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Writing *for IELTS*

with Answer Key

6.0–7.5



Stephanie Dimond-Bayir


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Introduction

Are you taking or re-taking your IELTS exam and hoping to gain a high score? Would you like to improve your academic writing skills? If so, this book is designed to help you.

Improve your Skills: Writing for IELTS 6.0–7.5 can be used for self-study or in the classroom with a teacher as part of a course. It can be used alongside other books or studied on its own.

Why use this book?

Successful academic writing is not just about practising a lot, although this helps! It requires you to do a number of things:

- comprehend the process of writing from the first stage (understanding the question) to the final stage (proofreading your final answer)
- recognize and produce the style, features and formats typical of academic writing
- develop the appropriate range of vocabulary, expressions and grammatical forms associated with successful academic writing
- be familiar with typical contexts and topics

Scoring well in the IELTS exam additionally requires you to utilize a variety of exam strategies and techniques, applying the skills and knowledge you have developed to produce a strong answer.

Working systematically through this book should support you in improving all these areas, helping you to understand the requirements of good academic writing then apply them effectively to achieve a higher score in the exam.

The content of the book

Improve your Skills: Writing for IELTS is divided into 10 units. The topics are typical of those found in the exam, ensuring that you have an awareness of likely subject matter.

Each unit is subdivided into three parts: Task 1, Task 2 and a Practice test. There is an answer key at the end of the book, as well as sample answers for the Practice test questions.

Task 1 covers the vocabulary, structures and writing features required to answer the first task in the exam successfully. This means it highlights the necessary language content, including related structures and grammar. It will develop your awareness of the processes of writing to support you in answering Task 1 questions more effectively. It will help you to understand the styles and formats of writing required. Throughout, it will provide practical exercises to give you practice applying this knowledge.

Task 2 repeats the process for the second task in the exam, developing the language, processes and skills needed to tackle this question. Each unit covers different aspects or formats required for Task 2 so that you are familiar with the range of task types which you may meet in the exam.

Technique boxes are found throughout each unit and are designed to give you practical tips and strategies on improving exam performance.

A **Practice test** is found at the end of each unit. Each Practice test gives you an example of both task questions, in the exam format.

Tips for using the book

If studying alone, it is recommended that you work through the book in chronological order as the skills and content build progressively. However, if you are working with a teacher you may be asked to focus on specific areas of the book or you may wish to focus on the content you have most difficulty with.

Using the Practice tests

You can use the Practice tests informally, as extra practice, or as a 'mock' exam, testing yourself either at home or in the class in exam conditions.

Ideally you should do some of the Practice tests in real time, i.e. giving yourself 60 minutes to complete both tasks without using a dictionary or any other support. You may wish to start by splitting the tasks and taking a break between each one. However, it is important to do some of the tests within a set time limit. This will allow you to see how you perform in exam conditions.

Using the Answer key

The key at the end of the book will allow you to check all your answers to the unit exercises. For each of the Practice test questions you will also find sample answers at the back of the book. The sample answers cover a range of student answers, from low to high level, and there is a commentary after each one, highlighting the typical errors and issues in the answer. Some of the high-level samples offer excellent models – though they are not the only way to answer the questions. Other samples are at a lower level and are invaluable in helping you understand the issues and typical errors to be avoided.

Summary of IELTS Writing Test Academic Module requirements

TASK 1	Describing a table, chart, diagram or process using evidence from the graphic provided	20 minutes; minimum 150 words
TASK 2	An essay describing a problem, response or opinion on typical topics	40 minutes; minimum 250 words

