

Shopping: writing introductions and overviews

By the end of the lesson I will be able to:

- understand the requirements of the IELTS Writing test.
- report the main features of trend data effectively.
- use a range of language for describing trends.



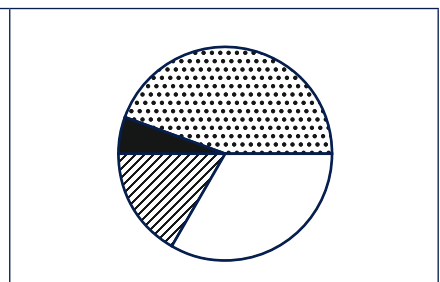
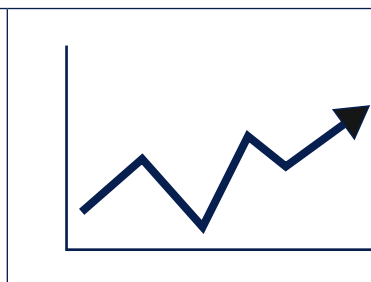
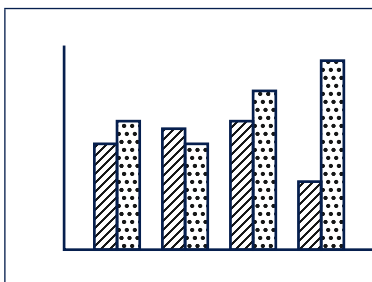
GET TO KNOW IELTS

1. Complete the information about the IELTS Writing test with the numbers from the box.

20	40	60	150	250
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The IELTS Academic Writing test takes 1. _____ minutes and has two parts: Task 1 and Task 2. In Task 1, you have to describe the information in a diagram. You must write a short report of 2. _____ words and you should complete the task in 3. _____ minutes. In Task 2, you have to respond to a question. For this task, you must write a short essay of 4. _____ words in a neutral style and you should complete the task in 5. _____ minutes.

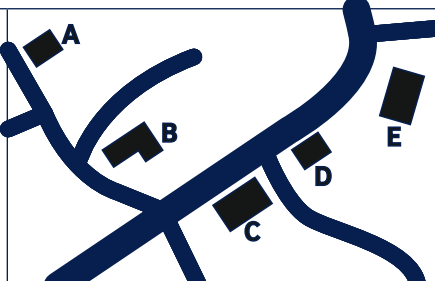
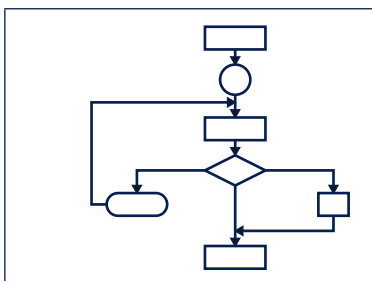
2. Match these labels to the diagrams below: map, line graph, pie chart, bar chart, flow chart.



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



4. _____

5. _____

3. Which diagram type would you use to show ...

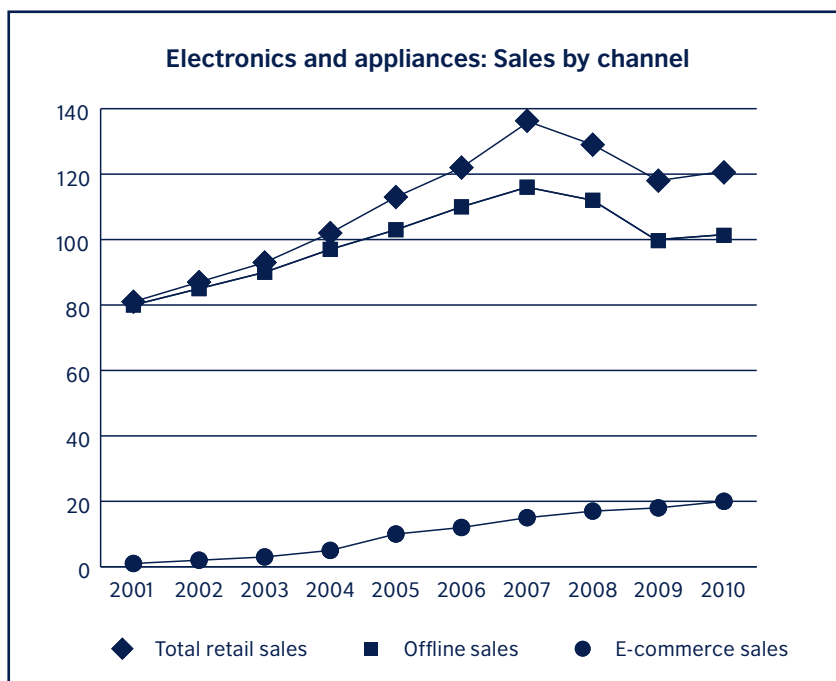
1. how a product is made? _____
2. the location of five shops? _____
3. the proportion (percentage) of book sales that are e-books? _____
4. how many people visited four shops in two different weeks? _____
5. how a shop's prices changed over five years? _____



