

An Academic Guide to IELTS Speaking
and Writing



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IELTS Examiner's Tips

KAROLINA ACHIRRI

IELTS EXAMINER'S TIPS

**An Academic Guide
to IELTS Speaking and Writing**



Chopstick Press
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Table of Content

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

CHAPTER 1 IELTS FEARS - Q&A section

GENERAL

SPEAKING

WRITING

CHAPTER 2 DOs and DON'Ts in IELTS Speaking Room Examiners' pet peeves

CHAPTER 3 HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED? ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

SPEAKING

WRITING TASK 1

WRITING TASK 2

CHAPTER 4 VOCABULARY OFTEN MISUSED AND OVERUSED & HOW TO DEAL WITH IT

CHAPTER 5 COMMON SPEAKING TOPICS & POSSIBLE QUESTIONS VOCABULARY
NEEDED FOR BAND 6 & HIGHER

PART 1. TOPICS

PART 2. & 3

THINGS/SKILLS/SITUATIONS/OCCASIONS/ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

PLACES

PEOPLE

CHAPTER 6 WRITING TYPE TASK 1 & TASK 2 HOW TO WRITE WELL

TASK 1

TASK 2

WRITING TOPICS & KEY IDEAS FOR ESSAYS

CHAPTER 7 DISCOURSE MARKERS FOR BOTH SPEAKING AND WRITING (E.G. LINKING
WORDS FOR COHESION)

APPENDICES

FAMOUS QUOTATIONS

TENSES

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

IELTS Examiner's Tips: An Academic Guide to IELTS Speaking and Writing is the outcome of countless hours spent testing as well as assisting students in their preparation for IELTS testing.

This textbook provides you with a comprehensive understanding of the test (specifically its Academic Speaking and Writing components). It affords you with all the tools you will need to succeed in your test. The textbook is made extremely useful by real life examples. If you have already achieved a Band 6 and you're struggling to jump to Bands 7,8 & 9, this book is exactly what you need.

The textbook contains of seven chapters and two handy appendices. You don't have to read them in order. I suggest that you pick the information that is most helpful to your study and apply it.

The first chapter answers over 60 of the most frequently asked questions by test takers regarding IELTS in general and its Writing and Speaking parts. It is exclusive as it presents an experienced examiner's point of view.

The second chapter depicts specific dos and don'ts in IELTS Speaking Room. It also suggests most examiners' biggest pet peeves. There are over 25 examples of things candidates do wrong during their interviews. All of them are explained in a comprehensive way.

Chapter 3 tells you how you'll be assessed. It explains all Bands in a very approachable way.

Chapter 4 focuses on vocabulary. It offers you 100 words that candidates tend to overuse or misuse at IELTS. I have also created a list of more than 2000 substitutes for such words. All my suggestions aim at Band 7 or higher and include phonetic transcription for correct pronunciation. Last but not least, this chapter includes some native expressions for situational English. The hope is to help you sound more natural during the spoken part of your exam.

Next, Chapter 5 occupies the biggest part of this textbook. It focuses on IELTS Speaking. This chapter contains 114 topics for PART 1 with over 1000 questions examiners might ask you. Later, it specifies over 150 topics for Part 2. What's more important, I provide you with over 3200 native level words and phrases that will definitely boost your score. Finally, I list over 3600 real questions for Part 3 your examiner is likely to ask.

Chapter 6 deals with IELTS Writing test. It exhibits and analyzes all

possible writing tasks and guides you how to write well. You will find a multitude of tips as to what to write and what not to write in both tasks. I explicate appropriate grammatical structures, punctuation, style and quoting way. You will see visual examples and necessary vocabulary for each question type here. I have also included three exemplar reports and essays for each writing task that would surely receive Bands 8 and 9. This chapter boosts your writing preparation and building skills, and delivers numerous vocabulary pieces for your dream score. Because students often face difficulties with the lack of ideas I have added a bank of 100 most common topics and key ideas that can be directly copied and used where relevant.

The last chapter of this book (Chapter 7) offers discourse markers (e.g. linking words for cohesion) for both IELTS Speaking and Writing. You will find here over 20 conversation fillers native speakers use and lots of discourse markers to express your opinion, compare and contrast, quote, agree, ask for clarification, give examples, etc.

Finally, the two Appendices at the end of this textbook accommodate your need for quotations (especially welcome in your essays) and your knowledge of tenses, explained in a rare and palpable manner.

Why is this textbook unique? Well... An examiner's perspective and authentic vocabulary bank make it simply the most practical guide on the market.

Feel free to use this textbook as your personal source of all you may need to obtain the top-notch score at your IELTS test. Keep calm and study for your IELTS exam!

CHAPTER 1

IELTS FEARS - Q&A section

Ad astra per aspera
(To the stars through difficulty)

GENERAL

1. Can I use my IELTS score to apply to American universities?

Absolutely. IELTS score is currently accepted by most universities in the world. Particular university's website should supply more detailed information.

2. What's the main difference between IELTS and TOEFL?

Both tests are constructed in a completely different way. In practice, TOEFL requires students to be able to understand future lectures and seminars at the university. It does not focus on communication as much as IELTS. The latter checks whether you will be able to easily convey your meaning to professors and classmates abroad. Also, IELTS emphasises language accuracy by paying close attention to grammar and lexis.