Food and the environment

UNIT AIMS

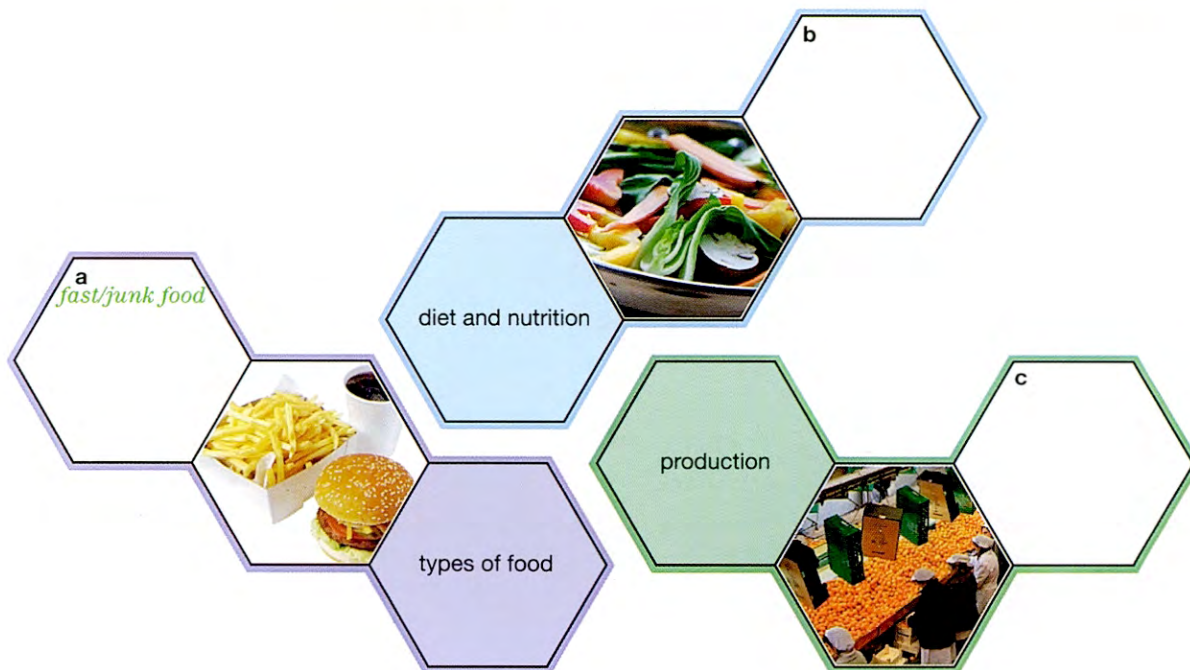
TASK 1 Food and nutrition vocabulary
Expressing purpose
Structure of a flow chart essay

TASK 2 Giving reasons
Ordering an 'evaluating solutions' essay
Referencing to avoid repetition

