



IELTS preparation course for students at LUISS Guido Carli

COURSE PACK

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INTRODUCTION

This Student's Coursebook is intended to help you to improve your exam techniques for the IELTS exam, especially where your writing skills are concerned.

IELTS is available in two formats – Academic and General. It is recognised by universities and employers in many countries, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the USA. It is also recognised by professional bodies, immigration authorities and other government agencies. It is recommended that candidates consult with the university or workplace where they wish to go to check what their IELTS scores requirements are.

Most Universities who offer undergraduate courses require an IELTS score from 5.5 upwards. Masters and PhD courses generally require from 6.5 upwards. Generally speaking, the more prestigious a university is, the higher the score they ask for, and interestingly it seems to be the English medium courses in European universities in non-English speaking countries that ask for higher grades, at least grade 7.

IELTS Test Results are standardised and usually available within two weeks of the test, and Test Report Forms are sent to the candidates and to the sponsor(s)/receiving institution(s). Test centres are not permitted to give results over the phone, or by fax or email. Candidates receive scores on a Band Scale from 1 to 9. A score is reported for each test component. The individual test scores are then averaged and rounded to produce an Overall Band Score according to a confidential Band Score conversion table. Overall Band Scores and individual test scores are reported in whole and half bands.

IELTS Band Scores

9 Expert user	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
8 Very good user	Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
7 Good user	Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
6 Competent user	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
5 Modest user	Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
4 Limited user	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
3 Extremely limited user	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
2 Intermittent user	No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
1 Non user	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
0	Did not attempt the test. No assessable information provided.

Source: IELTS Handbook, www.cambridgeesol.org

IELTS15c: IELTS QUIZ: JIGSAW READING
STUDENT A WORKSHEET

THE LISTENING TEST

The listening module, or paper, is a very difficult paper which requires some preparation and practice. It only lasts for about thirty minutes but in those thirty minutes you must keep your head and read each question carefully. It is very easy to lose points just because you thought you understood a question when, in fact, you only half understood it.

There is a total of four separate listening sections which are only heard once. Each section progresses in level of difficulty. There are forty questions (10 questions per section) and there is time allotted at the beginning of each section for the examinee to read the questions and ten minutes at the end of the exam for the examinee to fill in his answer sheet.

By the way, never leave blank spaces on your answer sheets. That way you automatically lose a point. Guessing an answer doesn't hurt, and you might actually be correct. Take a chance sometimes! Another hint is to make use of the school computer facilities to practice extra listening. There is not enough time in class. Listen to other materials, including other Cambridge listening exams, DVDs and the BBC radio on the internet. It's all practice.

In the first two sections in the Listening exam you will hear general social exchanges. There is usually a conversation between two people and then a monologue or an interview. In the third and fourth sections the subject matter tends to be more of a general academic nature. There will be a conversation of up to four people and then a monologue, maybe in the form of a talk or lecture.

The question types may include:

- multiple choice
- sentence completion
- short answer questions
- completion of tables, charts, summaries or notes
- labelling a diagram
- matching
- classification

Now, in your group, answer the following questions:

a. How long does the exam last?

.....

b. How many parts or sections are there in the exam?

.....

c. What do you have to do in each of these parts?

.....

d. Is there anything in particularly important to remember when doing the exam?

.....

IELTS15c: IELTS QUIZ: JIGSAW READING
STUDENT B WORKSHEET

THE SPEAKING TEST

The Speaking test only lasts for about 11 - 14 minutes. It is an individual exam in the form of a conversation with one examiner, which should not be too difficult for students at your level. Nevertheless, a little practice beforehand could prove useful.

There are three sections:

Part One lasts four or five minutes, and takes the form of a general conversation about you: your town, your family and friends, your interests, studies and ambitions for the future.

Part Two lasts three or four minutes and the candidate has to give a short presentation lasting one or two minutes. The examinee is given the subject of the presentation on a card, some paper and a pencil and one minute's preparation time, before talking about the subject given.

Part Three is a conversation with the examiner, but at a more abstract level. You are required to discuss, speculate, or support an argument on a subject related to your presentation.

One important thing to remember is not to be surprised by some of the questions you may be asked, which could seem to be rather strange or *non sequiturs*. Do not be afraid to ask the examiner to repeat questions. You won't lose any marks by doing so, and it is better than starting to talk about a subject your examiner never asked you about! Another thing to remember is that nobody is going to check up on anything you say, so if you find yourself in difficulties, INVENT. It doesn't matter what you say so long as communicate reasonably accurately in English.

The examiner will not just take grammar and pronunciation into consideration, but also fluency, coherence and range of vocabulary and grammar.

Now, in your group, answer the following questions:

a. How long does the exam last?

.....

b. How many parts or sections are there in the exam?

.....

c. What do you have to do in each of these parts?

.....

d. Is there anything in particular important to remember when doing the exam?

.....

IELTS15c: IELTS QUIZ: JIGSAW READING
STUDENT C WORKSHEET

THE WRITING EXAM

The Writing paper is an exam which requires some preparation and practice. It takes one hour and in that hour you have to be extremely self-disciplined.

You will need to prepare by practising two different styles of writing. Both are at a neutral/formal level, but Task One requires you to write a description of a chart, graph or diagram in about 150 words. It is simply a description with no personal comments or observations. You just describe what you see in front of you. Save your imagination and creativity for Task Two. You should only spend about 20 minutes on Task One.

Task Two asks you to present a discussion or essay expressing your point of view about a particular subject. Your composition should be about 250 words long and take the remaining 40 minutes of the exam. Although it is a longer piece of writing which carries more points, you should not neglect practising Task One. That may be more difficult to do well than you think.

In both pieces of writing, it is a good idea to set some time aside for planning what you want to say before you start writing, so as to avoid missing things out, repeating yourself or sounding muddled in your ideas. Make sure you read the questions well and understand exactly what is required.

In Task One examiners will be looking at your ability to
Organise, present and compare information
And/or describe the changes of a process or procedure
And/or describe an object or event or sequence of events
And/or explain how something works

In Task Two they will also want to see you

- Present a solution to a problem
- Present and justify an opinion
- Compare and contrast evidence opinions and implications
- Evaluate and challenge ideas, evidence or an argument

You need to make two or three points in your discussion which are supported by reasons or observations, a controlled and ordered presentation of ideas, and writing split into paragraphs (groups of sentences about more or less the same subject). Do not present too many points of view! There is no time. It is better to write two or three supported ideas rather than many unsupported ones.