3. If my IELTS score is 5.5, what is its TOEFL equivalent?

Score Comparisons

IELTS Score	TOEFL Score
9	118-120
8.5	115-117
8	110-114
7.5	102-109
7	94-101
6.5	79-93
6	60-78
5.5	46-59
5	35-45
4.5	32-34
0-4	0-31

SPEAKING

1. What criteria are used to assess my speaking?

There are 4 main categories examiners refer to when giving a score, namely Fluency and Coherence, Lexical Resource, Grammatical Range and Pronunciation.

Fluency indicates how fluid your speech is, how many pauses you make. It is not about your speed but rather about hesitation, searching for words. The more you pause the lower your fluency score.

Coherence means you speak logically and all the facts match. Your speech has content that makes sense to the listener. The more ‘Why/what do you mean?’ you hear from the examiner, the lower your coherence is.

Lexical Resource represents vocabulary you use throughout your test. If you are targeting scores from 6 to 9, you need to make sure that your answers contain idioms and correct collocations. The more the better but be careful not to sound too artificial.

Grammatical Range focuses on your sentence structures and grammar mistakes. Be sure to use a variety of structures, from simple sentences to complex ones. The number of mistakes matters as well if you want to cross over band 6. The fewer mistakes the better.

Pronunciation is not only your accent but also particular sounds. Is your speech easy to understand? Do you use correct intonation and chunking in phrases? Many students worry that American accent is treated unfairly, as IELTS is a British test. I can assure you this is not the case. Generally speaking, examiners listen for elements of native accents, be it American, British, Australian or Canadian.

2. What shall I focus on for Band 6 and higher?

That’s a big issue. There seems to be a significant gap between Bands 6 and 7. Your coherence needs to be intact at all times and you need to be able to speak at length easily with a good number of linking words. You need to have enough vocabulary for a variety of topics, which means you should not be looking for words. The examiner needs to hear idiomatic expressions and parts of language, which are not common for day-to-day conversations. After all, IELTS is an academic test. What’s more, your grammar should be correct with only a few basic mistakes from time to time. Plus your speech needs to

be understood effortlessly by the examiner.

3. How long is the Speaking test?

Part 1 = 4 to 5 minutes

Part 2 = 3 to 4 minutes

Part 3 = 4 to 5 minutes

Which adds it up to between 11 and 14 minutes. Examiners target a 15-minute interview most of the time.

4. How to speak better and with native (British/American) accent?

The only effective way to improve your accent is to not only listen to authentic materials (such as CNN or BBC) but also mimic pronunciation. Try to shape your lips as native speakers do. Observe their body language. Listen to English songs as it is also a grand way to make progress.

5. Why don't examiners show any emotions?

IELTS examiners are trained to remain unemotional and inexpressive. Don't take it personally. Their smile or the lack of it will not affect your score.

6. What shall I do if I have no idea about the topic?

Well, that seems to be a problem for many test takers. As the age to speak but actually having nothing to say. Not all answers must be your own ideas or opinions. What's important is that you keep going. Use your parents' conversations and TV news to broaden your general knowledge.

7. How to extend my answers?

Don't answer in the form of monosyllabic responses, such as 'Yes, no, I agree etc.' If you are using an adjective to describe your favourite book, explain what it means it's 'fascinating' and why you think so. Try to go on until the examiner stops you.

8. I've taken the test thrice and keep getting 6.5. Why am I not improving?

Probably because you don't know what your problems are. Ask your teachers to assess your English based on IELTS Speaking Test criteria. It's always better to know where our shortcomings are. This way we can focus on fixing them.

9. I've practised with Cambridge books (4 to 9). What other materials could I use to prepare well?

You have certainly made the first step into the right direction by getting this book. Past papers can help you master the test itself but they will not be helpful with skills and general English comprehension. Also, make sure you're using authentic materials prepared by professionals, not books written in your native language.

10. What shall I do if my examiner interrupts me? Is it good or bad?

Don't let it worry you. Examiners need to control the time of the interview, so if he or she interrupts you it is most probably because your answer isn't clear enough. Interruptions and additional questions (like 'Why?') are used to clarify your meaning. However, you should be aware that if an examiner needs to make sure they understand what your idea is, your Coherence score will most certainly be affected.

11. What shall I say if the examiner speaks too fast and I can't catch the question?

Ask her or him to repeat the question or slow down. It's better to make sure you understood clearly than start answering a completely different question. You will be off-topic then. In normal natural conversation speakers ask for clarification all the time.

12. How can I overcome my grammar mistakes?

First, make sure you know the correct grammar. Oftentimes candidates realize they have just made a mistake but they are afraid to correct it, thinking it will affect their score. Self-correction is a very crucial skill in any language. It shows you have awareness of grammar and your mistakes become errors. (For tenses reference see Appendices section of this book.)

13. Why do I need sophisticated vocabulary for the Speaking test? It seems pretentious.

You don't need it but it helps if your dream is Band 7 or higher. Remember that IELTS tests whether you can survive in an academic environment when you go abroad. Professors at universities use sophisticated vocabulary. You need it, too.