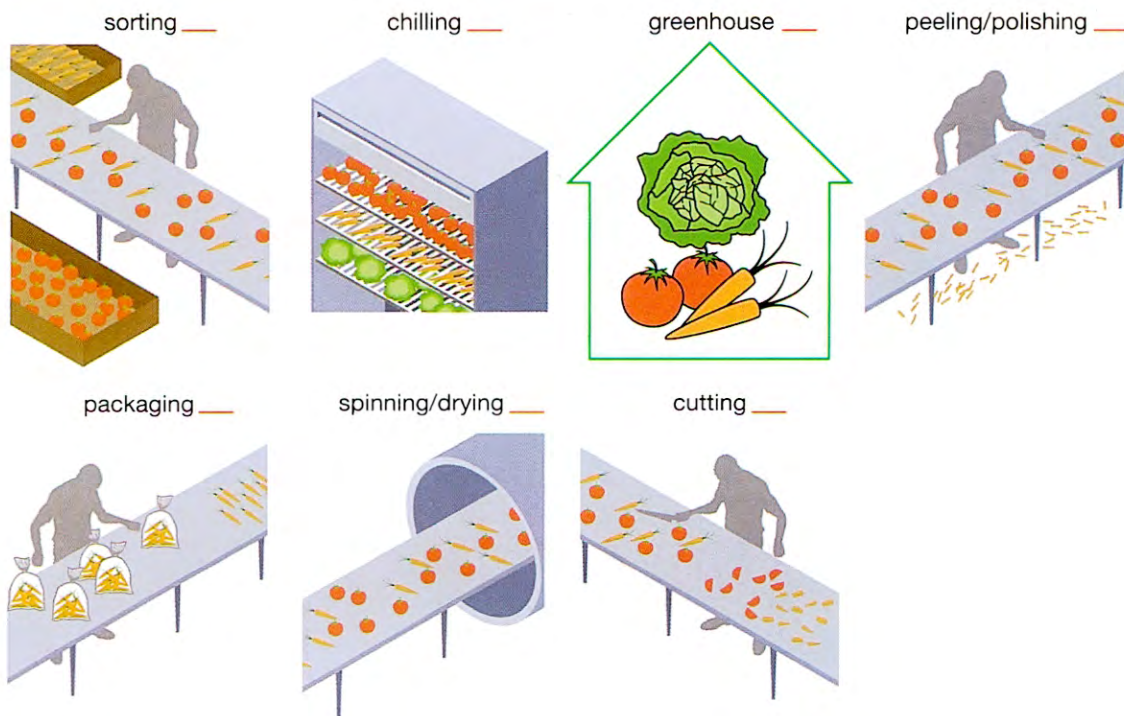
Task 1 Expressing purpose

- 1 What is your favourite type of food? What food do you dislike?
- 2 List two or three dishes that are traditional in your country and two or three that have been 'imported' from other places. Answer the questions.
 - Are they similar or different?
 - How healthy are they?
 - How popular are they?
 - How much do they cost?
- 3 Do you think the types of food people eat will change in the future? Why/why not?
- 4 Complete the diagram with words and phrases from the box. You can use two items twice.

balanced ■ comfort ■ confectionery ■ convenience ■ crash ■ delicious
factory farming ■ fast/junk food ■ free-range ■ intensive farming ■ obesity
organic farming ■ macrobiotic ■ pesticides ■ savoury ■ sensible
sustainable agriculture ■ starvation ■ (un)healthy



5 Read the description and look at the pictures, which show how vegetables are prepared and packaged before they are sold. Number the pictures in the correct order to create a flow chart.



The flow chart identifies how vegetables and fruit are cleaned and prepared for sale.

There are a number of different stages undertaken in order to ensure that the vegetables are in the correct condition for the shops. These include cleaning, cutting and packaging.

The first stage of the process begins when the vegetables and fruit are picked and taken out of the greenhouse. Having been collected, they are subsequently sorted by hand so as to remove any that are below standard. Those that are good enough are then polished or peeled depending on the type of vegetable or fruit they are. Similarly, some are also pre-cut for market. Next all the vegetables and fruit are put through a process of chilling to keep them fresh. After this initial chilling, the produce is put through a spinning machine so that it is dry. Finally the end product is packaged in order that it meets the standards required for selling.

In summary, the process of preparation ensures that vegetables and fruit are all cleaned, cut as necessary and packaged so that they are in good condition and can be sold in shops and supermarkets.

6 Answer the questions below.

1 Match the sections a–d with the content i–iv.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| a introduction | i clarifies the parts of the process more specifically |
| b first paragraph | ii gives detailed information about each part of the process |
| c second paragraph | iii general overall statement made about the complete process |
| d conclusion | iv identifies the type of information shown in the flow chart overall |

2 Find an example of a participle clause in the text in 5.

3 Find some examples of 'signposting' language in the text in 5.

Technique

If the question in Part 1 is about a process, you still need to make a plan for this. Does the process have different stages or phases? How many? You should include an overview of this.

7 Complete the sentences using words and phrases from the text in 5.

- 1 There are a number of different stages undertaken _____ ensure the vegetables are in the correct condition.
- 2 They are sorted by hand _____ remove any that are below standard.
- 3 Some are pre-cut _____ market.
- 4 They are put through a process of chilling _____ keep them fresh.
- 5 The produce is put through a spinning machine _____ it is dry.
- 6 The product is packaged _____ it meets the standards required for selling.

Technique

When describing a process, make sure that you vary the way you clarify reasons and don't put in too many expressions of purpose. Use enough to ensure the process is clear but try to avoid using them at the start of every sentence or the writing will sound clumsy.