Now, with your group, answer the following questions:

a. How long does the exam last?

.....

b. How many parts or sections are there in the exam?

.....

c. What do you have to do in each of these parts?

.....

d. Is there anything in particularly important to remember when doing the exam?

.....

STUDENT D WORKSHEET

THE READING EXAM

The Reading Paper takes an hour INCLUDING 10 minutes to transfer your answers to the answer sheet. You need to be fast and analytical and learn to skim and scan effectively. It is also possible to help yourself by making notes on the question paper.

The texts are often about a scientific or academic subject and aimed at a well-educated general reader. There are three sections to the exam and 40 questions in all, organised in BLOCKS which usually follow the order of the text. There is one mark for each question and the readings and questions are in rising levels of difficulty, so make sure you distribute the time wisely.

You should skim read the texts first. Read the titles, the sub-headings, the introductory paragraph, the concluding paragraph and the first lines of each paragraph. Briefly study any illustrations or diagrams with the text. Don't spend too much time poring over words you do not know. Try to get an idea of the writer's point of view or attitude. Is he being serious or ironic? What type of text is it? Where might it have been taken from?

Next, read the questions carefully, especially negative questions and YES/NO/NOT GIVEN questions. Move from the questions back to the text again, studying it more closely. You may not find exactly the same words in the texts as in the questions; you may find synonyms or paraphrasing instead.

Be careful when transferring your answers to the answer sheets. Answer ALL the questions, even if you are not sure about the answers. Make sure you give yourself time, and that in your hurry you do not transfer mistakes. Poor spelling and grammar are penalised.

The type of question to expect might include:

- sentence completion
- identifying the writer's views and attitudes
- completing or labelling a chart or diagram
- completing sentences
- multiple choice
- giving short answers to specific questions
- identifying main and supporting ideas
- completing a summary
- matching headings to identified paragraphs/sections of the text
- classification
- matching lists/phrases

Now, with your group, answer the following questions:

a. How long does the exam last?

.....

b. How many parts or sections are there in the exam?

.....

c. What do you have to do in each of these parts?

.....

d. Is there anything in particular important to remember when doing the exam?

.....

<p>Now find the answers to the same questions about the other IELTS papers by asking other members of the class. Use the words given to use in your questions.</p>	<p>Name of Paper:</p> <p>a. How long/exam?</p> <p>b. How many parts/section?</p> <p>c. What/have to do??</p> <p>d. Particularly important/remember?</p>
<p>Name of Paper:</p> <p>a. How long/exam?</p> <p>b. How many parts/section?</p> <p>c. What/have to do??</p> <p>d. Particularly important/remember?</p>	<p>Name of Paper:</p> <p>a. How long/exam?</p> <p>b. How many parts/section?</p> <p>c. What/have to do??</p> <p>d. Particularly important/remember?</p>

Exercise b:

(i) Here is a description of the graph on the previous page. However, the sentences in the description are muddled. What order do you think is correct?

- a. From the graph, it is clear that the percentages of people unemployed in the States were much lower than those recorded in Italy over the same period.
- b. On the other hand, although figures in the US went down slightly from just over 3% to just under 3% between 1999 and 2000, there was a steady rise in unemployment from just under 3% to just over 6% between 2000 and 2003.
- c. The figures remained steady at just over 9% between 2001 and 2002 when they rose again slightly to almost 10% in 2003.
- d. It appears that if the trend in the US continues over the next few years, it may rival the percentage of unemployed in Italy.
- e. This graph compares the percentage of people unemployed in the USA and Italy between 1999 and 2003.
- f. However, in Italy there was a steady decrease from almost 12% to just over 10% between 1999 and 2001.

(154 words)

Look at the reordered description of the graph:

(ii) What function does each sentence have in the description? What influenced you in your choices when reordering the sentences in the description?

(iii) Are there any words or expressions which you think might be useful when you write your own answer to a similar question in Task One?

(iv) Now write a similar description of a Practise Test graph (bearing in mind your observations of the one above) within a time limit of **20 minutes!**

IELTS15d:

Writing Task One (Part One: follow up)

To be used with Writing Task A, page 97 of Cambridge IELTS Practice Tests 3.

*Complete the description of the two graphs by inserting either prepositions or linking words.**

_____ the two graphs it can be seen that the bar graph refers _____ the number _____ Japanese tourists travelling abroad expressed _____ millions _ _ _ _ the line graph reports Australia's share _____ the Japanese tourist market shown _____ a percentage. Both of them cover the ten year period _____ 1985 and 1995.

A steady rise _____ numbers of tourists can be seen in both graphs _____ the ten years. The number _____ Japanese tourists travelling abroad rose overall from _____ 4.5 million tourists _____ 1985 _____ about 15.25 million _____ 1995 _ _ _ _ there was a slight fall _____ 1991. Australia's share _____ these tourists rose _____ about 6.5% _____ 1995 _____ zero _____ 1985 _____ the percentage going down slightly _____ both 1988 and 1993. The decreases _____ the figures _____ each graph do not seem _____ refer _____ the same years and _ _ _ _ are presumably not _ _ _ _ the same possible causes.

* _____ = *prepositions* _ _ _ _ = *linkers*

Correction Codes

When an English teacher corrects a piece of written work, he or she often uses a code. The correct form is not given immediately because the teacher would like you to analyse your mistakes, or the type of mistake that you make, in the hope that you will remember and improve your next piece of writing.

How to read the correction code.

s/p	Singular/plural confusion	λ	Word or words missing.
vp	Verb phrase; some part of the verb is wrong.	P	Punctuation mistake, including upper/lower case mistakes.
np	Noun phrase. Some part of the phrase with the noun is wrong.	T	Tense. The tense of the verb is wrong.
w.w.	Wrong word; confusion of one word with another.	Sp	Spelling mistake.
w.o.	Word order; the words are in the wrong order.	prep	Wrong preposition.
R	Register. Inappropriate level of formality.	?	I don't understand.
		OK	Oops! My mistake!

Exercise 1

Look at the following chart. What symbol would you put near each wrong sentence?