14. How to classify and learn vocabulary in a clear way?

There is an abundance of methods to learn vocabulary in a productive way. But first and foremost you should check what type of a learner you are. There are three main kinds: a visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learner. The first one learns through seeing while the auditory one needs to hear to remember. The last one wants to feel and experience to know. It's important to know which category you fall into.

Personally, I have always liked the concept from psychology called SCREAMS.

- Say key vocabulary words
- Use Concept mapping or word webs
- Read words in context

- Extract personal meaning
 - Actively learn through using the new word frequently
 - Memory formation (sense-making) based on usefulness of the word
 - Self-monitoring for new opportunities to use the newly learned word
- Always learn vocabulary in thematic groups (books, food, sounds etc.). A randomly heard word is not going to stay in your long-term memory if your brain cannot connect it with something you already know.

15. How can I practise Speaking by myself?

Yes, you can, but... Feedback will be missing. Having a study buddy is always a good idea. You can correct each other and benefit from each other's strengths and weaknesses. It is also a good idea to record your practice sessions and then hand them in to your teacher. A professional linguist will be able to locate problematic areas faster and more effectively.

16. Do I need to jot anything down in Speaking Part 2?

It is not a must. Paper and pencil are provided to candidates for the purpose of organizing their long-turn. A lot of test takers take notes but never use them during Part 2. If you decide to write something down, be certain to make use of it.

17. I know quite a good number of high-level vocabulary but when it comes to my Speaking test my mind goes blank and I can't use any of them. What shall I do?

It's one thing to understand the words you see in a text or hear around you, but a completely different thing to be able to apply them by yourself. Before coming to your IELTS Speaking Test, try to place 5 'good words' in one complex sentence. The more you'll practise the easier it will get.

18. How to speak coherently?

Firstly, listen to the question carefully. If it starts with 'when', talk about the time and not a place where something happened. Then, expand your answer as much as you can but still focus on the main topic you decided to use. Making mind maps helps with coherence. Remember to ask the examiner to clarify or repeat the question if you are not sure what it refers to.

19. What shall I do a week before my test?

Relax. I know it sounds like a cliché, but you have studied hard and prepared for the past month or so. Now is the time for your brain to absorb all the knowledge and organize it. Do not memorize any answers! Think in English! Watch some good English films, read gripping books, talk to native speakers. Keep your stress levels tamed.

20. How to sound more natural?

Expose yourself to authentic listening and visual material put together by native speakers of English. BBC and CNN websites yield plenty of functional language material. Mimic chosen pronunciation by speaking out loud and shaping your lips properly. Copy, copy, copy!

21. Shall I memorize the best answer?

Never should you do that! Examiners hate memorized answers and believe me when I say it is extremely easy to discern them. A lot of candidates tend to lose logic once they forget one word in a sequence. This will take your score down drastically.

22. Shall I look at the examiner while speaking?

Yes. Normally, eye contact is a weighty part of a conversation. If you are too shy to look into your examiner's eyes, pick a spot right behind their head on the wall. Focus on it. To the examiner it will seem like you are still maintaining eye contact. Psychology claims that people who avoid eye contact are potential liars.

23. Can I sing a song if the topic is related to music?

Well, it depends on how relaxed you feel your Test is. I know of instances of candidates singing but mostly because they couldn't keep on talking for 2 minutes. It's always better to keep it professional and academic.

24. Shall I correct my grammar or pronunciation mistakes when I realize I made them?

Yes, but right after you've made them. Don't say: 'By the way, that sentence I used three questions ago was wrong.' Correct instantly and you will seem as a student with language awareness, which is a highly valued attribute.

25. Can I ask the examiner to explain words I don't know? Is it going to affect my score?

Examiners can basically explain words only in Parts 2 and 3. So don't ask: 'Could you rephrase the question?' in Part 1. They simply cannot do that. Only repeating a question once is allowed in Part 1. Asking for vocabulary simplification will affect your Lexical Resource score.

26. I only covered one point in Part 2. Is that a problem?

The points provided on a card in Part 2 are only there to help you organize your answer. You do not need to stick to them strictly. Just make sure you cover your topic and you will be fine. Answers like: 'Moving on to the second point...' are not examiners' favourite.

27. The examiner stopped me. Will this affect my score?

Usually when an examiner stops a candidate it means candidate's answer was clear and comprehensive. It simply means you were still talking when the time earmarked for your answer came to an end. Nothing to worry about.

28. Can I ask the examiner to change my topic in Part 2?

Unfortunately no, you can't. The topics are chosen for you before you enter the exam room. One part of being a capable English speaker entails the ability to talk about any topic.

29. How can I come across as more confident during my test?

Try to maintain eye contact. Sit up and react to questions with appropriate body language. As I always tell my students: 'Don't be a robot!'

30. Can I give short answers?

You can, but it will affect the Grammatical Range criterion. Follow one simple rule: ABS, which stands for ALWAYS BE SPEAKING! And you'll be fine. Beyond everything, you have come to the test to exhibit your English at its best.

31. Does being fluent mean I need to speak fast?

No, it does not. This concept is often mistaken. Being fluent means you do not need to pause too often to search for language to express yourself. Your speech pace has nothing to do with it.