8 Look at the words and phrases in the gaps in 7. Which function do they have?

9 Complete the table using words and phrases from 7.

Expressing purpose	Structure
1 _____	+ infinitive verb
2 _____	
3 _____	
4 _____	+ noun/gerund
5 _____	+ subject and verb (clause)
6 _____	

10 Match 1–5 with a–e to make sentences about farmers' markets, where farmers sell their produce directly to people.

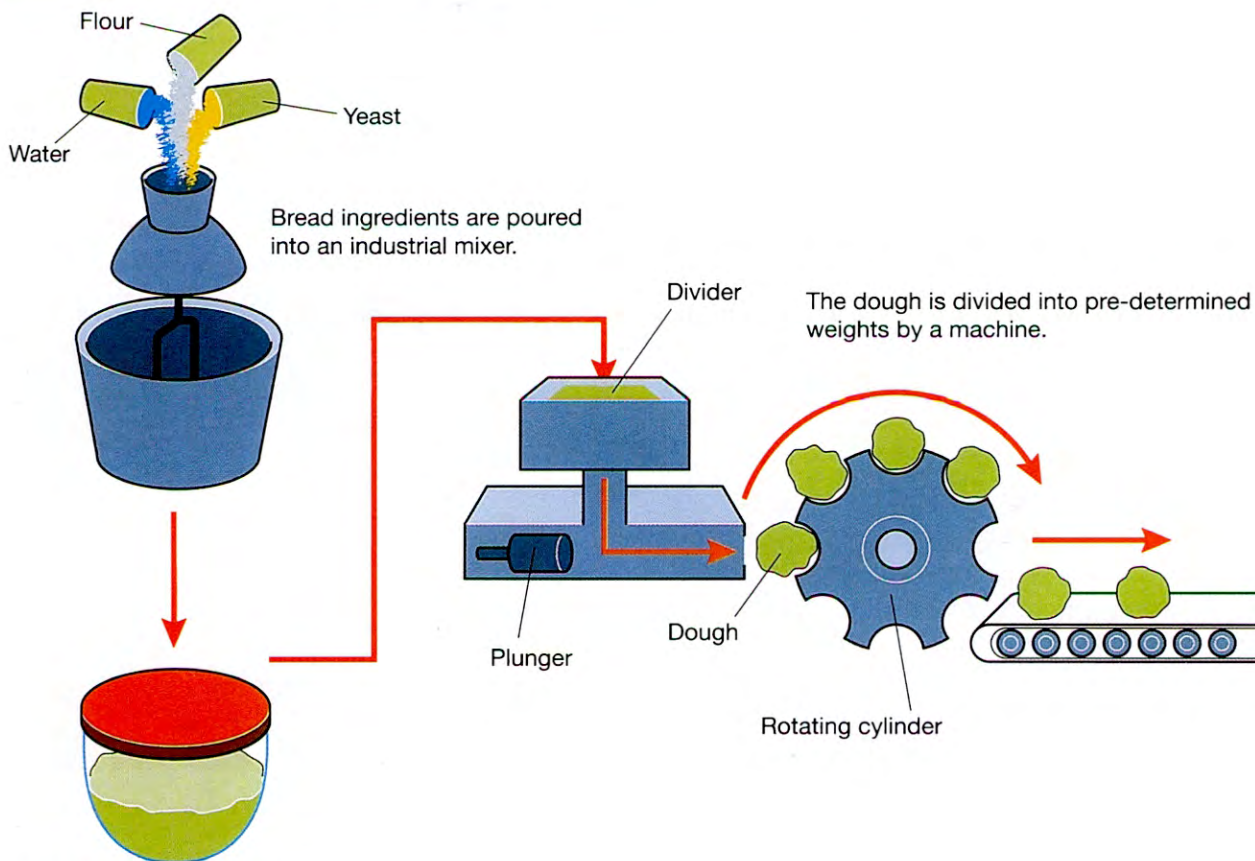
- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Originally, people farmed land 2 Eventually farmers' markets evolved 3 Often the farmers would go to a central 4 Farmers' markets declined when 5 Recent interest in organic food has led to | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a larger numbers of farmers' markets again, opened so that people can get fresh or organic produce. b so as to feed themselves and their families. c to sell the produce to others as well. d square in order to sell their products. e people chose supermarkets for their shopping. |
|--|---|