TASK FOCUS

4. Look at the graph below and answer the questions.

1. How much did people spend on electronics and appliances in 2010? _____
2. When did offline sales reach their peak (maximum number)? _____
3. Which of these pieces of information do you think is more important: A or B? _____
 - A. Offline sales remained higher than online sales.
 - B. Online sales have been growing strongly.



5. Read the task instructions related to the graph in activity 4. Then decide whether the statements below are true (T) or false (F).

The graph shows information about spending on electronic goods from 2001 to 2010.

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

1. You must start your description with information about 2001. _____
2. You must describe all the information in the graph. _____
3. You must decide which information is important. _____
4. You should describe each line in the graph separately. _____
5. You should describe the main differences between the lines. _____

6. Read the advice in the box about organising the different parts of a Task 1 answer. Then order the sentences below. Three have been done for you.

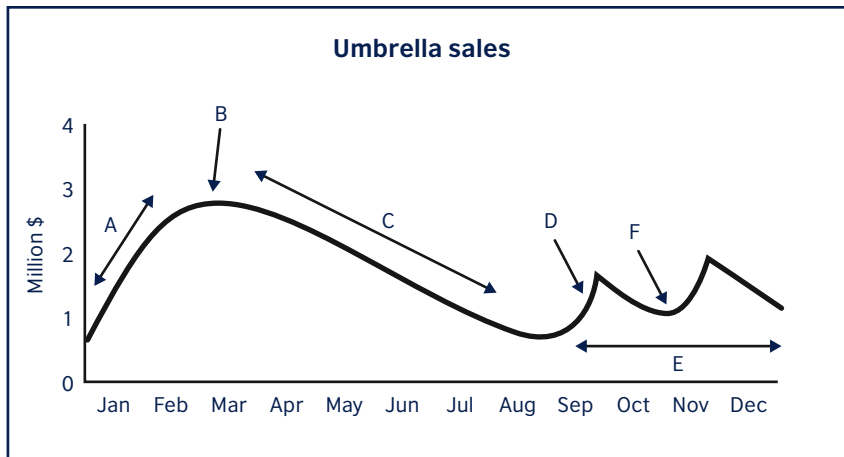
1. Introduce the graph by saying what type of information it shows.
2. Write a one-sentence summary of the information.
3. After that, report three pieces of specific information. Start with the most important.
4. After each piece of information, add a sentence containing data to illustrate the point.

- _____ **8** A. The amount spent in shops dropped by around \$18 billion in two years, from a peak of nearly \$120 billion.
- _____ **1** B. The graph shows how much money was spent on electronic products, both online and in shops.
- _____ C. People spent \$80 billion more in shops than on the internet, in both 2001 and 2010.
- _____ D. However, between 2007 and 2009 offline sales declined briefly, before recovering.
- _____ E. In general, sales of electronics and appliances grew strongly over the period, from \$80 billion to \$120 billion.
- _____ **4** F. They were not significant at the start of the period but had risen to \$20 billion by 2010.
- _____ G. The first detail to note is that online sales rose very steadily over the decade.
- _____ H. The value of shop sales remained much higher and increased just as much as online sales overall.



USEFUL LANGUAGE FOR IELTS

7. Look at the line graph below. Complete the descriptions with letters from the graph. The first one has been done for you.



