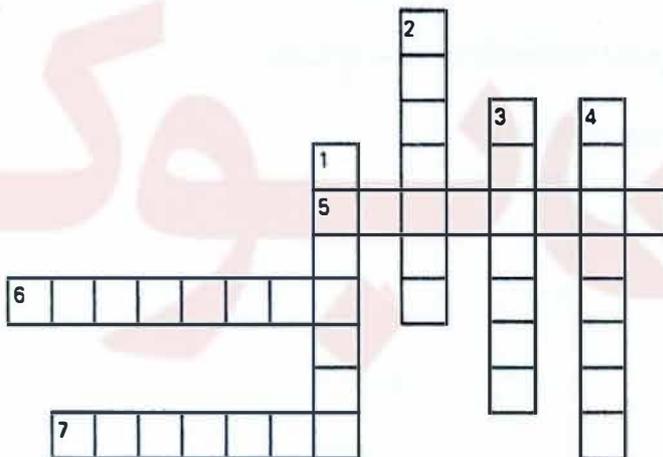
While you prepare for the IELTS writing exam, write a list of the mistakes that you often make. In the real exam, make sure you leave enough time (e.g. 5 minutes) to check your writing for spelling and grammar mistakes.

Review 4

1 Correct one mistake in each sentence.

- 1 Some big city suffer from overcrowding.
- 2 This is often due people coming to cities for work.
- 3 London has grow rapidly over the last 50 years and now has over 7 million people.
- 4 This means that moving around the city is difficult in rushing hour and house prices are very expensive.
- 5 If I was the mayor of London, I will build more flats on park land, so that more people could afford a place to live.
- 6 If London will grow bigger, more public transport will be needed for people who work.
- 7 The government needs to consider to reduce the number of cars coming into cities.
- 8 People may decide travelling by public transport if the system improves.
- 9 As the result, the roads will be clearer.
- 10 This would make transports in general easier.

2 Complete the crossword.



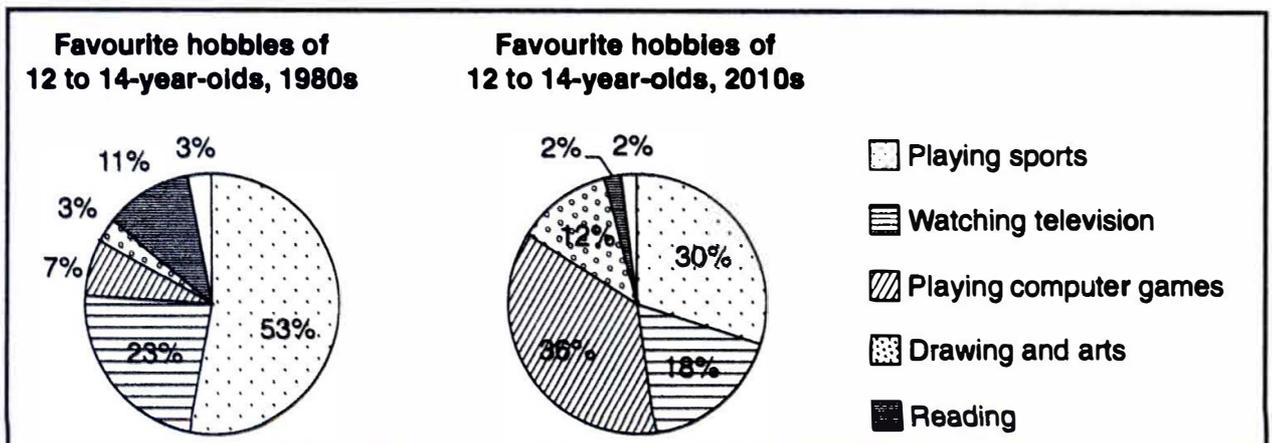
Across

- 5 People take this when they are ill (noun)
- 6 The time of day when people travel to and from work (noun)
- 7 To put harmful things into the air or water (verb)

Down

- 1 To get better (verb)
- 2 Too many people in one place (adjective)
- 3 A place where things are made with machines (noun)
- 4 Food that is unhealthy (noun)