	I can't find my car's keys.		I have no much time.
	I like also playing soccer.		One of the most particular day in my life.
	I play this sport since childhood.		I have many intrests.
	I like to cook and to eat well.		I speak spanish.
	Hi, prof!		My mother is housewife.
	I want to return in Italy.		

Exercise 2

Now look at the mistakes you have made in your latest written task and try to correct them for yourself. If you don't understand, work with a partner. If you still don't understand, ask the teacher.

IELTS15g:

Speaking Test, (Part One)

Exercise 1

In Part One of the Speaking Test, the examiner will ask you some questions about yourself, your interests, your work or study or ambitions.

Work with a partner and try to remember as many speech gambits, functions and expressions as you can which might be useful for the test.

What expressions can you use when you give your opinion?

e.g. I think... etc.

What expressions can you use when you give your preferences?

e.g. I'd rather...

What expressions can you use to play for time?

e.g. That's a very interesting question...

What can you say if you don't understand the examiner?

e.g. Sorry, would you repeat that, please?

STUDENT A: PAIRWORK

Now try asking your partner some of the following questions.

When it is your turn to answer your partner's questions, try using some of the above expressions in your answers.

Where are you from?

Were you born there?

How many people live in your hometown?

What don't you like about your hometown?

What entertainment facilities are there in your home town?

Where do tourists go in your country?

What sort of accommodation are you living in?

How long have you lived there?

Do you like living there? Why? Why not?

How long do you expect to continue living there?

Does your hometown have any important landmarks?

Which do you prefer? Living in the city or in the countryside?

How do you usually spend your free time on weekdays?

What do you like doing at the weekend? Why?

Who do you spend your free time with usually?

Which do you prefer? Writing by hand or on a computer?

Which would you prefer? Working in a multinational company or in a family business?

What would be your perfect day, and why?

Who is your closest friend?

How long have you known him/her?

What do you like doing together?

When did you see him/her last?

Which do you prefer? Going to a formal party or an informal party?

Do you take an active part in sports? Why?/Why not?

What is your national sport, if any?

Which do you prefer? Swimming in a pool or in the sea?

Do you think sports are becoming more or less important in your culture? Why?

STUDENT B: PAIRWORK

Now try asking your partner some of the following questions.

When it is your turn to answer your partner's questions, try using some of the above expressions in your answers.

What are your hobbies?

Which is your favourite hobby, and why?

When did you first take up this hobby?

How often do you do it?

Which do you prefer? Reading a book or watching TV?

In your country, what is the most important hobby for young people of your generation?

Which do you prefer? Pop music or classical music?

Which do you prefer? Going to the disco or going to the cinema?

What sports are compulsory in schools in your country?

What are the major festivals in your country?

Which is your favourite festival, and why?

Do you have a large number of public holidays in your country?

Do you like your national costume? Why? Why not?

How is electricity generated in your country?

What pollution problems does your hometown suffer from?

How much of the rubbish in your town is recycled?

Which do you prefer? Chinese food or Indian food?

What would be the perfect meal for you?

How has the teaching of languages changed over the last twenty years?

Which do you prefer? Studying English overseas or in your own country?

Which do you prefer? Writing a letter or talking on the phone?

IELTS15h:

Grammar Clinic

Group A – Punctuation

You are going to talk about the use of punctuation in English.

Work with a partner and think about the following questions.

Exercise 1

Discuss

In which situations you use:

- a. a comma (,)
- b. a full stop (.)
- c. a colon (:), a semi-colon (;)
- d. a question mark (?)
- e. a hyphen (-)
- f. and capital letters?
- g. single inverted commas (“

How are some of these different from Italian?

Group A: Explanation

Read the following description of English punctuation and correct your notes, if necessary.

a. **A comma** goes:

- after or in front of the name of the person being spoken to.
e.g. Mary, I'm sorry. Thank you, John. Listen, Mary, don't you think it is about time we went?
- between items in a list, except ones separated by 'and' or 'or'.
e.g. We ate pasta, fish and fruit.
- after a name or noun group, before a description or further information
e.g. Isabelle Allende, the Chilean writer.
- between the name of a place and the county, state or country it is in.
e.g. He was born in Birmingham, England, in 1975.
- before and usually after a non-defining relative clause.
e.g. Brenda, who is French, is going back to Paris next year.
- After or in front of a group of words which adds something to the main part of the sentence. *e.g. He is, I believe, the most talented musician around today.*
- In large numbers *e.g. 1,000 (one thousand), 2,000,450 (two million, four hundred and fifty).*

b. **A full stop** not only goes after a reported question and most other kinds of sentence, but it also goes in decimal numbers *e.g. 1.5 (one point five), 2.75 (two point seven five).*

c. (i) **A colon** is usually used: in front of a list or explanation. *e.g. Whenever possible, one should try to wear natural fabrics: linen, cotton, silk and wool.*

(ii) **A semi-colon** is used in formal writing to separate clauses that are closely related and could be written as separate sentences, or that are linked by 'and', 'but' or 'yet'. *e.g. I don't know what to do; after all, I have few alternatives.*

d. **A question mark** goes after a question *e.g. "Where are you going?"* but a *full stop* goes after a reported question *e.g. He asked me where I was going.*

e. **A hyphen** is used:

- when you cannot fit the whole of a word on one line, you can put part of the word and a hyphen on one line and the rest of the word on the next line. If the word is clearly made up of two or more smaller words or elements you put the hyphen after the first of these parts. For example, with the word *wheelbarrow*, you would write *wheel-* on one line and *barrow* on the next, *inter-* on one line and *national* on the next, *listen-* on one line and *ing* on the next.

Otherwise you put the hyphen at the end of a syllable at a point where it becomes obvious what the word is going to be. For example, you could write *compli-* on one line and *mentary* on the next.

However, it is best to avoid splitting words, especially if they are short ones, or if you are writing by hand.

f. Capital letters (upper case) are used

- For days of the week, months of the year and festivals *e.g. January, Monday, Easter.*
- For names of language and nationality adjectives and nouns *e.g. She is Italian, but she speaks English very well. The French are very proud of their cuisine and consider French wines among the best.*
- Nouns referring to products bought from a particular company *e.g. I bought a second-hand Volkswagen. We really need a new Hoover.*
- Titles used in front of a person's name *e.g. There has been no statement so far from President Bush. The Tower was built by William the Conqueror in the 11th century.*
- Adjectives referring to something associated with a particular person *e.g.his favourite Shakespearean sonnet. ... in Elizabethan times.*

g. Single inverted commas

Exercise 2

Correct the punctuation in the following e-mail.