32. Will the examiner give me a higher score if I dress well and look pretty?

Your attire is not a subject of assessment. Dress smart but comfortably. Also, contrary to what many female candidates believe, putting on heavy make-up to impress the examiner is not the most tenable notion.

WRITING

1. On what factors is my Writing assessed?

There are four criteria used for writing evaluation. Three of them are identical for Task 1 and 2 (Coherence and Cohesion, Lexical Resource and Grammatical Range and Accuracy), whereas one differs. In Task 1 it is called Task Achievement and in Task 2 Task Response.

Coherence represents logic of your writing and cohesion stands for linking words and the way you connect your ideas with each other. Lexical Resource means vocabulary you use, including collocations and idioms, but also spelling errors you make. Grammatical Range and Accuracy conveys the meaning of grammar errors as well as punctuation. The more error-free sentences you can write the higher your score will be.

As for Task Achievement in Task 1, it focuses on covering all requirements of the task, presenting a clear overview, categorizing information well and developing response in a clear way. Similarly, in Task 2, a candidate should not only present the main ideas but also extend and support them without overgeneralizing. Ideas need to be shown in a detailed way and supported with relevant examples.

2. What shall I focus on for Band 6 and higher?

In the Writing test, presenting a clear overview is extremely pivotal. Make sure you cover all major features. You may skip the details but the bullet points need to be present. In Task 2, your position should be obvious as well. The information needs to be organized logically and with a progressive trend, which basically means it needs to go somewhere. For Band 7 and higher, the number of grammar mistakes matters as well as your awareness of style and usage of idioms and collocations. The essay should present a wide range of sentence structures including a good number of complex sentences. Your writing does not need to be error free but only some slips should occur. Basically, the examiner needs to feel like nothing could be added to your answer.

3. Which part of my writing test is more important? Task 1 or Task 2?

Task 2 carries 60% of your final score for writing whereas Task 1 holds 40%.

4. How many words shall I write in both parts of my writing test? Will I be penalized if I write fewer/more than required?

There is a very clear word count for both parts of your Writing test. Task 1 should ideally have 150 words whereas Task 2 250. It is ok to exceed by 10%, but remember that the more you write the more mistakes you will most likely make. When it comes to writing too few words, your Task Achievement/Response criterion will be affected. The breakdown of penalties is as follows:

Task 1: 101-140 minus 1 in Task Achievement or Task Response, 51-100 minus 2 in TA/TR and below 51 words will cost you minus 3 in TA/TR category.

5. How much time do I have for each Task?

It is suggested that you spend 20 minutes on Task 1 and 40 minutes on Task 2. But of course it is up to you. Totally you will have 60 min for your Writing Test. I suggest you start with the task that you find more troublesome.

6. What can I do if I don't understand the topic for Task 2 or simply have nothing to say on the topic?

It's always important to show general knowledge on your IELTS test. However, if you really don't know anything about the topic and can't come up with any examples, write anyway. Change a topic slightly and write the essay. You will be penalised for the lack of logic, but the examiner will still assess your grammar and vocabulary. It is still possible to get a Band 3 or 4 even if your essay is completely off-topic.

7. How to make the essay shorter and more to the point?

Start with a plan. Many IELTS takers underestimate the power of a well-thought plan. It takes a minute but helps enormously with writing logically and providing pertinent ideas. Your plan can be in a form of a mind map, spider diagram or just rudimentary annotations. The form does not matter as long as you use it as the basis for your essay.

8. How can I overcome my grammar mistakes?

It may come to you as a surprise, but if only you read or scanned your essay before handing it in, you would be able to spot 50% of your mistakes. From my experience, the lion's share of candidates does not bother to self-correct their writings. There is definitely enough time to do it, as it only takes a minute. Remember to correct what you can before your essay gets to examiners' hands.

9. How to be logical in Writing?

Follow the draft! I cannot emphasize this enough. The only way to start logically and stay cogent is to abide by your own strategy. Also, you would

want to make sure that you use linking words properly, as for example ‘and’ and ‘but’ express two completely different concepts in one sentence.

10. How can I practise my Writing more efficiently?

Read more. By reading academic sources you will be able to not only broaden your vocabulary but also get accustomed to an assortment of phrases and sentences. Showing your writings to your teacher or classmate is a marvellous inkling too. They will be able to see what you might fail to catch.

11. Can I use a model for my Writing?

I do not advise it. It might work for TOEFL writing, but when it comes to IELTS models are just not inclusive enough. Besides, using a model for your introduction and conclusion could uncover your shortcomings. Any examiner is surely qualified to notice the difference between your language and the language used in the model. This will most definitely take your score down.

12. How to make sure my essay is not boring?

There is no good answer to this question. What I usually tell my students is to make sure they provide examples stemming from societal current events rather than their own circle of family and friends. Instead of using your uncle or your cousin to illustrate your point, say it is a trend in your society. This will make your paragraphs stronger and more gripping to read.

13. Shall I use social news and events in my Writing?

Yes, you should. This way your answers will be better rounded and you will come across as a young person who cares about the events in the world. Personalizing your essay isn’t advised as it is against the idea of an academic form of writing.

14. Is there enough time to write a draft?

Yes, because you do not need to write it per se. All you need to do is jot down some ideas and organize them in a logical way, that is in a way which would make sense to you in your further writing process.