3 Look at the pie charts and the graph and correct seven mistakes in the text opposite.



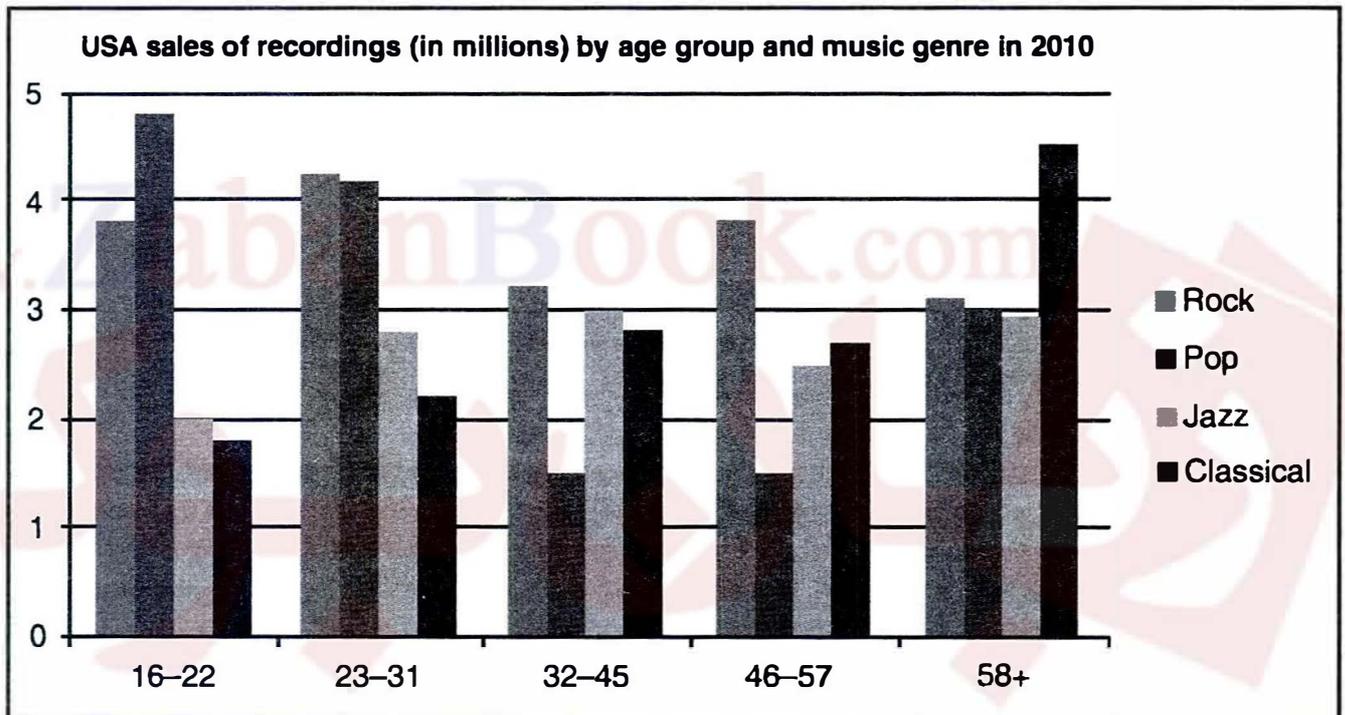
Practice test

Writing Task 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The bar chart below shows the types of music bought in the USA in 2010, by age group. Summarize the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 150 words.



coordinate v. – To coordinate an activity is to organize the people or things involved in it.

crowded adj. – A crowded place is full of people.

decide v. – If you decide to do something, you choose to do it.

distance n. – The distance between two points is how far it is between them.

drive v. – To drive a vehicle means to operate it and control its movements.

driving test n. – an exam drivers must pass before they are allowed to drive on the roads

effect n. – a direct result of someone or something on another person or thing

enjoy v. – If you enjoy something, you find pleasure and satisfaction in it.

environment n. – The environment is the natural world around us.

environmentally friendly adj. – describes something which does not damage the environment

expect v. – If you expect something to happen, you believe that it will happen.

v. – If you are expecting somebody or something, you believe that they are going to arrive or to happen.

expensive adj. – costing a lot of money

fare n. – the amount charged for a journey on a bus, train, or plane

fast lane n. – the lane of a motorway where drivers can overtake other vehicles

flight n. – a journey made by flying, usually in an aeroplane

fuel n. – Fuel is a substance such as coal or petrol that is burned to provide heat or power.

harm v. – To harm someone or something means to injure or damage them.

healthy adj. – Someone who is healthy is fit and strong and does not have any diseases.

adj. – Something that is healthy is good for you.

level n. – a point on a scale which measures the amount, importance, or difficulty of something

limit v. – To limit something means to prevent it from becoming bigger, spreading, or making progress.

lorry n. – a large vehicle for transporting goods by road

motorway n. – a wide road built for fast travel over long distances

noise pollution n. – noise that is annoying or harmful to people in the place where they live or work and that they have no control over

passenger n. – a person travelling in a vehicle, aircraft, or ship

passport n. – an official identification document which you need to show when you travel abroad

plan v. – If you are planning to do something, you intend to do it.

plane n. – a vehicle with wings and engines that enable it to fly

policy n. – a set of plans, especially in politics or business

pollute v. – To pollute water or air is to make it dirty and dangerous to use or live in.

pollution n. – Pollution of the environment happens when dirty or dangerous substances get into the air, water, or soil.

price n. – The price of something is the amount of money you have to pay to buy it.

problem n. – an unsatisfactory situation that causes difficulties

promise v. – If you promise to do something, you say that you will definitely do it.

public transport n. – buses, trains, etc. that everyone can use

reduce v. – To reduce something means to make it smaller in size or amount.

resist v. – If you resist something, you refuse to accept it and try to prevent it.

road tax n. – a tax paid by vehicle drivers for using the roads

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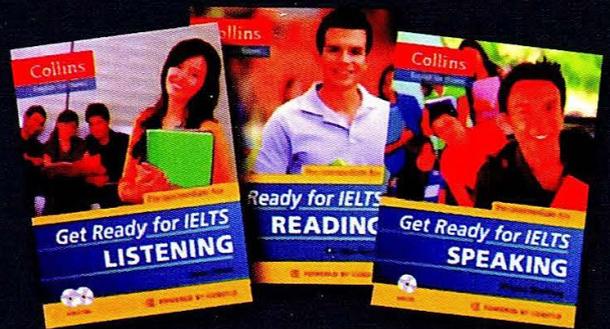
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