

Writing module (1 hour)

WRITING TASK 1

About Writing Task 1

In Academic Writing Task 1 you must describe the information shown in a diagram. You must write at least 150 words in your description and you should spend no more than 20 minutes on this task as it represents only one-third of the writing marks.

STRATEGY

Before you write make sure you understand the information the diagram is showing. Allow yourself two or three minutes to read the task carefully and look at the diagram.

1 Understanding the information

Look at the task opposite and answer the questions below.

- 1 Which country is the data about?
- 2 What two main periods of time does the horizontal axis show?
- 3 What do the two lines represent?
- 4 What measurement is used in the vertical axis?
- 5 What does the gap between the lines represent?

2 Identifying the main topic

Different types of diagram show different information. Graphs show changes. What is the main topic of the graph opposite?

- 1 changes in per capita energy consumption
- 2 changes in type of energy used
- 3 changes in the gap between energy production and consumption
- 4 changes in modes of production

3 Writing the introduction

Choose expressions below to paraphrase the introduction.

The graph **1** compares figures for / gives figures for / shows changes in **2** US energy / the consumption and production of energy in the US / the gap between US energy consumption and production **3** from 1950 to 2000 / between 1950 and 2000 / since 1950. It also **4** shows figures / predicts figures / estimates trends **5** up to 2025 / for 2025 / by 2025.

4 Using the right language for the right information

- a** Look at the types of information typically shown in graphs and identify three things you need to describe in the task on page 33.

- 1 changes over time
- 2 a comparison of different things
- 3 contrasting trends
- 4 a contrast across age groups
- 5 a prediction of future trends
- 6 changing proportions over time

- b** To practise using the right kind of language look at vocabulary page 159.

5 Selecting and organising information

Focus on the main trends. Do not simply list all the information.

- a** Look at the openings to five pieces of information and put them in a logical order.
- 1 However, production grew only gradually over the next ...
 - 2 Projections up to 2025 suggest that this trend ...
 - 3 Between 1950 and 1970 both the production and consumption of energy increased ...
 - 4 In contrast, growth in consumption ...
 - 5 Energy imports needed to bridge this gap therefore increased ...
- b** Group the information into three paragraphs.

6 Summarising statement

It is important to summarise the key information. You can do this at the beginning or at the end of your description. Do NOT try to explain the information.

a Choose the best summarising statement for this Task 1:

- 1 Both consumption and production of energy in the US will continue to rise.
- 2 Energy consumption in the US is rising faster than production.
- 3 Energy production in the US is not keeping up with consumption, so imports will continue to increase.

b Write three signals you can use to indicate that this is your summary.

For example: **Overall, the graph indicates that ...**

7 Timed writing

You have already thought carefully about this task. Now write your own answer in **15 minutes**.

Look at the sample answer only AFTER you have written your own.

WRITING TASK 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

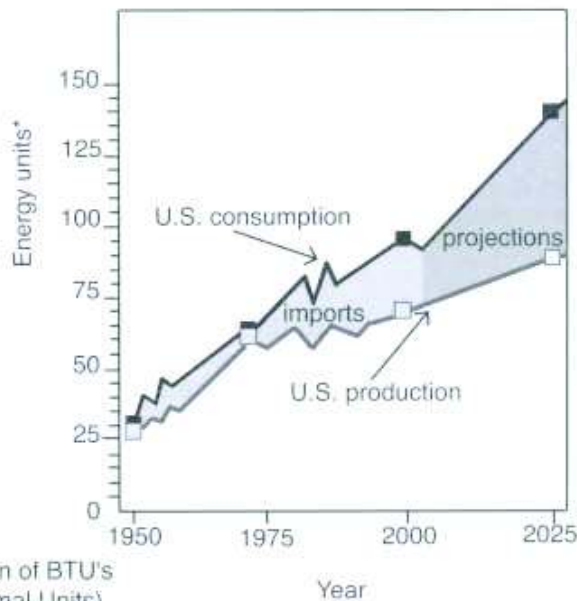
The graph below compares figures for the production and consumption of energy in the US from 1950 to 2000. It also predicts figures for 2025.