*hi miriam how are things were all ok and preparing for our first holiday in ages
were going to france however our french is not exactly fluent gerald asks whether
you have any old grammar books from school
were busy packing our bags and typically the children can never leave any of their
toys behind mary is as we speak trying to fit her dolls teddy bear dolls clothes and
tea set into her backpack jeremy is still wondering what to take with him all his
toys are laid out on the floor miniature cars toy guns video games his sony walkman
the list is endless
have you got any advice to give about good buys in france we would like to avoid
the cities and go around the country markets in search of bargains i rather fancy
picking up some napoleonic memorabilia although I don't really want to spend more
than 3000 pounds over the twoweek holiday
what about you have you been anywhere interesting lately please keep in touch see
you in december
love anne and gerald*

Exercise 3

Now explain your findings to members from group B, who will teach you something in return.

Group B – Word order

You are going to talk word order in English.

Work with a partner and think about the following questions.

Exercise 1

Word Order

How do you decide which order to write:

- a. The subject of the sentence
- b. The object
- c. The verb
- d. Adverbs of frequency/manner/degree
- e. Adjectives
- f. Phrases of time
- g. Adverbial phrases of place
- h. Adjectives, the position in a sentence and when there are more than two adjectives describing the same thing.

Group B: Explanation

Word Order

English word order is fairly inflexible. Generally speaking words are grouped into sentences by using the same word order except in poetry or more creative genres.

This is the general order for many affirmative sentences.

Subject + verb + Object (e.g. I love you.)

Adjective + subject + verb + adjective + object (e.g. *Fat Mary loves thin Phil.*)

How? (Adverb of manner) e.g. *Fat Mary loves thin Phil passionately.*

When? (Phrase of time) e.g. *She meets him every evening.*

Where? e.g. *She meets him at the restaurant every evening.*

How? Where? When? e.g. *She meets him secretly at the restaurant at nine o'clock.*

How often? (Adverb of frequency) Word order changes with the verb *to be*.

e.g. *They always meet at nine. They are seldom late. They have never missed a date.*

How much?

They love each other very much. Mary's father would be absolutely furious if he found out. He doesn't consider Phil good enough for his daughter. He doesn't earn enough money.

Adjectives also have a particular order. In colours, the darker, or stronger one usually comes first e.g. black and white.

Other types of adjectives take the following order; subjective judgement, size, shape, age, nationality, material, pattern, use.

e.g. **A beautiful, big, round, 19th century, French wooden dining table.**

An ugly pink cotton checked shirt.

Luckily, you should never need to use more than three adjectives together, as it wouldn't be very good style, and you will have to find other techniques to make your description work well.

(When?) + (Adjective) + Who?/What? + (Adverb of Frequency) + verb + (Adjective) + Who?/What? + (How?/How much?) + Where? + When?

Exercise 2

Rewrite the following sentences by putting the words in the right order.

1. She comes every day by car to work.
2. She better were a would never drive if there bus service to work.
3. Have money enough you got?
4. Marie business very sensibly behaves in matters.
5. I'll at nine o'clock see outside you the cinema.
6. She carefully drives very usually.
7. I dark like very much chocolate.
8. As a don't allow in the bar rule young children we.
9. Swimmers the flag is flying allowed in the sea are not when.

Exercise 3

Now explain your findings to members from group B, who will teach you something in return.

Writing TASK TWO

(Part One)

You have 40 minutes to complete Writing Task Two, which must be a minimum of 250 words in length. You need to organise this time carefully: 5 to (maximum) 10 minutes to understand the question, brainstorm ideas and plan the order of what you want to say and the paragraphs; 25 to 30 minutes for writing; and 5 minutes for checking at the end.

The examiner is looking for:

- answering the question accurately
- cohesion and coherence
- language appropriateness (grammar, spelling, register etc.)
- supporting evidence/arguments

1. Answering the question accurately

It is surprising how many candidates do not answer the question, or start by answering it then move on to some completely unrelated subject. It is important to spend time reading the question carefully. Underline the key words in the question and remember to refer to them while you are writing to make sure you are still on course.

Exercise a:

Look at the following examples of real past exam questions. What does the examiner want from you? What ideas or points would you include in your answer?

- i) In many countries children are engaged in some kind of paid work. Some people regard this as completely wrong, while others consider it as valuable work experience, important for learning and taking responsibility. What are your opinions on this?
- ii) Popular events like the football World Cup and other international sporting occasions are essential in easing international tensions and releasing patriotic emotions in a safe way. To what the extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?
- iii) Compare the advantages and disadvantages of three of the following as media for communicating information. State which you consider to be the most effective.
 - comics
 - books
 - radio
 - television
 - film
 - theatre
 Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.
- iv) In many countries schools have severe problems with student behaviour. What do you think are the causes of this? What solutions can you suggest? Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own experience.

Exercise b:

Writing an Introduction

This is an introduction to an essay:

Title: 'Internet can be dangerous for young people. Discuss.'

The Internet has become an invaluable means of communication as well as information, both at work and during leisure time. However, so many hours spent in this way can also have negative consequences, especially for teenagers.

This composition
discusses the
possible
dangers for
adolescents
using the
Internet.

1. Why has it been written in the above shape? What does the above shape illustrate?
2. What are the sentences about? How have they been organised?

Introductions

Above, you can see that the first sentences are about the Internet in very general terms. Then, the possibility of negative effects are introduced. After this, the subject is narrowed to discuss adolescents, in particular. Then the writer will discuss whether he agrees with the points of view given in the title.

Exercise c:

Now, look at the following introductory paragraph from a composition about eating disorders.

This is the title of the composition:

Eating disorders are symptomatic of our times and the media are largely to blame for this problem. Discuss.

The sentences are all in the wrong order. Can you arrange the sentences in the right order?

- a. This composition discusses the media's role in these disorders.
- b. These days, beauty and youth are considered as being essential criteria which influence a person's success or popularity. .
- c. Therefore, it is no surprise that there has been an increase in eating disorders, especially anorexia and bulimia, over recent years.
- d. Being slim, or even thin, has become a necessary qualification for achievement.
- e. As a result, people are never satisfied with their own bodies.

