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# Writing *for IELTS*

with Answer Key

4.5–6.0



Sam McCarter • Norman Whitby

  
MACMILLAN

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# Introduction

## What is *Improve your IELTS Writing Skills*?

*Improve your IELTS Writing Skills* is a complete preparation course for students at score bands 4.5–6.00 preparing for the Academic Writing paper of the International English Language Testing System. Through targeted practice, it develops skills and language to help you achieve a higher IELTS score in the Academic Writing paper.

## How can I use this book?

You can use *Improve your IELTS Writing Skills* as a book for studying on your own or in a class. If you are studying on your own, *Improve your IELTS Writing Skills* is designed to guide you step by step through the activities. This book is also completely self-contained: a clear and accessible key is provided so that you can easily check your answers as you work through the book. In addition, there is either a sample answer written by a student or a model answer written by the authors to accompany each Task 1 and Task 2 question.

If you are studying as part of a class, your teacher will direct you on how to use each activity. Some activities can be treated as discussions, in which case they can be a useful opportunity to share ideas and techniques with other learners.

## How is *Improve your IELTS Writing Skills* organized?

It consists of ten units based around topics which occur commonly in the real test.

Each unit consists of three sections:

**Task 1:** exercises and examples to develop skills and language for Task 1 questions.

**Task 2:** exercises and examples to develop skills and language for Task 2 questions.

**Practice test:** a complete Academic Writing paper based on the unit topic to practise the skills learned.

Each Task 1 and Task 2 section is subdivided further into skills sections. These focus on specific areas of relevance to each task.

In addition, there are Technique boxes throughout the book. These reinforce key points on how to approach Academic Writing tasks.

## How will *Improve your IELTS Writing Skills* improve my score?

### By developing skills

The skills sections form a detailed syllabus of essential IELTS writing skills. For example, key elements of Task 1 preparation, such as *Describing trends* and *Comparing information*, are fully covered. Similarly, Task 2 skills, such as *Expressing solutions* and *Developing ideas*, are dealt with in detail.

### By developing language

Each unit also contains a resource of useful phrases and vocabulary to use in each writing task. Over the course of *Improve your IELTS Writing Skills*, you will encounter a wide range of ideas to ensure that you are not lost for words when you get to the real test. These include concepts such as organizing words, trigger words and linking phrases, which all contribute to an appropriate academic writing style.

### By developing test technique

The Technique boxes contain short tips which can easily be memorized and used as reminders in the real test. These include quick and easy advice about planning, understanding questions and how to use effectively the language you have learned.

## How is the IELTS Academic Writing component organized?

The Academic Writing component of the IELTS lasts one hour. In the test, there are two tasks of different lengths, both of which you must answer.

### What does each task consist of?

In Task 1, you will have to write at least 150 words to describe some data or a diagram. Data will normally be presented in the form of a graph, a bar or pie chart, a table or a combination of these. A diagram will normally relate to a process, the workings of an object or changes in maps over time. You are always expected to summarize the information by describing the main features, making comparisons where relevant.

In Task 2, you will have to write at least 250 words on a topic. You will be presented with an opinion, an argument or a problem and you will be expected to respond in some way. For example, in your response, you may be asked to:

- Express an opinion.
- Give views about two different opinions and give your own opinion.
- Discuss advantages and disadvantages.
- Give a solution to a problem by suggesting measures.
- Discuss causes of a problem and suggest solutions.

You are always expected to give reasons and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge and experience.

### How will I be assessed?

In both tasks you will be assessed on your ability to express yourself clearly and accurately in English.

In Task 1, your answer is assessed according to your ability to write about data in an organized way and compare information where it is relevant to do so. You should write about the main features of the data and add relevant detail where necessary.

In Task 2, your answer is assessed according to your ability to write in a logical manner as you give a solution to a problem, present and justify an opinion, compare and contrast evidence and opinions or evaluate and challenge ideas or arguments.

### How much time should I spend on each task?

You are advised to spend 20 minutes on Task 1.

You are advised to spend 40 minutes on Task 2.