15. Can I write in capital letters?

Yes, it is not forbidden, so you are allowed to do so.

16. What is a well-developed paragraph?

Each paragraph should ideally consist of a topic sentence, which tells the reader what the paragraph is about; three to five supporting sentences (providing details, examples) and a concluding sentence, where you wrap up your ideas.

So if I were to give you a formula, it would look like this:

Topic Sentence = 1 sentence

Supporting Sentences = 3 to 5 sentences

Concluding Sentence = 1 sentence

17. Can I use personal pronouns in Task 2?

As mentioned before, IELTS writing is an academic type of writing, so personal pronouns should not occur. Only when expressing your opinion or conviction can you use 'I'. In order to avoid 'I' use group nouns, such as people or society; or refer to a particular part of your essay, e.g. 'This part of the essay will focus on...'. Definitely steer clear from using 'I' in Task 1. Your opinion is also not needed as you are to comment on facts and interpret data given.

CHAPTER 2

DOs and DON'Ts in IELTS Speaking Room Examiners' pet peeves

*Ipsa scientia potestas est
(Knowledge itself is power)*

■ Don't make mistakes in simple English, especially when it comes to grammar. That will stop you from getting Band 6. Examples: he/she, people is, she don't know etc.

■ Don't use words you're not sure how to pronounce! It's better to change a word you have in mind into one you are more confident with. Don't show your limitations! Focus on your strengths!

■ Lie, but show off ☺! Not everything you are saying needs to be 100% true. It's okay to use other people's ideas. What matters most is to show the best language you have during your 15-minute interview. The examiner will not know whether your story is true, anyway.

■ Don't be afraid to correct yourself or ask for a clarification if you're not certain about your question. Many candidates are afraid to ask to have their questions repeated and then start answering completely different ones. This situation affects their coherence. Always make sure you understand the question correctly. It is okay to ask for explanation, repetition or an unfamiliar word explanation. No one will penalize you for it.

■ Pronounce clearly. If the examiner has problems understanding you due to your frequent mispronunciations, your score will go down to a 4. Here, not only particular sounds matter but also your intonation and chunking. Enunciate with exaggeration if you have to, but assure being understood.

■ If you want to use idioms, use them correctly and regularly. Saying 'it's raining cats and dogs' once in a blue moon is not going to improve your score. Candidates dreaming of Band 7 must show the ability to utilize idiomatic expressions throughout the entire test.

■ Don't be thrown off by examiners' poker faces. That's how they are trained. It is not personal so don't try to read into it. If they don't smile it's because they are focusing on giving you the most equitable score, not because they hate you.

■ Record yourself and listen to it! This is very important before you come to your interview. Recording your own speech not only helps you spot pronunciation problems but also allows you to sound more natural and relaxed. Pay special attention to your intonation as it needs to be clear for Band 6 and higher.

■ Speak until you are stopped. I can't emphasise this part enough. As I

mentioned in Chapter 1, ABS is extremely handy to bear in mind during your Speaking Test. Always be Speaking! It shows your examiner that you are capable of conducting a longer conversation and that you can discuss topics at length and in depth.

- Display your best English! Exhibit your assets and conceal your flaws. Do not use a word if you are not sure how to. Use a different piece of vocabulary if you can't pronounce the word you have in mind. Do not say: 'I don't know anything about it', but rather go with 'I'm not so sure about this particular point, but I'd still say...'. You only have around 15 minutes to convince your examiner that you deserve a 7 ☺.

- Don't chop phrases according to intonation patterns in your native language. Make sure your sentences convey the same meaning by making your voice modulation more musical. Listening to lots of English songs is strongly advised here. You can copy the pitch and later on use it in your own answers.

- Listen carefully to the question! Questions are often similar but start with different question words: why, when, who, what, where, how. Be aware of the wh- words. It's a common mistake to focus only on key words in a question and ignore its full sense.

- Use the minute for preparation in Part 2 to organize your thoughts or simply calm yourself down. You are about to speak continuously for 2 minutes, so you need composure. Candidates who don't use paper and pencil provided tend to jump erratically from thought to thought making their examiner confused or dizzy. It's not a race. What you say is more important than how fast you utter it.

- Hesitation and pausing. A lot of test takers suffer from these two problems. It takes them many seconds to formulate an answer and even if they do, they pause lengthy after almost every sentence. This will keep their Fluency at 5. Speak more slowly but more persistently.

- Wrong tenses. Especially in Part 2, where many questions refer to past experiences, candidates forget about Past Simple and everything they say is in the Present. Since there is no free standing Grammar part on IELTS, this is how the test checks your grammar. If you always forget about it, write it down in the notebook provided. Also, make sure you know what tense a

specific question should keep to. For this, read your prompt card carefully!

- **Breathe & smile!!!** In order to create a natural conversation with an examiner you need to become friends with your breathing and your smile. Sometimes my candidates look like they are going to lose consciousness with their faces looking pale and drawn. You do not need to say everything you want to say on one breath. You shouldn't. It's not natural. Smile even if your examiner doesn't, to imprint an impression of a friendly and easy-going person you are.