How did you make your decisions about the text order? What helped you to decide your answers?

Exercise d:

Now can you write an introduction of no more than 60 words on the following topic?

Title: 'Famous people, such as politicians and film stars, deserve to have a private life without being harassed by journalists Discuss.'

2. Cohesion and coherence

IELTS Writing Task Two questions are discursive. That is, you are discussing a certain point, or points, of view. To make your answer easily understandable for your reader, you must organise your work in paragraphs. You will get better marks if your essay is easy to read. Keep your ideas simple as this will help to express and organise what you want to say clearly. A typical arrangement might be structure like this:

First paragraph: introduction

Second paragraph: arguments for or against

Point 1:

- a. supporting reason 1
- b. supporting reason 2

Point 2:

- a. supporting reason 1
- b. supporting reason 2

Point 3:

- a. supporting reason 1
- b. supporting reason 2

Fourth paragraph: conclusion

To make your ideas even clearer, they should be linked by adverbs or conjunctions of contrast/concession, addition, result/reason or put in a list.

Write in blue or black ink and leaving a one-line space between each line and two lines between paragraphs.

Exercise e:

You are going to look at neutral/formal linking words and adverbs concerned with cause, result, addition, concession (contrast) and time. They are also useful for the presentation in the speaking paper. Work with a partner and think about the following questions.

however	moreover	due to	in addition	therefore	despite
so	as a result of	in spite of	in contrast	not only....but also...	
	first of all	even though	because	then	in conclusion
	furthermore	although	nevertheless	on the other hand	

Questions:

1. Which linking words would you use to

- a) make a contrast?
- b) add more points?
- c) show a result
- d) give a cause?
- e) Talk about chronological order, order of importance or a process?

LINKERS

Cause and result

Exercise f:

1. Look at the following list of trends. Are they happening in Italy today? If so, why do you think they were happening? What do you caused them?

- People are living longer than they used to.
- Unemployment is getting worse.
- The planet's weather is getting more and more unpredictable.

Where do you think these trends will lead? What will be the results?

Exercise g:

Make sentences about each trend, describing how it came about and what the results will be. Use the phrases below to help.

EXPLAINING CAUSES

This is as a result of....

This is because of ...

This is a direct/indirect consequence of...

This is due to

DESCRIBING RESULTS

As a result, we will have...

This may result in a

As a consequence, we...

We shall, therefore, see/have...

CONCESSION/CONTRAST

Exercise h:

1. Read the paragraph below and work with a partner to underline the contrast words. Two examples are given.

Although Jane and Joanne were not identical twins, they looked almost exactly alike. When you studied them closely, however, it was possible to tell them, apart, for there were quite a few tiny differences. Jane had a minute scar over her left eye whereas Joanne did not. Joanne had neat flat ears but Jane's stuck out a little. Despite these distinctive marks, people often mistook one for the other. Though Jane and Joanne were usually quite serious they did enjoy confusing people. So Joanne would sometimes go out on a date with Jane's boyfriend, while Jane would sometimes go into Joanne's office. Their friends knew that the twins were likely to get up to tricks, yet they were often taken in all the same. One day, Joanne fell in love with James. In spite of the fact she was convinced that he was 'Mr Right', she couldn't resist having a bet with Jane. Jane was to win the bet if she went out on a date with James without his realising that it wasn't Joanne. Jane was quite certain she would win. Nevertheless, she waited apprehensively. But James was taken in like everybody else, and had a wonderful evening with Jane, thinking that she was Joanne. When he found out what had happened, he was not amused. However, he soon got his sense of humour back and sent his own identical twin on the next date with Joanne.

2. Look back at the words you have underlined. What is their position in the sentence? What kind of words follow them? Is this always true?

Exercise i:

Insert the word given in the following sentences, changing them where necessary.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <p>a. Because</p> | <p><i>Mary had sprained her ankle, so she found walking painful.</i></p> |
| <p>b. therefore</p> | <p><i>Many children have very little leisure time during the week because they are given too much homework.</i></p> |
| <p>c. although</p> | <p><i>I've been without a car most of my life, but I've always managed to get about.</i></p> |
| <p>d. even though</p> | <p><i>There's a lot of difference in my parents' ages, and yet it has been a very good marriage.</i></p> |
| <p>e. however</p> | <p><i>We've never met Peter. We've heard a lot about him, though!</i></p> |
| <p>f. nevertheless</p> | <p><i>Though she has had financial difficulties for some time, she has managed to avoid selling the business.</i></p> |
| <p>g. despite</p> | <p><i>Although Claire was very well qualified for the job, she didn't get it.</i></p> |
| <p>h. in spite of</p> | <p><i>He can no longer read a book without glasses, although he has tried to take care of his eyes.</i></p> |

Exercise j:

Write a few sentences based the composition you started in Exercise d. Experiment using the above vocabulary to make your points, and support them when possible.

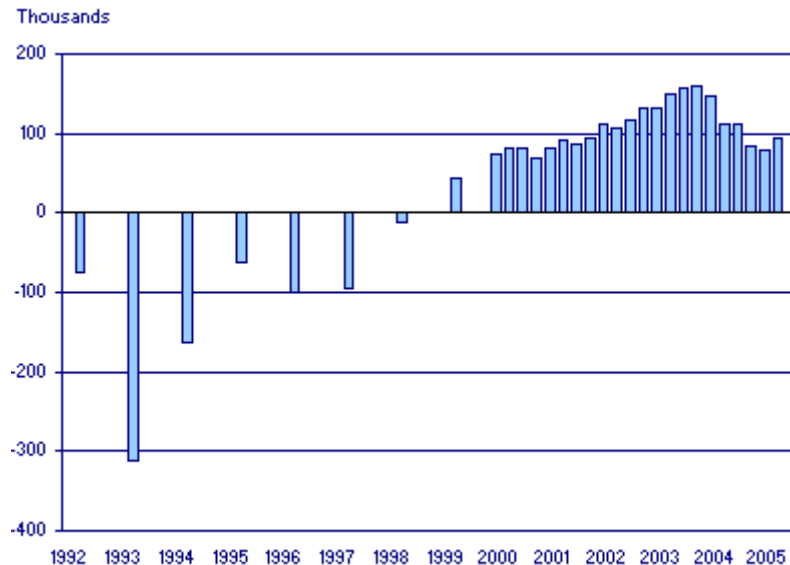
IELTSk:

WRITING TASK ONE: Second Part

Exercise a: Look at the following graph and the following description. What language can you identify which might be useful for any graphs or charts you might have to write about in Writing Task One?

