

IELTS Writing Task 1 – Bar charts 2

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Aim

To help students to prepare for writing about bar charts Task 1 of the academic component of IELTS.

Objectives

Help students to:

- develop writing skills
- develop vocabulary development
- develop confidence in writing
- develop editing skills
- to analyse a bar chart

Level of the exercises

The exercises may be used with different levels depending how much help you want to give your students.

Materials

The materials (all PDFs) consist of:

- teacher's notes
- exercises 1–10
- extra bar charts for multiple use
- a key

Methodology

Exercise 1

- Put the students into groups/pairs or on their own.
- Ask them to extract the information from the chart as quickly as possible. Give a specific time limit according to the level of the class.
- When you have checked the answers, students can ask each other the questions in pairs with one of them looking only at the chart and the other looking at the chart and the questions.
- You can combine this with Exercise 10 and have one student fill in the blanks on the chart by asking questions or the partner dictating.
- Alternatively, you can give the students the chart alone and ask them in groups to prepare an answer orally without writing anything down. When they are ready, you can create a 'spoken text' and then have them write the text on their own. During this exercise, it is important to try to stop the students writing so that they concentrate on holding the information in their heads. [A question should be given here, eg What is the main reason for learning languages among native and non-native speakers? Otherwise it is unclear what they are preparing an answer to.]

Exercise 2

- The exercise is fairly straightforward and will help the students prepare for writing the text itself.
- If you ask the students to write the text in class, when they have finished give them a copy of the model answer in Exercise 3 in the Key.
- Then ask them to work in groups or pairs and try to improve on their texts by adding words/phrases from the model.
- Encourage them not to rewrite their answers, but to use the model to help redraft their own writing. For example, they may replace certain words or add some data.

Exercise 3

- Ask the students to write out the jumbled text or ask them to do it verbally in pairs/groups. If they write it out they do not need to write the whole sentence, just the jumbled text.
- You can then give them the text with the jumbled words removed and ask them in pairs/groups/individually to complete the text.

Exercise 4

- The procedure here is the same as for the previous exercise. The length of the jumbled texts is longer.
- You can still give the students the gapped version in Exercise 3 after the students have completed this exercise.

Exercises 5 and 6

- These exercises help students look at a text carefully and build their vocabulary. Have the students working in pairs/groups and allow them to use dictionaries or computers.
- When you check their answers in a class discussion allow them time to explore the answers they want to give and discuss why alternatives are not as suitable as the correct answers.
- Encourage the students always to think of alternatives.

Exercise 7

- This exercise is similar to the previous two, but this time some of the items are correct.
- It is difficult for students to see why a word is not correct in a context when it is given in the dictionary.
- It is better for students to do this exercise together rather than alone as then they can pool their resources.
- Allow dictionaries, but for more advanced classes you may want to exclude them.
- Suggestions are given in the Key, but there are probably more possibilities.
- Once you have done this exercise, you can give the class a student essay from a previous class or from one of your current students and ask them to try and find and correct words that are not quite right.
- Encourage you students to do this as a matter of course each time they write.

Exercise 8

- Give the student the exercise to do on their own and set a time limit of 2–4 minutes. If you think that your students would need more time, give them longer.
- Once they have checked their answers in pairs, discuss as a whole class.
- Point out the nature of the problems and when they check their own writing to focus on the same problems.
- When you do similar exercises, practise reducing the time limit.

Exercise 9

- Give the students the exercise to do in pairs/groups/individually.
- You can give this exercise to the students after they have done any of the previous ones.
- In pairs/groups they can create the text. Ask them to pay particular attention to the spelling, grammar, etc. and make sure they look at the words that have been chopped.

Exercise 10

- Read the text relating to the graph as per Exercise 3 and ask the students to fill in the blank spaces. Go as slowly as the level of the class requires and repeat if necessary
- You may be able to get someone else to record it for you, in which case you can stop the tape at will.
- Or you can ask students to do the dictation in pairs.
- You can also do this exercise as an introduction to Exercise 1. Read out the text and when the students have checked the answers, then give them Exercise 1 with the chart to check and the questions.

Charts for multiple use

These can be used for dictation or for creating charts with your own data. Or you can give the charts to the class along with a theme, survey on the types of television programs that young people and old people like to watch, and ask them to make their own charts in groups. Then they can write them up.