Even though Task 2 carries more marks, you should always do Task 1 first. This is because it is shorter, and psychologically it feels better if you have completed one task.



a

## Task 1 Describing changes

1 Match the photos a–c to the comments by three people talking about the town where they grew up.

**Dave**

I remember there wasn't much to do here when I was growing up. My friends and I used to just hang around in the park, getting into trouble. These days there's much more here for young people. For instance, *the council opened the ice rink, the leisure centre and the skate park last year.* I wish I'd had things like that to keep me entertained.



b

**Sandra**

One of the things I used to really like about this area was the peace and quiet. It was so safe for us as kids. We could play in the streets or in the nearby woods and fields. *They built a bypass and an industrial estate a few years ago* and there's been a lot more traffic and development since. I don't feel it's safe for my children and I'd like to move away.

**Tom**

Well, you can't stand in the way of change, I suppose. Yes, people look at the town now with lots of shiny tower blocks and say it's not as pretty or peaceful as it was in the past. Even so, there are more jobs and opportunities now than there were when I was a teenager.



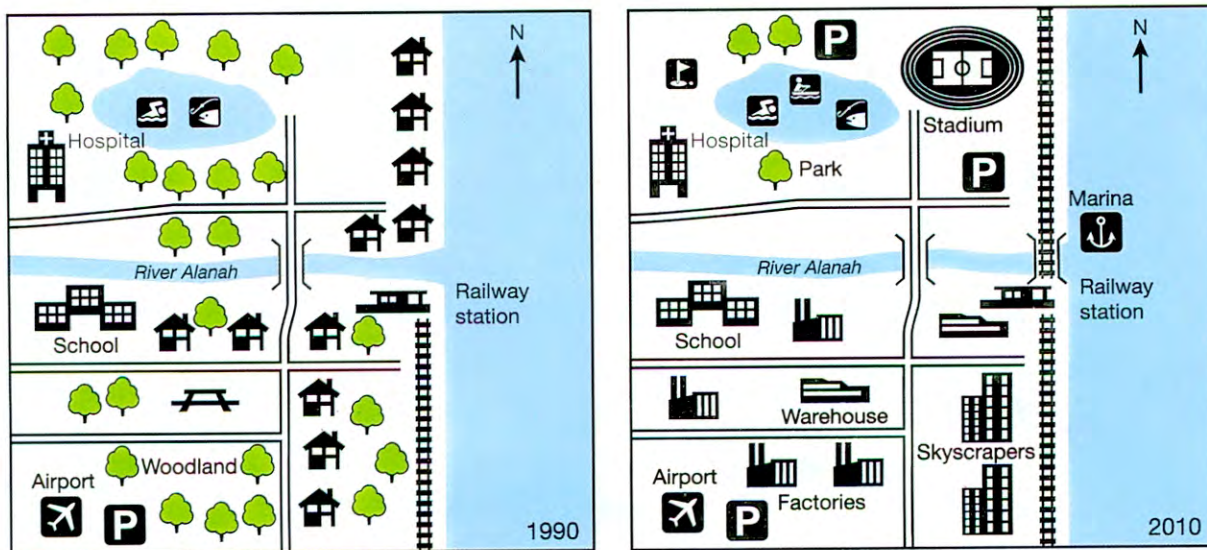
c

2 Read the comments above again. Answer the questions below.

- For each speaker, do they think things were better or worse when they were young? Why?
- What changes have occurred in the place you come from? Do you think they are positive or negative changes?
- How could you express the phrases in italics in a more formal way?
- Imagine you are a young person moving to a new town. Which facilities in the list below would be important to you?

golf course ■ skate park ■ theatre ■ railway station ■ concert hall ■ gallery  
stadium ■ ice rink ■ park ■ college ■ airport

- 3 The maps below show changes that took place in Youngsville in New Zealand over a 20-year period from 1990 to 2010. Answer the following questions:
- What is the most noticeable difference between the two maps?
  - Was the town more or less residential in 2010 compared to 1990?
  - Were there more or fewer trees in 2010?
  - Were the changes dramatic or slight over the 20-year period?
  - What were the two biggest changes north of the river?
  - What happened to the houses and trees along the railway line south of the river?



- 4 Complete the text below. Use one word from the following list to complete each blank space. The first one has been done for you.

houses ■ experienced ■ noticeable ■ factories ■ developments ■ comparison  
residential ■ corner ■ facilities ■ construction

The maps show the 1 developments which took place in the coastal town of Youngsville between 1990 and 2010.

In 1990, the town was a much greener 2 \_\_\_\_\_ area with a large number of trees and individual houses, but during the next 20 years the town

3 \_\_\_\_\_ a number of dramatic changes. The most 4 \_\_\_\_\_

is that all of the trees south of the River Alanah were cut down, with all the

5 \_\_\_\_\_ along the railway line being knocked down and replaced

by skyscrapers. Moreover, a new industrial estate with 6 \_\_\_\_\_ and warehouses sprang up around the airport and school.