Public Sector Employment Growth in 2004-2005

Annual changes in public sector employment, United Kingdom



Public Sector Jobs

Employment in the public sector rose by 95,000 in the year to June 2005, compared with an increase of 113,000 in the previous year to June 2004.

The largest increase in public sector employment in the year to June 2005 was in health and social services (up by 60,000 employees). There were also increases in education (19,000), in public administration (17,000), and in the police service (including civilians) (12,000).

The number of employees in the Civil Service in Great Britain was equal to that of last year, at 570,000. However, the June 2005 Civil Service figures include for the first time approximately 12,000 public sector employees who previously worked for local government in the Magistrates' Courts Service. On 1 April 2005, they became Civil Servants employed by Her Majesty's Courts Service.

From 1991 to 1998, public sector employment fell every year, with an overall reduction of 816,000 over that period. From 1998 public sector employment rose every year to 5,846,000, 680,000 higher than in June 1998. It is still, however, below the levels of 1991 and 1992.

In the year to June 2005, employment in the private sector rose by 216,000 compared with the rise of 95,000 in the public sector.

Sources: Office for National Statistics; Defence Analytical Services Agency, Ministry of Defence; Cabinet Office; Home Office, Local Government Authorities; NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre; National Assembly for Wales; Common Services Agency; Scottish Executive; Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment.

Exercise b:

- i Look at the following chart. What is it about?
- ii How are the figures represented?

Population of Great Britain: by religion, April 2001

	Total population		Non-Christian
	(Numbers)	(Percentages)	religious population (Percentages)
Christian	41,014,811	71.8	
Muslim	1,588,890	2.8	51.9
Hindu	558,342	1.0	18.3
Sikh	336,179	0.6	11.0
Jewish	267,373	0.5	8.7
Buddhist	149,157	0.3	4.9
Any other religion	159,167	0.3	5.2
All non-Christian religious population	3,059,108	5.4	100.0
No religion	8,596,488	15.1	
Religion not stated	4,433,520	7.8	
All population	57,103,927	100.0	

Christianity is the religion in Great Britain. There were 41 million Christians in, making up almostquarters of the population.

People with no religion formed the largest group, comprising per cent of the population.

About one (five per cent) of the population belonged to a non-Christian religious denomination. Muslims were the largest religious group Christians. There were 1.6 million Muslims living in Britain in 2001. This group comprised per cent of the total population and over 1, 558,890 (..... per cent) of the non-Christian religious population.

Hindus were the second non-Christian religious group. There were over million (558,000) comprising 1 per cent of the total population and 18 per cent of the non-Christian religious population.

There were just over a million Sikhs (336,179), making 0.6 per cent of the total population and 11 per cent of the non-Christian religious population.

There were just over million Jewish people (267,000), constituting per cent of the total population and 9 per cent of the non-Christian religious group.

Buddhists numbered people in 2001, comprising per cent of the population of Great Britain.

..... per cent of people chose not to state their religion.

IELTS15k:

Follow up

From Book 6, Test 3, Writing Task 1: Model Answer Gap Fill

The first diagram _____ that there are four _____ stages in the life of the silkworm. _____, eggs are produced by the moth and it takes ten days for each egg to _____ a silkworm larva that feeds on mulberry _____. This stage _____ for up to six weeks until the larva produces a cocoon of silk thread around itself. _____ a period of about three weeks, the adult moths _____ emerge from these cocoons and the life _____ begins again.

The cocoons are the _____ material used for the production of silk cloth. _____ selected, they are boiled in water and the threads can be separated in the _____ stage. Each thread is between 300 and 900 metres _____, which means they can be twisted together, dyed and then used to produce cloth in the _____ stage.

_____, the diagrams show that the cocoon stage of the silkworm can be used to produce silk cloth through a very simple _____.

IELTS15n:

WRITING TASK TWO (Part Two)

In Writing TASK TWO (Part One), you looked at the construction of an essay and the opening paragraph. Two out of three important items which examiners look for were discussed:

- answering the question accurately, and
- cohesion and coherence

In this second part we are going to look at **language appropriateness**

Language appropriateness does not simply mean grammar and spelling, but also register.

- What is register?
- What register would be appropriate for the Writing Paper of the IELTS exam?
- In order to clarify your ideas about what this means, look at these two job adverts.

What are the linguistic differences? What can you tell about the tone and vocabulary used?

How would you change informal language to formal?

<p>Keep the World Talking...</p> <p><i>As a Call Centre Operator</i></p> <p>As a Call Centre Operator you'll be dealing with lots of different kinds of people helping them with their problems.</p> <p>It's a responsible job which is varied and interesting. You can earn up to £95.00 - not including extra monetary allowances.</p> <p>You'll be working in Central London during evenings, nights and some Sundays. You don't have to be experienced, we train you thoroughly - on full pay! Car owner preferred. Ring: 0121 7068540</p>	<p><i>A Couple of Managers</i></p> <p>is sought by a private brewery chain in West Middlesex.</p> <p>GOOD SALARY PLUS BONUS AND A RENT AND RATE FREE ONE BEDROOMED FLAT WILL BE OFFERED TO THE RIGHT COUPLE. <i>Experience is not essential but integrity and reliability are required.</i></p> <p><i>A vacancy also exists for a</i> RELIEF MANAGER <i>A competitive salary will be offered to the right person. Experience is not essential. Preference will be given to applicants living locally who must own a suitable vehicle. References are required for both vacancies. Please apply in writing quoting telephone number to:</i></p> <p>Mr J Brown <i>Belling's Brewery Ltd.</i> <i>Pump Lane, Hayes, Middlesex.</i></p>
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Neutral/formal writing style

Formal English differs from spoken English in several ways. If you have ever done English lessons at a private school, your teacher will probably have concentrated on informal spoken English, trying to make you use contractions and phrasal verbs. In formal written English, you have to avoid both of them and remember a few other things, too.

For example:

1. Avoid contractions.

It is usual to avoid the use of contractions in formal writing.

