

Tips for IELTS Writing Task 1 – Describing Graphs!

1. You need to write 3-4 paragraphs and 150 words. If you don't, you will be penalized.
2. In the initial paragraph, you need to paraphrase the question. Start the paraphrase with one of the following prompts,
 - 'The table shows/illustrates the trends in between
 - The graph shows.....
 - The chart shows how the have changed
3. Don't include below in your paraphrase.
4. Write an overview as you second sentence of your introduction. Look at the beginning and the end of the chart to help determine your overview.
5. Decide if the graph you are describing is a comparison, progression or both. You will need to use the appropriate language for each type. For example, if it is comparative , use 'the same as' or if it is progressive, use ' a slight increase'.
6. Change noun and adjectives phrases into verbs and adverbs to create a range of expressions, for example 'a slight increase' to 'increase slightly'. Also, try to learn a few different ways to say the same thing so you don't have to repeat yourself ('increase', 'go up', 'rise'). Remember you will be marked on your language range and accuracy.
7. Describe the most general trends in second paragraph, including the most striking characteristics.
8. You need to add linker to help your essay to help with its cohesion and coherence; in other words, it's flow. Here are some useful expressions: in addition, furthermore, however, although.
9. In the 3rd paragraph you need to give a more detailed description. You still need to focus on main trends, but focus more on elements within each part of the graph (For 10 years, there was a gradual upward trend until it peaked at 250units in 2002, followed by a dip.). Add data to support your information.
10. Don't describe all small details as this creates lists which sound mechanical.
 - Instead of writing :It went up by 2% and then dropped up 5%, then rose again for 2 years, and again dropped by 2%.
 - Write: It fluctuated between 5% and 2% for the first quarter of the year.
11. You don't have to write a conclusion, but it makes the writing seem more complete if you do.
12. Don't forget spelling and punctuation count towards accuracy.