Only a few trees north of the river remained. The woodland was cleared to

make way for a park, a golf course and car parking 7 \_\_\_\_\_.

Further developments were the 8 \_\_\_\_\_ of a stadium near the north-east

9 \_\_\_\_\_ of the lake and a new stretch of railway from the river running

directly north. A marina was also built at the mouth of the river.

Overall, a 10 \_\_\_\_\_ of the two maps reveals a change from a largely

rural to a mainly urban landscape.

### Technique

Identify changes in the maps and number them on the second one. Think of some general statements and make notes. Remember to write an overview.



**5** Answer the questions below about the text in exercise 4.

**1** What information is given in the introductory paragraph?

---

**2** Which sentence in paragraph two gives an overview of the changes?

---

**3** Which part of the map does the rest of paragraph two describe?

---

**4** Which part of the map is described in paragraph three?

---

**5** In paragraph three does the description move west to east, or east to west?

---

**6** Which two adjectives in the conclusion sum up the changes?

---

**6** Transform the sentences below by changing the nouns into verbs and by using the passive. Refer to page 7 for more information on using nouns to summarize.

*Example*

There were *spectacular changes* in the area. The area *was changed* spectacularly.

**a** There were dramatic developments in the town centre.

---

**b** There was a complete transformation of the neighbourhood.

---

**c** There was a total reconstruction of the residential area.

---

**d** There was a total redevelopment of the old factories.

---

**e** There was a rebuilding of the old houses.

---

**f** There was a complete modernization of the entertainment district.

---

**7** Look again at the sentences you wrote in exercise 6. Which could be rewritten in the active form?

**8** Rewrite sentences a–h below using synonyms from the text in exercise 4.

**a** The maps show changes which *occurred* between 1990 and 2010.

**b** Very few trees *were left*.

**c** Over the next 25 years, all these houses *were demolished*.

**d** The houses *were replaced* by skyscrapers.

**e** The trees *were chopped down*.

**f** The area *witnessed* dramatic changes.

**g** The woodland *gave way* to a golf course.

**h** A marina *was also constructed*.

### Technique

Do not just describe the map or maps. Describe the developments that took place.

9 Put the verbs below into the correct form. All of the changes took place between 2005 and 2012.

*Examples*

The block of flats was turned (turn) into a hotel. (passive)

The block of flats made way (make way) for a hotel. (active)

- a The row of old houses \_\_\_\_\_ (knock down) to make way for a road.
- b The forest \_\_\_\_\_ (cut down) to build a railway.
- c The area \_\_\_\_\_ (redevelop) completely.
- d The factory \_\_\_\_\_ (convert) into an art gallery.
- e The city centre \_\_\_\_\_ (undergo) a total transformation.
- f The row of old terraced houses in the city \_\_\_\_\_ (pull down) and \_\_\_\_\_ (replace) by a block of flats.
- g A sports complex \_\_\_\_\_ (construct) in the suburbs.
- h A number of spectacular changes \_\_\_\_\_ (take place).
- i The whole centre of the town \_\_\_\_\_ (transform) by new developments.

10 Which of the following cannot be used to replace the phrase *Between 2005 and 2012*?

- a Over the period
- b During the seven-year period
- c From 2005 to 2012
- d Over the past seven years

11 Insert *By 2012* at the beginning of each sentence in exercise 9 and adjust each sentence. Use the Technique box to help you.

**Technique**

Use the past perfect (had done) to describe changes occurring before a specific time in the past, e.g. *By 2012*, the block of flats *had been turned* into a hotel (passive). *By 2012*, the block of flats *had made way* for a hotel (active).

**Describing locations**

1 Answer the questions a–g about the maps on page 39 using the phrases in the box.

south of the river ■ in the south-west of the town ■ north of the skyscrapers  
 to the south of the golf course ■ south west of the stadium ■ in the north-east of the town  
 just to the north of the river mouth

- a Where is the lake? It is \_\_\_\_\_.
- b Where is the hospital? It is \_\_\_\_\_.
- c Where is the railway station? It is \_\_\_\_\_.
- d Where is the airport? It is \_\_\_\_\_.
- e Where is the school? It is \_\_\_\_\_.
- f Where is the stadium? It is \_\_\_\_\_.
- g Where is the marina? It is \_\_\_\_\_.