11 Look at the flow chart, which shows the first industrial process for making dough. Then answer the questions.

Technique

When you look at a process or flow chart, at the planning stage think about the tools, equipment or ingredients involved, how many parts of the process there are and the cause and effect relationship of each part.



The dough is fermented naturally or by adding additives.

- 1 Write a sentence to describe what the flow chart shows.
- 2 Write two sentences describing a) the ingredients and b) the main parts of the process.
- 3 Write a sentence describing:
 - a why the ingredients are put into an industrial mixer.
 - b why additives are added.
 - c why the dough is put into a divider.
- 4 Write a summary of the whole process.

Technique

The ideas you present must be relevant and clear and cover each element of the process. Tick each part of the flow chart once you have included it to check this happens. You won't have time to put in a lot of detail but if you miss a step of the process, the description won't be logical.

Task 2 Giving reasons

- 1 Look at the pictures of farming methods. What similarities and differences can you identify?
- 2 How do the words in each set 1–4 connect to each other?
 - 1 deforestation → soil erosion → less food production
 - 2 global warming → unreliable rainfall → poor crops
 - 3 war → farming prevented → imports and exports prevented
 - 4 rising prices → less available food → starvation
- 3 Read the sentences and check you understand the meaning of the words in *italics*.
 - 1 Eating *wholefoods* and natural produce is important for me. They are healthier than other foods.
 - 2 Intensive farming increases the use of pesticides and *chemical fertilizers*. I prefer to shop at a farmers' market where the food is usually locally produced and organic.
 - 3 *Genetically modified* crops are crucial I think. They help to prevent starvation, producing much greater quantities of crops.
 - 4 *Overgrazing* and *deforestation* mean there is less land for food production. Farmers and landowners should be banned from allowing this.
 - 5 Developed countries should focus on solutions for *climate change*. This issue has a great impact on food production in developing countries.
- 4 Change each sentence in 3, if necessary, so that it is true for you. Think about why the sentences are/are not true for you.
- 5 Read the following sentences and underline the conjunction in each.
 - a As wholefoods are healthier than other foods, eating natural produce is important for me.
 - b Eating natural produce is important for me because wholefoods are healthier than others.
 - c Since wholefoods and natural produce are healthier than other types, eating them is important for me.
- 6 Rewrite sentences 2–5 in 3. In each case use a different conjunction.



Technique

When you need to give reasons, you can show this by extending the structure of your sentence using linkers.

7 Look at the Task 1 question below. Is it asking you to find solutions or evaluate a solution?

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Some people believe that famine is caused by climate change and preventing this will stop famine. What is your view of this?

Write at least 250 words.

8 Look at the introduction and conclusion of the essay. Put the sentences in the correct order.

Introduction

- a Some people believe this is the result of climate change and the impact it has on farming and the ability of less-developed countries to produce sufficient food.
- b Famine is a terrible problem which astonishingly still exists in the 21st century.
- c Indeed, millions of people still die from starvation every year.
- d However, I will argue that, whilst this is one factor which contributes to the problem of famine, there are other causes which have as much impact and must also be considered.

Conclusion

- a In summary, what is needed is for a range of causes to be tackled, and global warming is only one of them.
- b Politics, economics and technology also have a part to play.
- c Whilst global warming is a significant contributor to the problem, and addressing it would also help prevent famine, this alone would not end famine.
- d There are clearly many factors involved in the causes of famine.

9 An essay which evaluates solutions often describes the proposed solution and looks at the disadvantages and the advantages. Read paragraph 1 of the essay below. What order do these three elements appear in?