- **Know the differences between Parts 1, 2 and 3.** A lot of candidates do not know that Part 1 checks your personal experiences, so you are supposed to use 'I' in most of your answers. Part 2 likes to ask a candidate to describe, be it a person, a place or a situation. For this reason, it requires some descriptive vocabulary. Conversely, Part's 3 central point is the society. It would most likely refer to the media, culture and future predictions, all based on general knowledge, hence more universal answers are expected here. Despite the fact that by Part 3 your examiner already has a pretty good idea of what your level is, your score is always validated by your replies in Part 3.

- **Don't try to be so American!** There are some students of English who want to come across as very Westernized, so they would throw 'OMG' in between every two words they say. Don't pretend to be someone you are not. Be yourself.

- **Don't spend too much time on memorizing and rote learning,** but concentrate on developing skills (esp. for speaking and listening). This test checks your general English abilities, which means it is easy to see the gap between your real answers and the ones you have memorized. Trying to remember 50 words a day is also a bad idea. You won't know how to use them. Always use context related to your own life to study vocabulary and write down whole collocations, not just single words.

- **Always answer the questions first!** Don't give me the context of the whole story. Don't beat about the bush! Get to the point first and then extend it by providing extra information.

- **Don't be a 'YES man'!** You are not expected to agree with everything the examiner says. You must show your own opinions and views. Don't be afraid to say: 'I completely disagree with this statement'. If you don't like

nature, say it!

- Be different! Don't use Kobe and basketball as your answer to every single question. If you are asked what's your favourite animal, say it's a 'gecko' instead of 'dog'. Originality will be rewarded.

- Use signposts! Linking words add to your cohesion and also help the examiner follow your logical thinking. You will find a complete list of signpost expressions in Chapter 7 of this book.

- Paraphrase! It doesn't matter how many years you have been studying English. There will always be words you simply don't know as a non-native speaker. Nobody is a walking dictionary. Not knowing the word for something you wish to express happens often in a test when you are feeling nervous. So, this is where the skill of paraphrasing comes in. It basically means you are able to describe a word using other words, such as synonyms, parallel expressions or descriptive adjectives.

CHAPTER 3

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED? ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Aut viam inveniam aut faciam
(I'll either find a way or make one)

The information below will give you a sense of what competence is required for each band score.

Band 9: Expert User

Has a full command of the language: appropriate, accurate, fluent and effortless with complete understanding.

Band 8: Very good user

Has a full command of the language with occasional unsystematic errors. Confusion may occur in atypical or unfamiliar situations. Is able to formulate advanced and detailed arguments.

Band 7: Good user

Has advanced command of the language, though with a few occasional errors in some situations. Generally uses sophisticated vocabulary and complex syntax well. Comprehends detailed reasoning.

Band 6: Competent user

Has capable command of the language despite some errors and misunderstandings. Can use and comprehend moderately complex language, but mainly in familiar and typical situations.

Band 5: Modest user

Has limited command of the language. Is able to understand overall meaning in routine and typical situations. Makes numerous errors and has difficulty with the general meaning of conversations. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.

Band 4: Limited user

Has limited basic competence restricted to routine and typical situations only. Has frequent problems with understanding and expression. Uses only simplistic vocabulary and syntax. Isn't able to use complex language.

Band 3: Extremely limited user

Cannot follow a quite simple and common conversation even with the most simplistic vocabulary and syntax. Conveys and comprehends only general meaning in very familiar situations. Breakdowns in communication occur frequently.

Band 2: Intermittent user

No real communication is possible. Can only use isolated words and syntax to express basic needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.

Band 1: Non user

Has basically no ability to use the language. Knows only a small number of

random words. Has no understanding of English at all.