1. At C, sales **fall** slowly.
 2. At _____, sales **fluctuate**.
 3. At _____, sales **rise** sharply.
 4. At _____, sales **peak**.
 5. At _____, sales **dip**.
 6. At _____, sales **recover**.
8. Write the words in bold from activity 7 as nouns. Some of them will not need to be changed. The first one has been done for you.

1. fall
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

9. Complete the description of the line graph from activity 7. Use the correct form of the verbs from activity 7 and the nouns from activity 8. The first one has been done for you.

At the beginning of the year, sales 1. rose sharply towards a 2. _____ in March. Sales volumes then 3. _____ steadily, although in September they 4. _____ a little. However, there was a significant 5. _____ in sales over the next two months and they 6. _____ markedly in December.



- 10. Look at the title of the diagram in activity 7 and complete the sentence below using the words in brackets.**

The graph shows _____ sold. (how many)

- 11. Change the graph titles into complete sentences using the words in brackets.**

1. Percentage of customers over 18

The graph shows _____ are over 18. (what percentage)

2. New Shopping Malls built in 2008

The graph shows _____ in 2008. (the number)

3. Percentage of teenagers who buy music online

The graph shows _____ buy music on the internet.
(what proportion)

4. Money spent on e-books

The graph shows _____ e-books. (how much)

- 12. Which sentence gives the best overview of the information in the table below?**

- A. The shops attracted more young people.
- B. The shops attracted fewer young people.
- C. For each shop, the trend was very different.

Percentage of customers over 18

	2000	2005	2010	2015
Shop A	20	30	40	50
Shop B	30	25	20	15

13. Write overviews of the information in each table.

1.

Number of new shops opening				
	1980	1990	2000	2010
Supermarket A	15	25	35	45
Supermarket B	10	30	50	70

2.

Percentage of people who buy CDs				
	1995	2000	2005	2010
Older people	20	24	19	12
Teenagers	20	18	22	6

3.

Profits of publishers (percentage)				
	1995	2000	2005	2010
Publisher A	10	15	20	25
Publisher B	10	30	35	45
Publisher C	15	13	17	20



SELF-STUDY

Practise doing Task 1 of the IELTS Writing test.

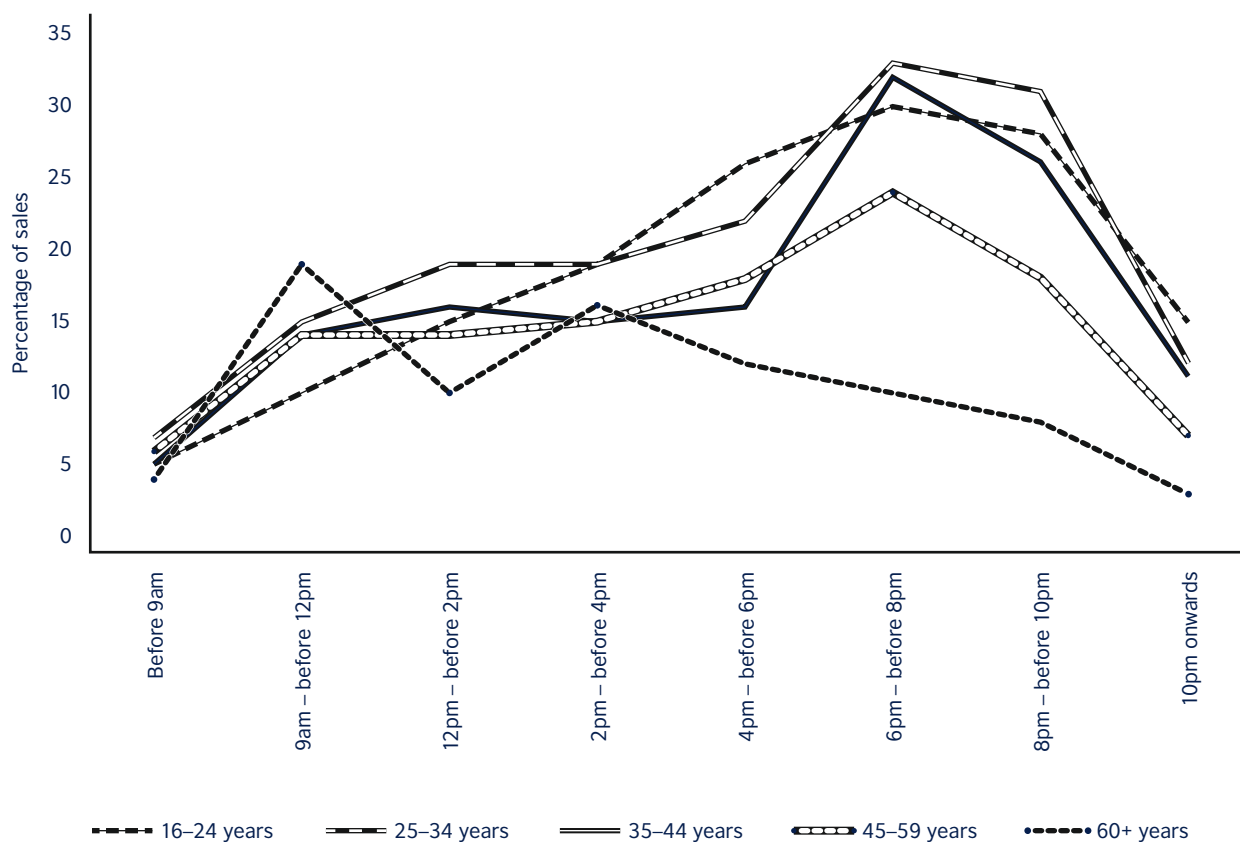
You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graph below shows levels of online shopping by age group for different times of the day.

