

IELTS LANGUAGE OF CHANGE
IELTS WRITING: ADVANCED WRITING MASTERCLASS
(IELTS TASKS 1 & 2)

HOW TO GET AN IELTS

WRITING BAND 7.0 - 8.5

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IELTS Academic Writing Overview

Length: 60 minutes

Academic Writing Test

Task	Word Count	Advised Timing	Task description
1	150	20 mins	Describing visual information such as bar charts, tables, graphs, maps or diagrams.
2	250	40 mins	Presenting arguments and opinions in a discursive essay about a topical issue.

TIP: The exam says to write a 'minimum of 150/250 words but don't write much more. Aim for 10 or 20 words more at the most.

IELTS Academic

The Writing component of IELTS Academic includes two tasks. Topics are of general interest to, and suitable for candidates entering undergraduate and postgraduate studies or seeking professional registration.

Task 1

You will be presented with a graph, table, chart or diagram and asked to describe, summarise or explain the information in your own words. You may be asked to describe and explain data, describe the stages of a process, how something works or describe an object or event.

Task 2

You will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. Responses to both tasks must be in a formal style.

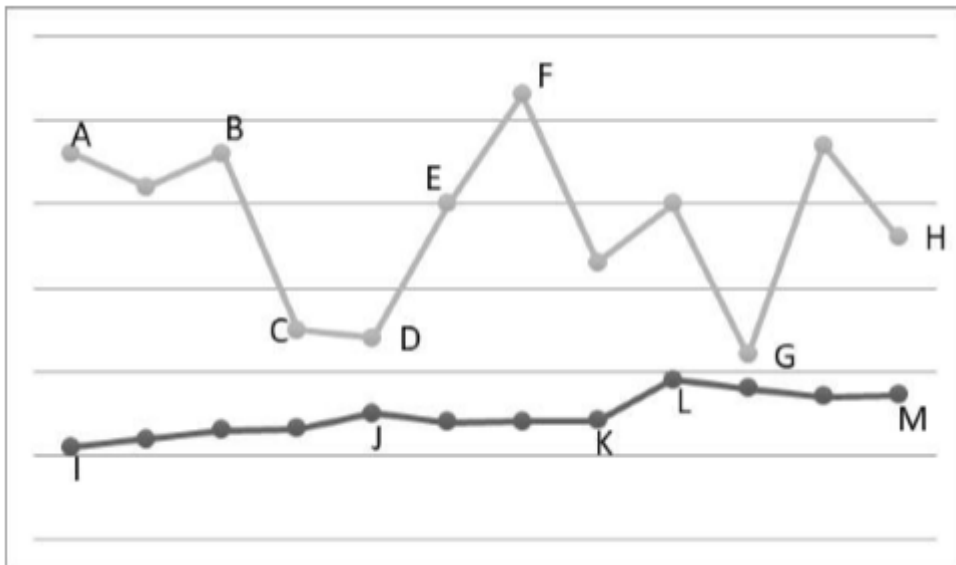
Language of Change

When you write about a graph in Task 1 of IELTS, you will most likely be using the language of change and / or the language of comparison and contrast.

In this first part we'll look at expanding your range of vocabulary and grammar structures for describing changes.

Exercise 1

Match the words of change with the parts of the graph. More than one option is possible.



Rose/increased steadily	Rose/increased dramatically	Rose/increased gradually
Plummeted to/Plunged to ...	Hit a peak / Peaked at/reached a high of ...	Fluctuated
Fell/dropped/shrank drastically/ dramatically / sharply Remained	Remained flat/constant/unchanged/stable at Dropped	Dropped and then levelled off/evened out at
Hit a low of .../ bottomed out at	Fell and then quickly recovered	Dipped
Soared	Rocketed	Was erratic
Fell gradually / steadily		