Band 0: Did not attempt the test

SPEAKING

Band	Fluency and coherence	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy	Pronunciation
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks fluently with only rare repetition or self-correction; any hesitation is content-related rather than to find words or grammar speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features develops topics fully and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses vocabulary with full flexibility and precision in all topics uses idiomatic language naturally and accurately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a full range of structures naturally and appropriately produces consistently accurate structures apart from 'slips' characteristic of native speaker speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety sustains flexible use of features throughout is effortless to understand
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks fluently with only occasional repetition or self-correction; hesitation is usually content-related and only rarely to search for language develops topics coherently and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide vocabulary resource readily and flexibly to convey precise meaning uses less common and idiomatic vocabulary skilfully, with occasional inaccuracies uses paraphrase effectively as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures flexibly produces a majority of error-free sentences with only very occasional inaccuracies or basic/systematic errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of pronunciation features sustains flexible use of features, with only occasional slips is easy to understand throughout; L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks at length without noticeable effort or loss of coherence may demonstrate language-related hesitation at times, or some repetition and/or self-correction uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with some flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses vocabulary resource flexibly to discuss a variety of topics uses some less common and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of style and collocation, with some inappropriate choices uses paraphrase effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a range of complex structures with some flexibility frequently produces error-free sentences, though some grammatical mistakes persist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows all the positive features of Band 6 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 8
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is willing to speak at length, though may lose coherence at times due to occasional repetition, self-correction or hesitation uses a range of connectives and discourse markers but not always appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a wide enough vocabulary to discuss topics at length and make meaning clear in spite of inaccuracies generally paraphrases successfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a mix of simple and complex structures, but with limited flexibility may make frequent mistakes with complex structures, though these rarely cause comprehension problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a range of pronunciation features with mixed control shows some effective use of features but this is not sustained can generally be understood throughout, though mispronunciation of individual words or sounds reduces clarity at times
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually maintains flow of speech but uses repetition, self-correction and/or slow speech to keep going may over-use certain connectives and discourse markers produces single speech fluently, but more complex communication raises fluency problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manages to talk about familiar and unfamiliar topics but uses vocabulary with limited flexibility attempts to use paraphrase but with mixed success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> produces basic sentence forms with reasonable accuracy uses a limited range of more complex structures, but these usually contain errors and may cause some comprehension problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows all the positive features of Band 4 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 6
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot respond without noticeable pauses and may speak slowly, with frequent repetition and self-correction uses basic sentences but with repetitive use of simple connectives and some breakdowns in coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is able to talk about familiar topics but can only convey basic meaning on unfamiliar topics and makes frequent errors in word choice rarely attempts paraphrase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> produces basic sentence forms and some varied simple sentences but subordinate structures are rare errors are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a limited range of pronunciation features attempts to control features but slips are frequent mispronunciations are frequent and cause some difficulty for the listener
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks with long pauses has limited ability to link simple sentences gives only simple responses and is frequently unable to convey basic message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses simple vocabulary to convey personal information has insufficient vocabulary for less familiar topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts basic sentence forms but with limited accuracy, or relies on apparently memorised utterances makes numerous errors except in memorised expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows some of the features of Band 2 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 4
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pauses lengthy before most words little communication possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> only produces isolated words or memorised utterances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot produce basic sentence forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speech is often unintelligible
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no communication possible no intelligible language 			
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not attend 			

WRITING TASK 1

Band	Task Achievement	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resources	Grammatical Range and Accuracy
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully satisfies all the requirements of the task clearly presents a fully developed response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention skillfully manages paragraphing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> covers all requirements of the task sufficiently presents, highlights and illustrates key features / bullet points clearly and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sequences information and ideas logically manages all aspects of cohesion well uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings skillfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures the majority of sentences are error-free makes only very occasional errors or inaccuracies
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> covers the requirements of the task (Academic) presents a clear overview of main trends, differences or stages (General Training) presents a clear purpose, with the tone consistent and appropriate clearly presents and highlights key features / bullet points but could be more fully extended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a variety of complex structures produces frequent error-free sentences has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses the requirements of the task (Academic) presents an overview with information appropriately selected (General Training) presents a purpose that is generally clear; there may be inconsistencies in tone presents and adequately highlights key features / bullet points but details may be irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication

5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> generally addresses the task; the format may be inappropriate in places (Academic) recounts detail mechanically with no clear overview; there may be no data to support the description (General Training) may present a purpose for the letter that is unclear at times; the tone may be variable and sometimes inappropriate presents, but inadequately covers, key features / bullet points; there may be a tendency to focus on details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task may make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a limited range of structures attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts to address the task but does not cover all key features / bullet points; the format may be inappropriate (General Training) fails to clearly explain the purpose of the letter; the tone may be inappropriate may confuse key features / bullet points with detail; parts may be unclear, irrelevant, repetitive or inaccurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task has limited control of word formation and/or spelling; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> errors may cause strain for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fails to address the task, which may have been completely misunderstood presents limited ideas which may be largely irrelevant/repetitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not organise ideas logically may use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling errors may severely distort the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts sentence forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> answer is barely related to the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has very little control of organisational features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot use sentence forms except in memorised phrases
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> answer is completely unrelated to the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fails to communicate any message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can only use a few isolated words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot use sentence forms at all
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not attend does not attempt the task in any way writes a totally memorised response 			

WRITING TASK 2

Band	Task Response	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully addresses all parts of the task presents a fully developed position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well-supported ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention skillfully manages paragraphing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sufficiently addresses all parts of the task presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sequences information and ideas logically manages all aspects of cohesion well uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings skillfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures the majority of sentences are error-free makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses all parts of the task presents a clear position throughout the response presents, extends and supports main ideas, but there may be a tendency to over-generalise and/or supporting ideas may lack focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use presents a clear central topic within each paragraph 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a variety of complex structures produces frequent error-free sentences has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses all parts of the task although some parts may be more fully covered than others presents a relevant position although the conclusions may become unclear or repetitive presents relevant main ideas but some may be inadequately developed/unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately uses paragraphing, but not always logically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses the task only partially; the format may be inappropriate in places expresses a position but the development is not always clear and there may be no 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression makes inadequate, inaccurate or over- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task may make noticeable errors in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a limited range of structures attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences

	<p>conclusions drawn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents some main ideas but these are limited and not sufficiently developed; there may be irrelevant detail 	<p>use of cohesive devices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution • may not write in paragraphs, or paragraphing may be inadequate 	<p>spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responds to the task only in a minimal way or the answer is tangential; the format may be inappropriate • presents a position but this is unclear • presents some main ideas but these are difficult to identify and may be repetitive, irrelevant or not well supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response • uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive • may not write in paragraphs or their use may be confusing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task • has limited control of word formation and/or spelling; errors may cause strain for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses • some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not adequately address any part of the task • does not express a clear position • presents few ideas, which are largely undeveloped or irrelevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not organise ideas logically • may use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling • errors may severely distort the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attempts sentence forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • barely responds to the task • does not express a position • may attempt to present one or two ideas but there is no development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has very little control of organisational features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cannot use sentence forms except in memorised phrases
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • answer is completely unrelated to the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fails to communicate any message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can only use a few isolated words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cannot use sentence forms at all
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not attend • does not attempt the task in any way • writes a totally memorised response 			

CHAPTER 4

VOCABULARY OFTEN MISUSED AND OVERUSED & HOW TO DEAL WITH IT

Verba movent, exempla trahunt.
(Words move people, examples draw them.)