Of course the impact of climate change can't be underestimated in relation to famine. Climate change is, in itself, caused by many different factors including deforestation and polluted air. The ¹deforestation problem leads to soil erosion. The ²polluted air problem increases temperatures. ³Deforestation and polluted air contribute to unpredictable rainfall patterns which damage crops and the quality of vegetation that grows, preventing steady food production in developing countries. Farmers in ⁴developing countries usually don't have enough money for measures which will help counteract the effects, e.g. anti-flooding or irrigation methods. Consequently, preventing climate change would decrease ⁵climate change's unpredictable effects and therefore reduce famine. Agricultural planning would be easier as farmers would know what the likely seasonal changes would be. However, climate change is a vast problem and not ⁶a problem easily solved. ⁷The problem requires a global effort and huge investment, which is difficult to achieve quickly in the short term.

10 What problem can you see in the writing?

11 Replace the words in *italics* 1–7 in the text in 9 with the words below. Read the paragraph again. What is the effect?

- a It b former c such places d the e latter f one g Both of these

12 Match the reference words a–f with the definitions 1–7. You can use some words more than once.

- 1 replaces a singular noun at the end of the previous sentence
 - 2 replaces a plural noun at the end of a previous sentence
 - 3 replaces a process or situation
 - 4 replaces the first noun in the preceding sentence when there are two
 - 5 replaces the last noun in the preceding sentence when there are two
 - 6 combines with 'as this/as these' or similar to replace a repeated noun
 - 7 replaces the article before a preceding noun
- a they/these
 - b one
 - c the latter
 - d it/this
 - e such
 - f the former

- 13** Read paragraph 2 of the essay. Does it evaluate the same solution as paragraph 1 or offer and evaluate an alternative solution?

Alongside climate change, politics is an important issue to consider when looking at famine. The decisions of political parties and the impact of wars heavily affects the likelihood of famine. In some parts of India, for example, it was a consistent problem until independence was declared. After this it halted. War means that scarce resources are spent on weapons or armies and not invested in farming. Such approaches prevent farmers from long-term planning and managing their land in a normal way. Consequently, preventing war would also prevent famine. In other words, having control over unstable political systems and influence over the processes of war would allow governments to formulate more stable agricultural policies. However, managing these types of changes is demanding and it is unrealistic to suggest that this is achievable, at least for now.

- 14** Look at the underlined words in paragraph 2 and draw a line to show which noun each one refers to.

- 15** Complete the next part of the essay with suitable reference words, to avoid repetition.

Finally, the use of technology could have an influence on when and how often famine happens. ¹ _____ is an important factor because ² _____ can help to improve the situation long-term by offering some control to the people of the countries affected. For example, if ³ _____ people were able to access water pumps to irrigate ⁴ _____ farms, they may be able to avoid losing crops. Also, food technology and improved food distribution could allow people to manage long-term planning better. ⁵ _____ approach takes ⁶ _____ issue out of the hands of politicians and does not depend upon climate change being solved.

- 16** Read the notes for the final part of the essay. Write them out using reference words, to avoid repetition.

Technology – difficult, requires economic investment. Some money for water pumps, etc. raised through charity but often limited. However, of all solutions this one viable immediately.

Technique

Leave time at the end of your essay to check it through and think about repetition. You will be graded on the range of language you use. Constant repetition suggests that your range is limited, so try to avoid it. Using reference words shows good control of language.