A-B

B-C

B-D

D-F

F

F-H

G

I-J

J-K

L-M

Definitions for some difficult words

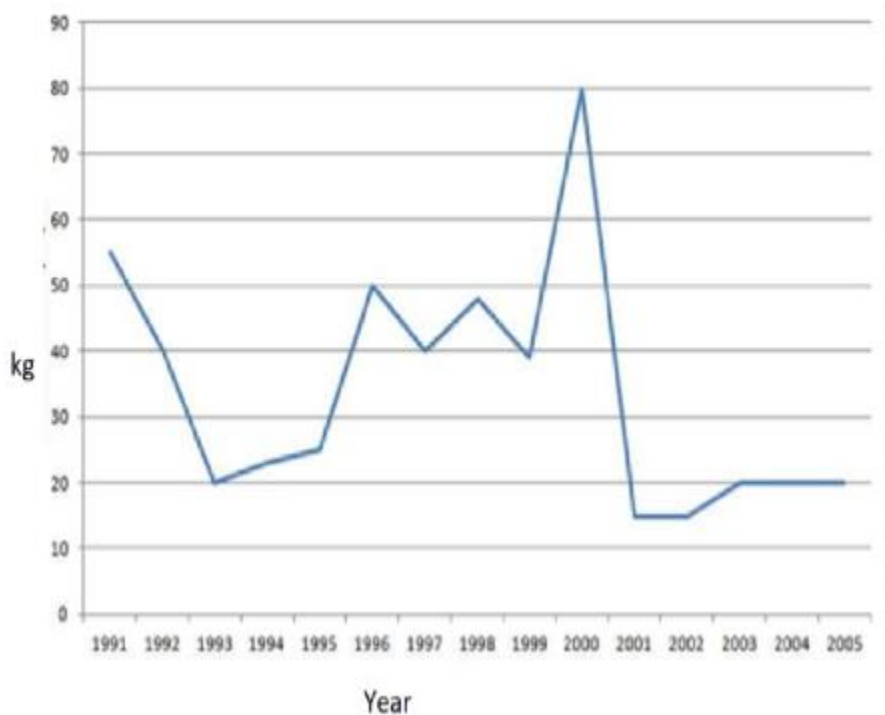
Word	Explanation
Plunged	a very quick and large drop or reduction
Peaked at / reached a high of	The highest point on the graph
Hit a low of / bottomed out	The lowest point on the graph
Remained constant/unchanged/stable at .../ Levelled off/evened out at ...	a 'flat' part of the graph where there is no change
Fluctuated/ was erratic	Increases and decreases randomly, irregularly or unpredictably
Rose/increased dramatically/Soared/ Rocketed	Increased very quickly and drastically
Dipped	Fell slightly but recovered quickly

AnswersA-B *Fell and then quickly recovered / Dipped*B-C *Fell/dropped/shrank drastically/ dramatically / sharply/ Plummeted to/Plunged to*B-D *Dropped and then levelled off/evened out at*D-F *Rose/increased dramatically/Soared/ Rocketed*F *Hit a peak / Peaked at/reached a high of*F-H *Fluctuated/ was erratic*G *Hit a low of ... I-J Rose/increased steadily/ Rose/increased gradually*J-K *Remained flat/constant/unchanged/stable at*L-M *Fell gradually / steadily*

Mastering Sentence Structures to Describe Change

Take a look at the following graph and read the paragraph which describes it.

Average Kg of rice per household per year



Graph Description:

To begin, in 1991, the average number of kg of rice consumed per household per year was 55, but over the next two years, there was a dramatic drop to 20 kg per year (annum). The number then increased (grew, rose, climbed) significantly between 1995 and 1996 to 50 kg per year (per annum). 1996 to 1999 saw an erratic period (a fluctuation) in the amount of rice consumed, which was followed by a sharp rise at the end of the period, with the figures hitting a peak of 80 Kg in 2000. Next, the average consumption plummeted, hitting a low of 15 Kg in 2001. It levelled off for the next year, but then slowly increased to 20 kg, remaining steady at this rate for the rest of the period.

Exercise 2

Now, read the following sentences from the graph above. There are four different parts: 'bold', 'CAPITALS', 'italics' and 'underlined' Each part has a specific function.

Read the sentences and say what you think the purpose of each different part is:

1. **To begin**, in 1991, the average number of kg of rice consumed per household per year was 55.
2. But over the following two years, *there was a dramatic drop to 20 kg per year (annum)*.

3. The number then increased (grew, rose, climbed) significantly between 1995 and 1996 to 50 kg per year (per annum).
4. 1996 to 1999 *saw an erratic period (a fluctuation) in the amount of rice consumed*
5. **Which was followed by a sharp rise** at the end of this period,
6. *With the figures hitting a peak of 80 kg in 2000.*
7. **Next**, the average consumption plummeted, hitting a low of 15 kg in 2001.
8. *It levelled off* for the next year,
9. **But then** slowly increased to 20 kg,
10. Levelling off at this rate for the remainder of the period.
remaining steady at this rate for the rest of the period.