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

Write at least 150 words.

Online shopping by time of day 2015, split by age



Source: Nielsen Australian Connected Consumer Report 2016
Copyright © 2016 the Nielsen Company

Food and drink: identifying key information

By the end of the lesson I will be able to:

- understand the requirements of the Task Achievement assessment criteria.
- describe two sets of data in different time periods.
- use a range of language for making comparisons.



INTRODUCTION

1. Name these soft drinks and answer the questions below.



A.



B.



C.



D.

1. At what time of day is it normal to have these drinks in your country?
2. Which of these drinks do you think is the healthiest?
3. Are there any drinks that you have too often or not enough?



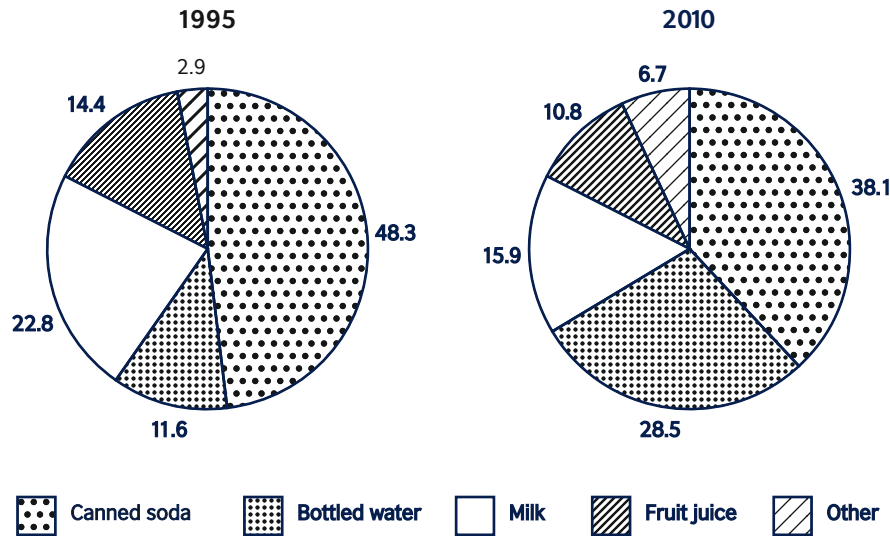
TASK FOCUS

2. Look at the Task 1 question below. Do you think candidates should describe each chart separately or describe the differences between the charts? Why do you think this?

The pie charts below show information about the sales of soft drinks in 1995 and 2010.