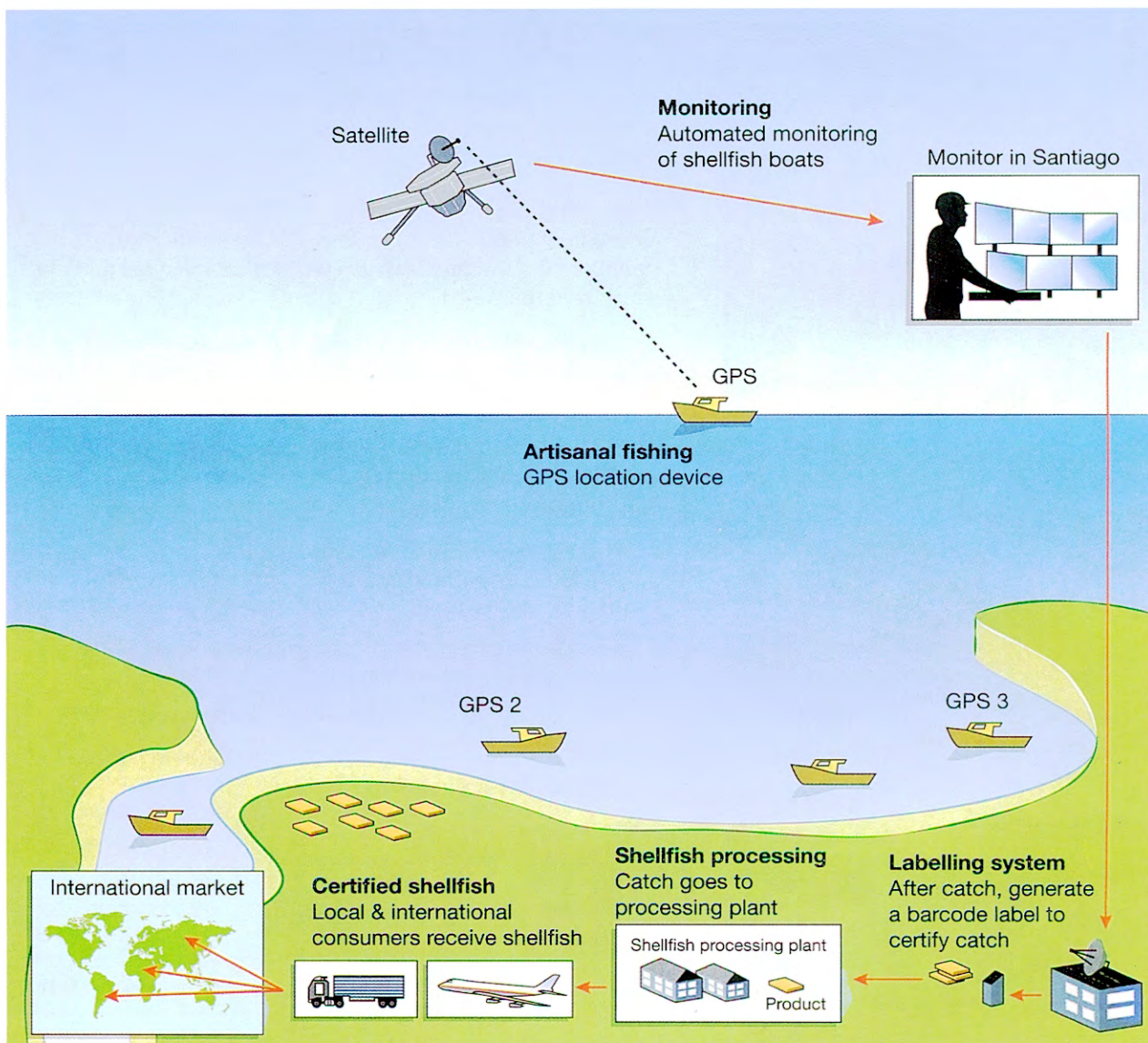
Practice Test 6

Task 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The diagram shows the process for labelling shellfish for the international market. Summarize the information by selecting and reporting the main features.

Write at least 150 words.



Task 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Poor nutrition and obesity is a problem in many developed countries and some people believe that a tax on fast food would reduce the problem. Do you agree?

Write at least 250 words.

Writing for IELTS 6.0–7.5

Improve your IELTS Skills 6.0-7.5 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 7 or higher.

The series can be used for self-study or in class. Each of the ten topic-based units guides you through the activities step by step.

Improve your Writing Skills for IELTS offers complete preparation for the IELTS Writing tests.

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- **Language development** helpful phrases and vocabulary to use in each writing task to ensure students are well prepared and confident
- **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

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