The answers are on the next page. Don't look until you've worked out the purpose of each part.

Answers

Bold	Introduces sentence and adds coherence and contrast to the paragraph. (Connector)
CAPITALS	Tells when something happened (Time)
<i>Italics</i>	Describes the changes to the figure (what happened to the figures?) (Change)
<u>Underlined</u>	Provides a specific number or value per year, etc., connected to the change that has taken place or to the current point in the graph. Shows the movement. (Value)

The words in bold are connectors, or linking words, the words in CAPITALS are the time period, the words in italics are the change taking place, and the underlined words are the value the graph is measured in.

Connector	Time	Change	Value
To begin,	In 1991,	<i>the number of arrests for illegal drug use stood at</i>	55
Connector	Time	Change	Value
However,	over the following three years,	<i>There was a sharp fall to</i>	20 per year.
Connector	Time	Value	(no connector)
<i>The number rose significantly</i>	from 1995 to 199	To 50 per year.	
Time	Change	Connector	Change
1996 to 1999	<i>saw a fluctuation in the arrest rate</i>	which was followed by	<i>A sudden increase</i>
Time	Change	Value	Time
at the end of this period,	<i>with the rate reaching a peak of</i>	80	In 2000

This can help you see exactly what you need to be doing when you write about graphs to describe changes over time. Each sentence you write should have all or some of these elements.

If you don't feel very confident writing about graphs yet, this is a particularly useful trick to get you started. As you internalise these sentence structures, you will be able to use them naturally and automatically.

There are 3 vital sentence structures you must learn and practice so that in the end you can write them automatically! If you know these structures and you can apply them correctly in your description, you are on the right road to achieving a good or even a great score.

3 structures used when describing changes:

1	There + be + adjective + noun + in + noun		
	There was a slow rise in the number of kg consumed.		
2	Noun + verb + adverb		
	Rice consumption rose steadily.		
3	Time + saw/experienced/witnessed + adjective + noun + in + noun		see table 1
	*1999 saw a gradual increase in rice consumption.		

****there is no preposition before time words in this 3rd pattern (Not: In 1999 saw...)***

Using varied language with a range of sentence structures is vital to achieving a high band score in the IELTS exam. However, it is very common to see candidates who have learnt one of these sentence structures, and then use them throughout their graph description. If you do this, it will make your answer unnatural and will not demonstrate that you know a wide range of sentence structures.

For many students, the difficult part of using these sentence structures is getting the word forms right. Adjectives (gradual) change to adverbs (gradually) and nouns (a rise) change to verbs in the past (rose) depending on the sentence structure you are using.

You have to be very careful when using them and you have to practise them so that it becomes almost automatic for you and you can use them without thinking.

Now, you will see three different tables that will show you all the language of change you require for the exam.

Table 1: There + be + adjective + noun + in + noun

Time	Verb	Adjective	Noun	In the	Quantity of	Item	Time
Time	There as a(n) (very)	Dramatic Gradual Large Marked Minimal Rapid Sharp	Decline Decrease Drop Fall Growth Increase Rise	In the	Amount of Number of Percentage of Price of Value of Etc.	Noun	Time
	Saw Witnessed experienced	Significant Slight Slow Small Steady Steep	Fluctuation* Jump* Plunge*				

Table 1

Time + saw + adjective + noun + in + noun

Note: as you can see in the table, the time phrases can fit in three different places.

* Some words do not work with all adjectives and adverbs. Only use these with the following:

Fluctuation/(fluctuated) – dramatic(ly) /Slight(ly) / small.

e.g. There was a dramatic fluctuation in the amount of rice consumed.

Jump – sharp(ly), dramatic(ally), sudden(ly), minimal(ly), slight(ly) or small

e.g. There was a sharp jump in ice-cream sales

Plunge – sudden(ly)

e.g. 2009 saw a sudden plunge in ice-cream sales to 20,000.