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

Percentage share of soft drinks market by product category



Source: www.fiberwater.com/industry_bwi.php

3. Study the pie charts in activity 2. Use the information to rank these drinks by sales (1–4). The first one has been done for you.

	1995	2010
Canned soda	1	
Bottled water		
Milk		
Fruit juice		

4. Look at the pie charts in activity 2 again. Which of the following statements were true in 2010? Write T (true) or F (false) next to each statement. Note that the pie charts show the relative popularity of soft drinks.

- Sales of bottled water had increased. _____
- The average person bought more canned soda than any other type of drink. _____
- The relative popularity of other soft drinks had more than doubled. _____
- Sales of milk were lower than sales of bottled water. _____



GET TO KNOW IELTS

5. Read the extract from the Task Achievement assessment criteria for an IELTS level 6 response. Why should sentences A–C not be included in a response to the question in activity 2?

In order to score IELTS level 6 for task achievement, the response must ...

- address the requirements of the task
- present an overview with information appropriately selected
- present and adequately highlight key features but details may be irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate.

A. Water has become more popular because of all the news stories about the dangers of sugary drinks.

B. Sales of milk, canned soda and bottled water fell dramatically between 1995 and 2010.

C. I'm actually surprised that milk is so popular because I really don't like it!

6. This response to the question in activity 2 would only get a score of IELTS level 5 for Task Achievement. Why do you think this is?

The pie charts reveal which types of soft drink were the most popular in 1995 and in 2010. The largest segment in 1995 was canned soda with 48.3 per cent of sales. In 2010, this figure had fallen to 38.1 per cent. The second largest segment in 1995 was milk, which accounted for 22.8 per cent of sales. By 2010 sales of milk had also fallen, to 15.9 per cent of all sales. Next, we have fruit juice, whose share of the market stood at 14.4 per cent in 1995. That number also fell over the period shown, to 10.8 per cent. Finally, we have bottled water. Only 11.6 per cent of soft drink purchases in 1995 were of water. However, water increased its market share, which had risen to 28 per cent by 2010. Overall, canned soda was the most popular drink in 2010.



IELTS SKILLS

7. The sentences below describe aspects of Writing Task 1 responses. Match the beginning of the sentences (1–3) to the endings (A–C).

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Overview sentences ... | A. describe a particular feature in the information. |
| 2. Key ideas ... | B. summarise all the information. |
| 3. Details ... | C. compare parts of the information or describe change. |

8. One way to create an overview of a diagram is to imagine you are describing the information in a newspaper headline. Which of these headlines gives the best overview of the pie charts in activity 2?

A

Soda the most popular soft drink!

B

Milk now less popular than water.

C

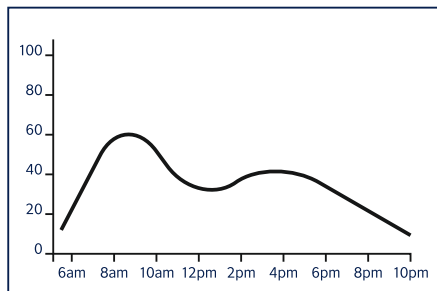
Drinkers moving from sugary drinks to water.

9. Find the overview in this answer to the Task 1 question from activity 2. Which of the headlines in activity 8 is closest in meaning to the overview?

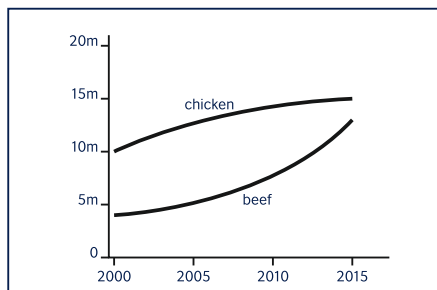
The pie charts reveal which types of soft drink were the most popular in 1995 and in 2010. In general, we can see that during the 15-year period bottled water took a share of the drinks market away from other types of soft drink, especially canned soda. Indeed, bottled water was the only named segment to grow, and increased its share from 11.6 per cent to 28.5 per cent. By contrast, other named segments experienced significant declines ...