For example:

The reaction of the audience showed **they'd** performed badly. = Informal style

The reaction of the audience demonstrated **they had** performed badly. = Formal style

Exercise c.

2. Use appropriate quantifiers

Which of the expressions below would be more suitable in formal English writing.

- She made *a great deal of/a lot of* money by selling her shares at the right time.
- Inflation increased *a lot/significantly* at the end of last year.
- The relationship mind and body is *really/extremely* important.
- Henry *got/received favourable/good* reviews of his exhibition.
- They dispatched *a lot of/numerous* application forms.
- The response of the staff was *somewhat/sort of* negative.
- Several members/some of* the management team *quit/resigned* in protest when one of their colleagues was *given a dressing down/criticised* in public by the chairman.

3. Use appropriate negative forms

For example:

Not..... any	>	no
Notmuch	>	little
Notmany	>	few

Their research didn't yield any new results. > Their research yielded no new results.

The machinery doesn't require much storage space. > The machinery requires little storage space.

The painting doesn't have many potential buyers. > The painting has few potential buyers.

4. Use Nominalisation

Nominalisation allows us to represent one **event** as causing another **event** in a single clause. It is very common in formal writing to use a **noun** to represent an event or a process, rather than a **verb**.

For example:

The company was reorganised internally. This was said to be the main reason for the redundancies.

The company's internal reorganisation was said to be the main reason for the redundancies.

Exercise d.

Make the following sentences more formal.

- a. The report on the public health service was published last week. As a result, the Minister of Health resigned.

.....

- b. The bank withdrew its offer to buy the company because of a higher bid.

.....

- c. If poverty and homelessness were reduced, it would make the world a better place to live.

.....

- d. There hasn't been much agreement between the trades unions.

.....

- e. It can be a stressful experience to speak in front of a large audience.

.....

- f. Not many companies employ their own legal team.

.....

IELTS[®]:

READING PREPARATION

The Reading Paper is made up of 3 articles preceded or followed by various types of comprehension exercises in rising level of difficulty.

You have only limited time available, so do not waste time agonising over individual questions. Split up your time between the readings, leaving a longer period for the later reading texts and tasks. Do not attempt to read all the texts word for word and spend time worrying about vocabulary.

The Reading paper exercises can include:

- a. **Gap fill exercises using given words**
- b. Matching exercises (matching information, or sub-headings to paragraphs)
- c. Chart or diagram completion
- d. Multiple choice
- e. Yes, No, Not Given/Not mentioned
- f. Sentence completion
- g. Interpretation of the writer's viewpoint or a combination of the above.

TIPS

For the type of exercise which requires a general understanding of the text...

1. It is useful to look at the text briefly, noting the title, any subtitles, illustrations or diagrams, reading the first and last paragraphs of the text and the first sentences of each paragraph.
2. Then look at the questions and underline any 'tricks' in the questions. 'Tricks' are words or phrases upon which the whole sense of the answer depends. Words like quantitatives (some, all, both etc.), negatives, paraphrasing or synonyms, specific adjectives or adverbs (very, completely etc.) group nouns (mammals, students etc.).

If the exercise requires more detailed understanding...

Follow tips one and two, then...

3. After you have made a few possible choices of answer, read the text more carefully and make your final choice. Be careful to stay within the time limits, and write down your answers on the Answer Sheet as you are reading. There is no time set aside for filling in the answers at the end of the test.
4. Finally, FILL IN any empty spaces, even if you are not sure of the answer. If you are wrong, it makes no difference. If your guess is right, it could make the difference between one grade and the next one up.

OTHER TIPS

- a. In the matching sub-headings to paragraphs exercise, there are always more headings than paragraphs to label. The instructions say that you may use headings more than once, but this rarely occurs. It is also useful to underline parts of the text where you find clues about matching headings. It will then be easier to check back when you make your final decision.
- b. In the chart or diagram completion exercise, watch out for synonyms and the use of prepositions.
- c. The *Yes, No, Not Given/Not Mentioned* exercise worries many candidates. First of all, it is useful to select just two different types of answer; true/yes or false/no. After that, look at your choices for no/false and find the evidence for your choice. Sometimes certain specific information is not given but the meaning is made clear through the context.
- d. In the Sentence completion exercise, many of the possible combinations are impossible grammatically or logically unlikely, therefore you should be able to predict most of the answers before reading the text.
- e. The *Interpretation of writer's viewpoint* is always be the last task and should also be done last during the exam. It is only one question (and one point) out of 40, and there will be very little time to look at the text specifically for this question. You should base your judgement on the understanding of the text gained while reading for the other questions.

N.B. Be careful to copy out your answers correctly: Is the spelling correct? Is the answer singular or plural? Always write the complete answer. Do not leave any questions unanswered.

LISTENING PREPARATION

FORMAT

The listening test lasts 30 minutes plus 10 minutes for transferring answers to the answer sheets. The tape is only played once. There are 4 listening texts with 40 questions.

You will hear:

- a. a conversation on a general topic with 2 or three speakers.
- b. A talk by one speaker on a general topic.
- c. A conversation on an academic topic with two or three speakers.
- d. A talk or lecture in academic style.

The Listening paper exercises can be of seven different types which will include elements of the following:

- h. Multiple choice exercises, which may include an illustration to identify from a description.
- i. Chart or diagram completion
- j. Gap fill exercises using numbers, spelling, prices, times etc. especially in Section One.
- k. Sentence or paragraph completion/note-taking/gap fill of UP TO (THREE) WORDS
- l. Identifying which subjects are mentioned from a list

You have ten minutes at the end to fill in your answer sheet.

On this sheet you should FILL IN any empty spaces, even if you are not sure of the answer. If you are wrong, it makes no difference. If your guess is right, it could make the difference between one grade and the next one up.

TACTICS

To make efficient use of the time, you should...

- a. read all the questions before each section carefully in the pauses between the listening exercises. Underline the key words in the questions. You may be able to guess the answer, or at least imagine what kind of answer it will be; a number a price, a name. Can you identify the context? The questions usually follow the same sequence as the text. However, the relevant information is not spread regularly through the text and there will often be large chunks of information you need to ignore.
- b. Remember that the Listening tape very often uses synonyms for the answers, so do not concentrate too much on listening for the actual words written on the question paper. They may also mention the same subject more than once before giving the correct answer. You may also have to change the part of speech of the words you hear in order to grammatically match the gap on the question paper.
- c. To improve your chances of a better score, you can cross out any of the answers you are sure are wrong on the question paper and guess between those left. You can scribble whatever you like on the question paper as you listen.
- d. When answering, be careful ...
 1. To use the correct spelling and the correct punctuation or symbols, if necessary (e.g. £, \$, %).
 2. To write the whole answer.
 3. NOT to write MORE THAN the number of words allowed in the answer.