Table 2 Noun + verb + adverb**The number of (noun).....****The price of...****The value of...****Etc. +**

Verb	Adverb
Declined	
Decreased	
Dropped	
Fell	Dramatically
Grew	Gradually
Increased	Markedly
Reduced	Minimally
Rose	Rapidly
Fluctuated*	Sharply
Jumped*	Significantly
Plunged*	Slightly
Remained constant	Slowly
Remained stable	Steadily
Levelled out	Suddenly
Did not change	
Reached a peak/trough	

peaked at + Number- percentage or value

hit a high of/low of + Number- percentage or value

Table 3

Time phrases
From (time 1) to (time 2)
Between (time 1) and (time 2) During the period (time 1) to (time 2) During (month or year) In (month or year) On (day)
On the (date)
At (time; hours/minutes) (time/time 1 to time 2) saw/experienced/witnessed

Table 4

Connectors
Moving to a more detailed analysis,.../First of all,.../To begin,... Following that/this, ...
Subsequently,... Afterwards,... After that/this,... Next,...
Then,... Finally,...
In contrast,...
However,...

Exercise 3

Practice

Look at the tables carefully and make sure you use the correct form and tense for each verb.

Examples

The + noun + verb + adverb + in + time

The consumption of gas rose gradually in 2012.

There + BE+ adjective + noun + in + noun + in + time

There was a gradual rise in the consumption of gas (in gas consumption) in 2008.

Time + saw+ adjective + noun + in + noun

2018 saw a gradual increase in the consumption of gas.

1. Alcohol consumption dropped suddenly during January and February.

There was a

January and February saw a.....

2. There was a slight dip in car sales at the start of the new year.

Car sales.....

The start of the new year witnessed.....

3. In May, weather conditions improved significantly

May.....

There.....

4. There will be a sharp increase in employment next year.

Next year

Employment

5. Visits to European cities increased steadily from 2010 to 2017.

There was a

The period.....

6. July experienced a fluctuation in the number of houses rented.

There was

Answers

Exercise 3

1. Alcohol consumption dropped suddenly during January and February.

There was a sudden drop in alcohol consumption during January and February.

January and February saw **a sudden drop in alcohol consumption.**

2. There was a slight dip in car sales at the start of the New Year.

Car sales **dipped slightly at the start of the New Year.**

The start of the New Year witnessed **a slight dip in car sales**

In May, weather conditions improved significantly

May **saw a significant improvement in weather conditions.**

There **was a significant improvement in weather conditions in May.**

3. There will be a sharp increase in employment next year.

Next year **will see a sharp increase in employment.**

Employment **will increase sharply next year.**

4. Visits to European cities increased steadily from 2010 to 2017.

There was **a steady increase in visits to European cities from 2010 to 2017.**

The period from **2010 to 2017 saw a steady increase in visits to European cities.**

5. July experienced a fluctuation in the number of houses rented.

There was **a fluctuation in the number of houses rented in July.**

Exercise 4

Here is a similar graph. The topic is slightly different, and so is the data. Write some sentences describing the different patterns on the graph, making sure you vary your sentence structures between the three examples we've looked at.

KPB Share price in USD



Test Tip

Calculate how much space 150 words occupy on a page. This means you won't need to waste time counting during the exam. Make sure your handwriting is neat and that the examiner can easily read it.

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Model Answer

The graph shows the changes and the overall decline in the share price of KPB over a five-year period from 2006 to 2010.

At the beginning of the period the share price was at USD 13 per share. There were several fluctuations until late 2006 when there was a sudden increase from USD 21 to USD 31 per share. This higher price did not last long, however, and it fell before rising strongly again in 2008. From mid-2008 there was a sharp downward trend until the end of the year when it fell to the lowest point in this period at just over USD 7 per share. After that the share price recovered and, despite some fluctuations, continued to rise until it reached a peak of USD 17 in early 2010. Until late 2010 the trend was downward again, ending the year at just over USD 12.

KPB made significant gains and losses during this period but overall lost around USD 1 per share.

About the E-Book

IELTS Writing: Advanced Writing Masterclass (IELTS Tasks 1 & 2) is a fully comprehensive self-study resource designed for IELTS learners who need to achieve a band score of 7.0 to 8.5 in the IELTS Academic Writing test.

Students are guided step-by-step through the different tasks to achieve the highest possible grade in the real exam. The activities in this book have been developed in the classroom by IELTS instructors with many years' experience in helping hundreds of candidates reach the highest possible scores in the exam.

IELTS Writing: Advanced Writing Masterclass (IELTS Tasks 1 & 2) shows candidates how to organise and structure an answer for all types of IELTS Academic writing task in the exam. This book quickly develops students' fluency and confidence in producing Advanced pieces of writing and contains specialised IELTS grammar exercises in each unit, showing students how to apply a wide range of grammar items in their IELTS writing.

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