**Technique**

State locations clearly on a map. Sometimes we can do this by referring to their position on the whole area shown. In this case, we say *in the north/south/west/east of ...* We can also talk about the position of an item in relation to other items on the map. In this case, we say *north/south of* with no preposition or *to the north/south of*. Look at the examples.

*Examples*

The airport is *in the south-west of the town*.  
 Only a few trees (to the) *north of the river* remained.  
 Where is the golf course? It is (to the) *north-west of the lake*.

2 Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct prepositions of place from the alternatives.

- a Several changes took place *at/in/on* the town of Northgate.
- b North of the town, there is a lake surrounded *in/of/by* trees.
- c A number of new houses were built *beside/at/on* the railway line.
- d There was a large industrial area located *on/in/at* the north.
- e A new railway was constructed which ran *from/at/in* north to south.
- f Two new hotels were erected *on/in/at* the banks of the river.
- g A large number of new villas were built *beside/at/to* the sea.
- h A yachting club was set up *on/in/at* the shores of the lake.
- i A number of wind turbines were placed in the sea, just *off/on/to* the coastline.

3 Choose five prepositional phrases of place from the sentences in exercise 2 to record.

*Example*  
*in the town*

## Task 2 Developing and justifying opinions

1 Look at the photo and the speech bubbles. Answer the questions below.

- a Which person do you agree with?
- b Do you agree with the justification for each person's opinion?
- c Is this situation the same all over the world?



2 Read the following Task 2 question and then answer questions a–b.

*Employers should pay young people the same salary as older colleagues doing the same job.  
To what extent do you agree or disagree?*

- a Do you have to strongly agree or disagree? Is it possible to take a neutral view?
- b Rewrite the statement in your own words. Begin with *Young employees ...*

3 Read a–g, taken from an answer to the question in exercise 2. Match each sentence or part-sentence with the correct function from the list. The first one has been done for you.

Contradiction ■ Explanation ■ Result ■ Example ■ Reason (x 2) ■ Opinion statement

- a Many people believe that workers should be paid according to age rather than merit.
- b However, I feel that they should be paid according to results.
- c Take, for example, someone in their twenties working in a financial company.
- d They deserve to receive the same salary ...
- e ... because they are doing the same work.
- f Moreover, young people nowadays are often faster at doing things than their older work colleagues ...
- g ... which compensates for lack of experience.

*Opinion statement*

---



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---



---

4 Underline the linking devices in exercise 3 which indicate the functions you chose.

5 Using the sentences in exercise 3 as a model, write a paragraph expressing your own opinion in response to the question in 2. Use appropriate linking devices.

6 Read the Task 2 question and the extract below. For each of 1–6, two options are possible and one is incorrect. Delete the incorrect option.

*Some people feel that young people face more pressures today than in previous generations. Others think that they have a much easier life than their parents did. What is your opinion?*



Life for the young in today's world is in some ways certainly more comfortable than for those in previous generations. **1** *However/Moreover/Even so*, one cannot deny the fact that in a number of areas life is much more demanding than it used to be. Take the workplace, for example. Competition for every job is now fierce in all parts of the world, not just developed countries, **2** *while/because/as* young people are more qualified than previous generations. **3** *Furthermore/Likewise/And*, there is increased mobility of people in the international job market. Skilled workers move from the Far East to Europe. India, **4** *for instance/also/in particular*, has a large pool of mobile skilled workers. This globalization of jobs has **5** *consequently/however/as a result* put intense pressure on young people as they search for work in their home countries. **6** *Thus/So/Subsequently*, it is no longer a case of just being good; young people are expected to be top rate.

**7** Decide which functions are indicated by the correct linking devices in exercise 6.

- |          |                   |                   |                     |
|----------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>a</b> contrast | <b>b</b> result   | <b>c</b> addition   |
| <b>2</b> | <b>a</b> contrast | <b>b</b> reason   | <b>c</b> result     |
| <b>3</b> | <b>a</b> addition | <b>b</b> contrast | <b>c</b> result     |
| <b>4</b> | <b>a</b> contrast | <b>b</b> addition | <b>c</b> example    |
| <b>5</b> | <b>a</b> result   | <b>b</b> contrast | <b>c</b> reason     |
| <b>6</b> | <b>a</b> example  | <b>b</b> reason   | <b>c</b> conclusion |

**8** Read the statements below and in each case contradict them. Begin by using one of the following expressions in the box.