10. For each chart and group of sentences decide which is the overview (O), key idea (K) or detail (D).

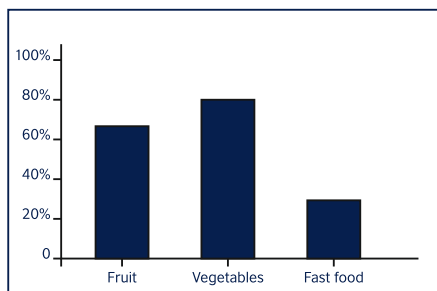
1. A. A maximum of 60 cups of coffee per hour are drunk before midday. _____
 B. People drink coffee throughout the day. _____
 C. Coffee drinking is higher in the morning than in the afternoon. _____



2. A. Meat consumption increased during this time period. _____
 B. There was a substantial increase in beef consumption from 2000 to 2015. _____
 C. Beef consumption rose from four million kg to 13 million kg. _____



3. A. Vegetable prices increased far more than fast food prices. _____
 B. Vegetable prices rose by 80 per cent. _____
 C. The price of healthier food types grew the fastest. _____



11. Study the diagrams in activity 10 again. Think of another key idea to report on in each diagram.



USEFUL LANGUAGE FOR IELTS

12. These sentences each express a key idea about the pie charts in activity 2. Complete the sentences with words from the box.

greater	least	less	more	largest	fewer
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1. Canned soda lost a _____ percentage of the market than other products.
2. Canned soda remained the _____ segment overall.
3. People were drinking 30 per cent _____ milk and fruit juice by 2010.
4. Fruit juice became the _____ popular of the four segments.
5. The average person probably bought _____ cans of soda in 2010 than in 1995.
6. Bottled water became a _____ popular choice.

13. Respond to the instructions below using words from activity 12 in your answers. An example has been done for you.

1. Compare the amount of choice that people have when buying food now with 50 years ago.

There's a much greater amount of choice now than there was 50 years ago.