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

Write at least 150 words.

Tip Strip

- You need to understand the diagram, but you do not need to describe it. Focus on the *information* in your answer.
- Do NOT copy the introduction from the question paper. Always paraphrase the introduction.
- Pay attention to any dates given. They will indicate what tenses you should use.
- Remember to use figures to support your main points.



8 Assessing your writing

- a Remember to edit your writing for any common mistakes.
- b Use the Task 1 list on page 156 for checking your written answer.

WRITING TASK 2

About Writing Task 2

This task usually consists of a background statement that raises issues about a topic of general interest. This is followed by a question or instruction to the candidate.

Strategy

Before you start to write

- identify the issues.
- be clear about what you have to do.
- plan your answer.

1 Identifying the issues

These are not always stated explicitly so you need to read the question carefully. Tick three ideas below that are implied in the Task 2 question opposite.

- 1 Traffic in cities today is a problem.
- 2 There are too many people living in cities so some should move out.
- 3 There is not enough transport for everyone to use.
- 4 Traffic problems are mainly due to individuals travelling for work, study or shopping purposes.
- 5 There are not enough jobs in the economy today.
- 6 Today people can work, study or shop from home.

2 Being clear about what you need to do

This question type asks you to agree or disagree with the statement.

- a** Do you agree or disagree with the three ideas you identified in Exercise 1? Do you agree that this is the ONLY way to reduce traffic problems?

It is likely that you will agree with some ideas but probably not all of them. Use signals to indicate this.

- b** Combine 1–3 and a–c below using each of the expressions given.

Even though ... , nevertheless, ...

It is certainly true that However, ...

It may be the case that ... , but ...

- 1 People can work from home
 - 2 Distance learning is very efficient
 - 3 This presents a possible solution
- a it would be a very unpopular one.
b there would be a lack of social contact for students.
c it is unrealistic to think they would all want to.

3 Planning your answer

The logical organisation of your ideas and the way you signal the relationships between ideas are assessed in this module, so plan your answer before you start to write.

Put the paragraph topics below in a logical order.

- 1 agree: home working may reduce problems, but not the only solution.
- 2 causes of traffic problems in cities
- 3 limitations of this solution
- 4 distance working, studying and shopping possibilities

4 Signalling the organisation

- a** Look at the following opening expressions. Put them in a logical order to reflect your argument.

- a It is also true that today ...
- b In terms of other solutions, we need to ...
- c Probably these are mainly due to ...
- d So, in conclusion, I think that ...
- e However, even if ...
- f It is certainly true that today ...

5 Supporting your ideas

It is not enough to state your point of view. You have to justify your ideas by supporting them with evidence.

- a Look at the supporting ideas below and match them to the three ideas in Exercise 1.
- the options IT gives us today.
 - the number of vehicles on our roads and the amount of pollution they cause.
 - the rush hours we experience every morning and evening.
- b Write supporting sentences for the ideas in Exercise 1. Begin with each of the following in turn:
- This is obvious from ...*
 - This is evident in ...*
 - We can see this in ...*

6 Using academic language

- a Giving your opinion does not mean that you always write *I think*. Use impersonal expressions for a more academic style.
e.g. *It is obvious that ...*
Skim the exercises above and add other expressions to the list.
- b For help with vocabulary, look at the Language of the Urban Environment section on page 165.

7 Speed writing

Write your own answer to Task 2 below. Spend no more than 35 minutes writing it.

WRITING TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic.

The only way to reduce the amount of traffic in cities today is by reducing the need for people to travel from home for work, education or shopping.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

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

Write at least 250 words.

Tip Strip

- Don't write too much over the minimum word length as you won't have time to check it properly.

8 Assessing your response

- a Check your writing for the most common grammatical and vocabulary mistakes you make.
- b Use the list for Task 2 on pages 157–158 for checking your answer.