Nevertheless, I feel ... ■ However, I think ... ■ Personally, I believe ...

- a** Many feel that young people today have much more influence in the world than past generations.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b** According to some people, older workers are just as equipped to deal with the modern world as young people.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c** Some people feel that modern advertising encourages a negative view of older people and older workers.  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Technique

Always develop and justify opinions. Make a statement and use linking devices as trigger words to think up and organize ideas.

## Writing introductions

**1** Read the questions and introductions below. Match each introduction a–c with one of the questions 1–4.

- 1** All forms of media but especially films and TV programmes should be censored to protect young people. To what extent do you agree?
- 2** The younger generation are the main driving force behind many of the latest technological developments. How far do you agree?
- 3** Blogs on the web are very effective ways for people to express their ideas. What is your opinion?
- 4** The modern emphasis on computers reduces the development of any creative ability. How far do you agree?
- a** It is certainly important to make sure that people are protected from harmful material in various media. However, I feel that care needs to be taken in doing so for various reasons.
- b** In some areas, it does appear that computers reduce creativity, but I also feel they can be used as a tool to develop creative ability in many fields.
- c** While the youth of today definitely have an impact on the way new technology develops, there are other factors involved.

### Technique

Keep your introductions short. Write only one or two sentences.

**2** For the remaining title, write your own introduction. Try to paraphrase the statement in the title in one sentence. Then write another statement to show how you intend to organize your essay using a general noun.

# Practice Test 5

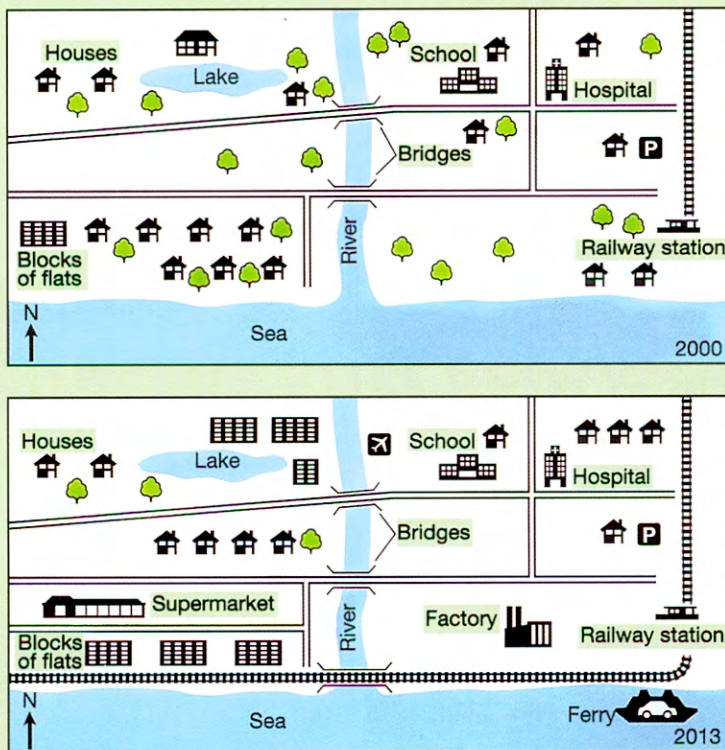
## Task 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The maps below show the changes that took place at the seaside resort of Templeton between 2000 and 2013.

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

Write at least 150 words.



### Task 1 Checklist

- 1 Look at the information on the maps and note any dates given.
- 2 Paraphrase the task statement in the introduction.
- 3 Write an overview sentence to summarize the types of changes.
- 4 Decide on a way to organize your answer, e.g. changes in the north and changes in the south.
- 5 Write two paragraphs about the details of the changes.
- 6 Write a concluding paragraph summarizing the changes, if necessary.

## Task 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task. Write about the following topic:

**Young people are much more aware of and concerned about issues like the environment, poverty and animal welfare than previous generations. What is your own opinion?**

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

Write at least 250 words.

## Writing for IELTS 4.5–6.0

*Improve your IELTS Skills 4.5-6.0* is a three book series for students preparing to take the IELTS exam. The series aims to develop the skills, language and test techniques required to achieve an IELTS band score of 6.

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- **Technique boxes** with ideas on how to approach the IELTS Writing tasks
- **Practice test:** a complete Writing paper based on the unit topic with model answers.

COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK

A1 A2 B1 **B2** C1 C2