2. Compare the amount of food you eat at the weekend with the amount you eat on weekdays.

3. Say what the largest meal you ever ate was.

4. Compare the amount you drink in winter with the amount you drink in summer.

5. Name the food that you like least.

6. Compare the number of foreign restaurants in your town now with the number that were there ten years ago.



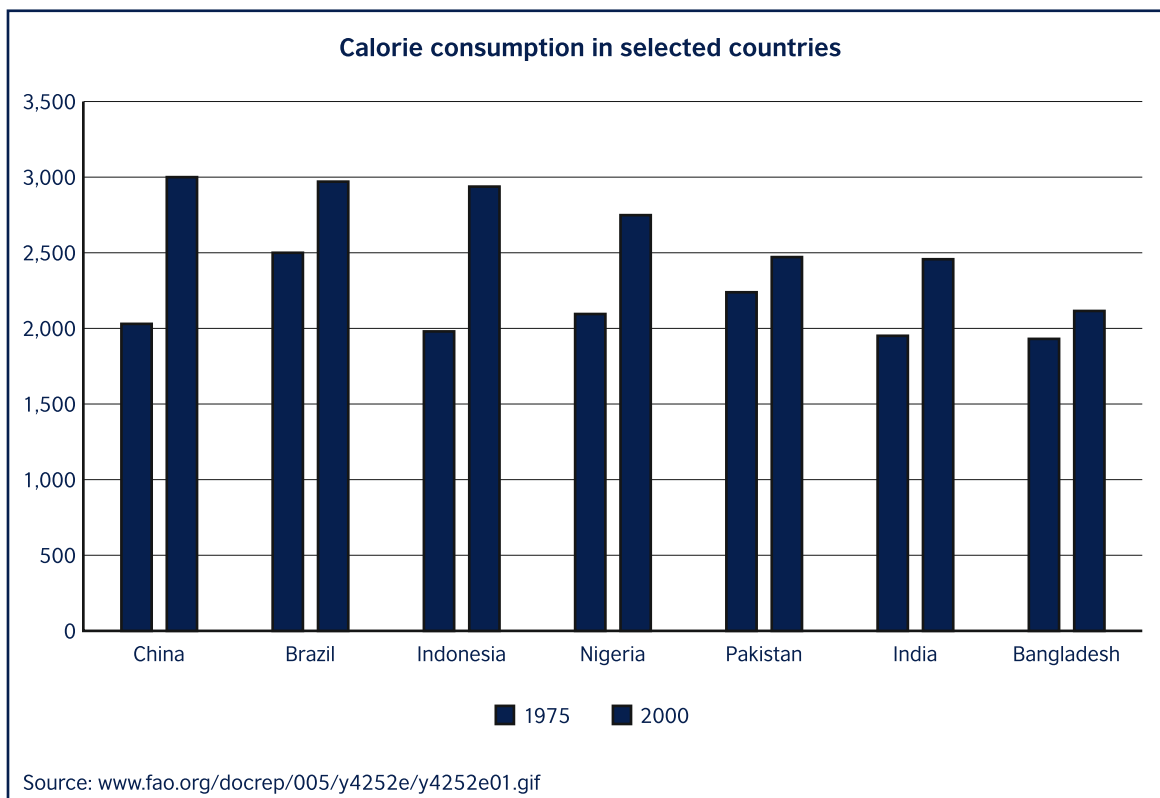
SELF-STUDY

Practise doing Task 1 of the IELTS Writing test.

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The chart below shows information about calorie consumption in seven countries in 1975 and 2000. Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 150 words.



Household budgets: categorising data

By the end of the lesson I will be able to:

- use vocabulary for comparison and contrast to describe charts and tables.
- use linking words to compare and contrast information.
- understand IELTS Coherence and Cohesion assessment criteria.
- understand how to compare and contrast information effectively.



INTRODUCTION

1. Match the examples of spending to the categories in the table. The first one has been done for you.

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Paying the rent | <u>Housing</u> |
| 2. Buying a ticket to a football match | _____ |
| 3. Paying an electricity bill | _____ |
| 4. Paying for phone calls | _____ |
| 5. Getting a haircut | _____ |

Weekly average household spending in the UK

Housing	27%
Transport	14%
Recreation	12%
Food	11%
Restaurants and hotels	8%
Other goods and services	8%
Household goods and services	7%
Clothing and footwear	5%
Communication	3%
Education	2%
Health	1%
Other	2.5%

2. Think about what you or your family spend money on.

1. Which of the things from the table in activity 1 do you spend the most money on?
2. Which things do you spend the least money on?
3. How does your spending compare to the weekly average household spending in the UK?



TASK FOCUS

3. Look again at the table in activity 1. Try to identify relationships between the categories. An example has been done for you.

Housing and household goods and services are both connected to the home.

4. Read the task and sample answer related to the table in activity 1. Then answer the questions.

1. Has the writer described every piece of information in the table separately?
2. How has the writer grouped the different pieces of information from the table?
3. Has the writer reported the information in the order it appears in the table?

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The table shows the different things people in the UK spend their money on.

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

Write at least 150 words.

Sample answer

The table shows the average weekly spending in UK households on different goods and services. Generally, we can see that spending on essential costs, like rent payments, food bills and transport fares, is greater than it is for items that are less essential. Housing is a particularly large cost and accounts for 27 per cent of people's spending on average, the largest single item of expenditure. Other essential costs, namely transport, food and household bills, account for an additional 32 per cent of spending. By comparison, spending on less essential items is quite low. If we look at spending on education courses and new clothes, we see that these two costs take up only two and five per cent of household budgets respectively. Nevertheless, spending on some non-essential items is high. Most notably, people spend 20 per cent of their budgets on leisure expenses like eating out, spending nights in hotels (which together account for eight per cent of spending) and other recreation costs (12 per cent).



GET TO KNOW IELTS

5. The information below gives the Coherence and Cohesion assessment criteria for candidates with IELTS level 6 in the Writing test. Find words which mean the following.

1. words that connect ideas _____
2. words that help you avoid repetition _____
3. moving forward to the next thing that you want to say _____
4. logical and well-ordered _____

IELTS level 6 candidates ...

- arrange information and ideas in a **coherent** way and there is clear overall **progression**
- use **cohesive devices** effectively
- include **referencing** but not always clearly or appropriately.