If you don't know the answer, **GUESS!**

N.B. You will be penalised for bad spelling, punctuation and grammar, but you can use numerals in some answers to save time.

In questions where it says 'UP TO (THREE) WORDS' in the answer, that is what it means and answers over that number of words will not be marked correct. (Contractions count as 2 words.)

You are strongly advised to practise the Listening paper on your own in the SAC.

When practising, it can be especially useful to look at the tapescript. This will give you a good idea on the kinds of 'traps' to avoid.

Spend time on thinking about possible synonyms before you start and make a note of any when you read the tapescript after practising. You will not often hear the exact words that are written in the question.

IELTS15m: EXAM CHECKLIST

SPEAKING PAPER

For the speaking test, can you...

- Talk freely about yourself, your education, your family, your town, experiences and people that have been important for you?
- Use appropriate expressions for discussing, hypothesising and expressing opinions?
- Organise a short presentation using appropriate listing or linking expressions?
- Hypothesise about imaginary or abstract, possibly future situations?
- Remember, it's not necessary to tell the truth. Just be communicative!

WRITING PAPER: Can you organise my time well enough to answer BOTH questions fully?

TASK ONE: *When answering the question, make sure of the following....*

- Are you able to complete your answer to Task 1 within 20 minutes?
- Is your answer about 150 words long?
- Have you described the graph or chart using appropriate and suitably diverse vocabulary?
- Is your interpretation of the graph or chart accurate?
- Does the opening sentence describe what the graph represents?
- Is there a sentence describing the general trend, (if there is one)?
- Is the description suitably impersonal?
- Do you know how to use verb tenses, especially present continuous, simple past, present perfect and passives correctly?

TASK TWO: *When answering the question, make sure of the following....*

- Are you able to complete your answer within 40 minutes?
- Is your answer about 250 words long?
- Is your work written so as to be clearly understood by another person?
- Is your work organised in paragraphs?
- Have you made at least two points about the subject under discussion and backed them up?
- Have you used a wide range of grammatical forms and vocabulary?
- Have you avoided being repetitive?

READING PAPER

While reading the paper, do the following....

- Answer all the questions WHILE you are reading. There is no time at the end!
- Look at the titles, sub/titles diagrams and illustrations, the first and last paragraphs and the first lines of each paragraph first.
- Read all the questions carefully, looking for possible tricky 'keywords' (i.e. quantitatives, negatives, specific adjectives, paraphrase, group nouns...).
- Organise your time so that you have enough to read all three articles and fill in your answer sheet.
- Fill in ALL the spaces for the answers, even the ones you are not sure about!

And remember, if the question states an answer of NO MORE THAN (THREE) words, that's what it means!

LISTENING PAPER

While listening, do the following....

- Read all the questions carefully first, looking for possible tricky 'keywords' (i.e. quantitatives, negatives, specific adjectives, paraphrase, group nouns...)
- Make sure you understand what type of answer is required; a number, a spelled proper noun.
- Know numbers, prices, times, dates and the alphabet in spoken English.
- Try to guess some of the possible answers in the time you have before you listen.
- Fill in ALL the spaces for the answers, even the ones you are not sure about!

And remember, if the question asks for an answer of NO MORE THAN (THREE) words, that's what it means!

IELTS15q

USEFUL WEB SITES FOR STUDENTS of ENGLISH

Comments:

www.nationalstatistics.gov.uk can be investigated from the point of view of useful language to describe graphs.

www.onestopenglish.com IELTS lessons and tips.

Grammar and writing tests for FCE and CAE:

www.flo-joe.co.uk/cae/students/index.com Although Flo-joe is really for other UCLES exams, it gives some good practice in grammar and writing exercises.

Links to various types of English Test:

www.ohiou.edu/esl/english/tests.html

Links for listening exercises:

www.englishstudydirect.com/langacls.htm

Links to On-line Newspapers:

www.englishstudydirect.com/OSAC/medianews.com

Looking for synonyms and antonyms:

www.thesaurus.com

Corpus, concordance, and collocation related sites

Collins Cobuild Concordancer

<http://www.collins.co.uk/Corpus/CorpusSearch.aspx>

The electronic text center, The University of Virginia

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/>

Project Gutenberg - Official and Original Project Gutenberg Web Site and Home Page

<http://www.promo.net/pg/>

CETH - Center for Electronic Texts in the Humanities

<http://scc01.rutgers.edu/ceth/>

UCREL Corpus Holdings - Lancaster University

<http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/computing/research/ucrel/corpora.html>

Oxford University Computer Service - British National Corpus

<http://info.ox.ac.uk/bnc/>

British National Corpus (an-online service and CD-ROM)

<http://info.ox.ac.uk/bnc/>

Information about the Online Service

<http://sara.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>

Information about The BNC Sampler

<http://info.ox.ac.uk/bnc/getting/sampler.html>

WordSmith (windows)

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/~ms2928/>

<http://www1.oup.co.uk/elt/catalogue/multimed/4589846/4589846.html>

Concordance (windows)

<http://www.rjcw.freemove.co.uk/>

Web concordances made by R. J. C. Watt with his 'Concordance' software (see above)

<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/english/wics/wics.htm>

Business letter Corpus Online KWIC search, designed by Yasumasa Someya

<http://www2.gol.com/users/ysomeya/> (then click on BLC KWIC - top left)

Michel Barlow's Corpus Linguistics Page

<http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~barlow/corpus.html>

Tim Johns Home Page - Data-driven Learning (aka Classroom Concordancing)

<http://sun1.bham.ac.uk/johnstf/>

SIL Computing Resources

<http://www.sil.org/computing/>

Mike Scott's Web Site - the maker of WordSmith

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/~ms2928/index.htm>

The University of Birmingham Corpus Research Group

<http://www-clg.bham.ac.uk/>

Websites:

www.ielts.org

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/me-exams-english-language-ielts.htm>