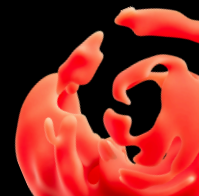


IELTS General Writing: Tasks 1 & 2

A complete lesson for success



Introduction to IELTS General Writing

The IELTS General Writing test consists of two tasks:

- **Task 1:** Writing a letter (150 words minimum) in response to a given situation.
- **Task 2:** Writing an essay (250 words minimum) in response to a given argument or problem.

This lesson will equip you with the skills and strategies you need to excel in both tasks. Remember, **time management** is crucial. Allocate approximately 20 minutes for Task 1 and 40 minutes for Task 2.

Task 1: Mastering Letter Writing

In Task 1, you'll be presented with a scenario and asked to write a letter. Common letter types include:

- **Formal:** To a company, organization, or someone you don't know.
- **Semi-formal:** To someone you know professionally or acquaintances.
- **Informal:** To a friend or family member.

Key Elements of a Successful Letter:

- **Purpose:** Clearly state the reason for writing.
- **Clarity:** Use simple and direct language.
- **Organization:** Structure your letter logically.
- **Tone:** Maintain the appropriate level of formality.
- **Grammar & Vocabulary:** Use accurate grammar and a range of vocabulary.

Step-by-Step Guide to Writing Task 1 Letters

Follow these steps for an effective Task 1 letter:

1. **Understand the Prompt:** Read the prompt carefully and identify the letter type and required information.

2. **Plan Your Letter:** Brainstorm ideas and create a brief outline.
3. **Write the Letter:**
 - **Salutation:** Choose the appropriate greeting (e.g., Dear Sir/Madam, Dear Mr. Smith, Dear John).
 - **Introduction:** State your purpose clearly.
 - **Body Paragraphs:** Develop your ideas in separate paragraphs.
 - **Conclusion:** Summarize your points and state your desired outcome.
 - **Closing:** Use an appropriate closing (e.g., Yours faithfully, Yours sincerely, Best regards).
4. **Check and Edit:** Review your letter for errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Example Prompt:

You recently bought a product online that was faulty. Write a letter to the company complaining about the product and requesting a refund or replacement.

Sample Answer (Formal):

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with a product I recently purchased from your website, order number #12345. I bought a Bluetooth speaker on July 10th, 2024, and upon receiving it, I discovered that it was faulty.

The speaker does not power on, despite following all the instructions in the user manual. I have tried charging it for several hours, but it remains unresponsive. This is extremely disappointing, as I was looking forward to using the speaker.

Therefore, I request either a full refund for the product or a replacement with a fully functioning speaker. I have attached a copy of my purchase receipt as proof of purchase. Please let me know the steps I need to take to return the faulty item.

I look forward to your prompt response and resolution to this matter.

Yours faithfully,
[Your Name]

Activity: Task 1 Practice

Prompt:

You are planning a surprise birthday party for a friend. Write a letter to another friend asking for help with the preparations.

Task 2: Essay Writing Strategies

Task 2 requires you to write an essay in response to a given statement or question. Common essay types include:

- **Opinion:** Expressing your personal view on a topic.
- **Discussion:** Presenting different viewpoints on a topic.
- **Problem & Solution:** Identifying a problem and suggesting solutions.
- **Advantages & Disadvantages:** Weighing the pros and cons of a topic.

Key Elements of a Successful Essay:

- **Clear Thesis Statement:** State your main argument clearly in the introduction.
- **Supporting Arguments:** Provide evidence and examples to support your claims.
- **Logical Organization:** Structure your essay in a coherent manner.
- **Cohesive Writing:** Use linking words to connect your ideas smoothly.
- **Grammar & Vocabulary:** Demonstrate a strong command of English.

Step-by-Step Guide to Writing Task 2 Essays

Follow these steps for a well-written Task 2 essay:

1. **Understand the Prompt:** Read the prompt carefully and identify the essay type and topic.
2. **Plan Your Essay:** Brainstorm ideas, create an outline, and formulate a clear thesis statement.
3. **Write the Essay:**
 - **Introduction:** Introduce the topic, provide background information, and state your thesis statement.
 - **Body Paragraphs:** Develop your supporting arguments in separate paragraphs, providing evidence and examples.
 - **Conclusion:** Summarize your main points and restate your thesis statement in different words.
4. **Check and Edit:** Review your essay for errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and coherence.

Example Prompt:

Some people believe that technology has made life more complicated, while others think it has made life easier. Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Sample Answer (Opinion/Discussion):

In contemporary society, technology's impact on daily life is a subject of ongoing debate. While some argue that it has introduced unnecessary complexities, others maintain that it has significantly simplified various aspects of our existence. This essay will explore both perspectives before offering my own opinion.

On the one hand, technology has undoubtedly created challenges. The constant need to update software, learn new devices, and manage online security can be overwhelming, particularly for those less familiar with digital tools. Furthermore, the reliance on technology can lead to social isolation and a decrease in face-to-face interaction. The potential for cyberbullying and online scams also adds a layer of complexity to modern life.

However, technology has also brought about numerous conveniences. Communication has become instantaneous through email and social media, enabling people to connect across vast distances. Access to information has been democratized through the internet, empowering individuals to learn and explore new ideas. Moreover, technology has streamlined many tasks, from online banking to automated household chores, saving time and effort.

In my opinion, while technology presents certain challenges, its benefits far outweigh its drawbacks. The key lies in using technology responsibly and developing the skills necessary to navigate its complexities. By embracing lifelong learning and promoting digital literacy, we can harness the power of technology to improve our lives without being overwhelmed by its demands.

In conclusion, technology's influence on modern life is multifaceted, with both positive and negative aspects. While acknowledging the challenges it presents, it is essential to recognize the immense opportunities it offers for progress and development. By embracing technology thoughtfully and responsibly, we can unlock its full potential and create a more efficient and connected world.

Activity: Task 2 Practice

Prompt:

Universities should provide students with practical skills that are directly related to employment, rather than theoretical knowledge. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Conclusion

This lesson has provided a comprehensive overview of the IELTS General Writing test, focusing on both Task 1 and Task 2. By understanding the key elements of each task, following the step-by-step guides, and practicing regularly, you can significantly improve your writing skills and increase your chances of success on the IELTS exam. Remember to manage your time effectively and always review your work for errors. Good luck!