6. How has the writer arranged information in a coherent way?

- A. By reporting the *highest costs* and then the *lowest costs*.
- B. By reporting costs *in* the home and then costs *outside* the home.
- C. By reporting *essential* costs and then *non-essential* costs.

7. Look at the underlined words from the sample answer in activity 4. Which are examples of referencing, and which are examples of cohesive devices? Two have been done for you.

- A. Referencing: *it* _____, _____,
- B. Cohesive devices: *Generally* _____, _____, _____,



USEFUL LANGUAGE FOR IELTS

8. Read the sentences below and look at how the linking expressions in bold are used. Write each expression in the correct box to indicate if it is used to express similarity or difference.

Used to express similarity, e.g. similarly	Used to express difference, e.g. however

- People spend a lot of money on transport. Their spending on holidays is **also** high.
- Compared with** all other items, people spend significantly more on housing.
- People spend about five per cent on clothing and footwear, **whereas** they only spend one per cent on health.
- Education is important. **On the other hand**, the spending level is not high.
- People spend 11 per cent of their budget on food. **In contrast**, they spend eight per cent on restaurants and hotels.
- Neither** health **nor** education are a large part of people's spending.
- People spend eight per cent on **both** restaurants and hotels, **and** other goods and services.
- Spending on food is nearly **as** high **as** spending on transport.

9. Use linking expressions from activity 8 to complete the sentences.

- Households spend over ten per cent of their money each week on _____ transport _____ housing.
- The average weekly spending on communication, other and education is approximately 2.5 per cent on each, _____ the average spent on restaurants, other goods and services, and household goods and services is around 7.5 per cent every week.
- _____ health _____ education receive much of the weekly household budget.
- Overall, essential spending _____ non-essential spending is a much higher percentage of the average household's budget.

10. Write a short paragraph about your own spending on the following items. Use as many of the linking expressions from activity 8 as you can.

recreation	clothes	transport
phone calls	snacks	restaurants and cafes

Example: I spend a lot on both transport and phone calls, whereas I spend very little on clothes ...



11. Look at table 1 in activity 12. How would you group the data when writing about this information?

1. Write about public transport and then private transport.
2. Write about the fastest types of transport and then the slowest types of transport.
3. Write about transport on land and then other types of transport.

12. Decide how you would group the data in tables 2, 3 and 4.

1.

Cost of travel between two towns		
Method	Cost (\$)	Time
Car	40	2 hr
Coach	20	3 hr
Direct train	50	1 hr
Local train	40	2.5 hr
Motorbike	35	1.5 hr
Plane	80	40 min
River boat	30	6 hr
Taxi	90	1.5 hr

2.

People's average monthly spending on clothes	
Age	Cost (£)
< 10	8
10–19	12
20–29	36
30–39	32
40–49	28
50–59	25
60–69	10
70–79	7

3.

Average amount spent on holidays (by month)	
Month	Cost (\$)
Jan	20 m
Feb	10 m
Mar	30 m
April	50 m
May	40 m
June	80 m
July	200 m
Aug	180 m
Dec	50 m

4.

Workers' average weekly spending in restaurants	
Profession	Cost (£)
Construction workers	19
Executives/managers	90
Factory workers	27
Health workers	39
Lawyers	78
Office administrators	31
Scientists	62
Shop workers	8
Teachers	52



IELTS PRACTICE

13. Practise doing Task 1 of the IELTS Writing test.

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The table below shows the amount spent on healthcare in different countries.

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

Write at least 150 words.

Country	Spending on healthcare per person in 2010
Japan	\$2,690
South Korea	\$1,187
Singapore	\$1,035
Bahrain	\$810
Kuwait	\$796
Argentina	\$551
Chile	\$473
Brazil	\$426
Global average	\$717

14. Read your response to the task in activity 13 carefully. Put a tick (✓) in the boxes if you have done the following things.

1. Placed countries into categories and compared the categories. ☐
2. Dealt fully with each category before moving on to the next one. ☐
3. Included some linking words for comparing and contrasting information. ☐



SELF-STUDY

Watch this video about Task 1 in the IELTS Writing test. Write down three tips that you find useful.

<http://tinyurl.com/n7gvfc7>