This Chapter is particularly significant for both your Speaking and Writing tests. I have collected a huge number of words that candidates overuse or misuse in the test. I am also providing copious substitutes to help you achieve score 7 and higher (part of the criteria is to show a broad range of vocabulary). However, make sure you use them correctly in your writing and pronounce them right during your Speaking Test. Good luck!

1. **MAYBE** /'meɪbi/ adverb, noun

COMMON MISTAKE!

NOTE: *Do not use 'maybe' when asked about your preferences! It ruins logic in your answer! For example: Do you like to visit museums? Maybe. (x)*

- possibly /'pɒsəbli/ adv.
- conceivably /kən'si:vəb(ə)li/ adv.
- perhaps /pə(r)'hæps/ adv.
- perchance /pə(r)'tʃɑ:ns/ formal, adv. (more suitable for writing)
- apparently /ə'pærəntli/ adv.
- in all likelihood /'laɪklihʊd/ phr. = almost certainly
- in all probability /,prɒbə'bɪləti/ phr.
- most likely /məʊst 'laɪkli/ phr.
- one can assume that... /ə'sju:m/ phr.
- presumably /pri'zju:məbli/ adv.
- to all appearances /ə'piərənsɪz/ phr.
- probably /'prɒbəbli/ adv.
- for all I know = phr. used to emphasize that you do not know something

2. **ADVANTAGE VS. DISADVANTAGE** /əd'vɑ:ntɪdʒ/ vs. /,dɪsəd'vɑ:ntɪdʒ/ noun

NOTE: *advantages and disadvantages of sth*
e.g. There are multiple advantages and disadvantages of studying abroad.

PAY ATTENTION TO PREPOSITIONS!!!

All pairs below can be used instead of advantage/disadvantage:

- reasons for sth vs. reasons against sth /'ri:z(ə)nz/
- arguments for sth vs. arguments against sth /'ɑ:(r)gju:mənts/
- strengths of sth/to do sth vs. weaknesses of /in sth /streŋθs/ vs. /'wi:knəsiz/
- pluses of sth vs. minuses of sth /plʌsɪz/ vs. /'maɪnəsɪz/
- plus factors of sth vs. minus factors of sth /'plʌs fæktə(r)z/ vs. /'maɪnəs fæktə(r)z/
- pros of sth vs. cons of sth /prəʊz/ vs. /kɒnz/
- benefits of sth vs. drawbacks of sth /'benɪfɪts/ vs. /'drɔ: ,bæks/
- good points of sth vs. bad points of sth /'gʊd pɔɪnts/ vs. /'bæd pɔɪnts/
- profits in sth/doing sth vs. hindrances to sth /'prɒfɪts/ vs. /'hɪndrənsɪz/
- assets to sth vs. impediments to sth /'æsets/ vs. /ɪm'pedɪmənts/
- conveniences of sth vs. inconveniences of sth /kən'vi:niənsɪz/ vs. /,ɪnkən'vi:niənsɪz/
- strong points of sth vs. weak points of sth /'strɒŋ pɔɪnts/ vs. /'wi:k pɔɪnts/

Words below are to be used separately (not as a pair) and can be used both in singular and plural forms:

Advantage:

- blessing of sth /'blesɪŋ/
- value of sth /'vælju:/
- plus point of sth /'plʌs pɔɪnt/
- virtue of sth/in doing sth /'vɜ:(r)tʃu:/
- boon to/for sth /bu:n/

- fruit of sth /fru:t/
- aid to sth /eid/
- gain to sth /gem/
- perquisite of sth /'pɜ:(r)kwɪzɪt/ (formal)
- perk of sth /pɜ:(r)k/
- pay-off of sth /'peɪɒf/ (informal)
- beauty of sth /'bjʊ:ti/

Disadvantage:

- liability to sth /,laɪə'biləti/
- handicap to/of sth /'hændɪ,kæp/
- limitation of sth /,lɪmɪ'teɪʃ(ə)n/
- disamenity /,dɪsə'mi:nɪti/ (best used at the end of the phrase, e.g. Two main sources of disamenity are tourism and weather.)
- flaw in sth /flɔ:/
- defect in sth /'di:fekt/
- trouble with sth /'trʌb(ə)l/
- catch in sth /kætʃ/
- disbenefit of/to sth /dɪs'benɪfɪt/ (formal)
- downside of sth /'daʊn,sɑɪd/ (informal)
- hang-up in sth /'hæŋ ʌp/ (AmE, informal)
- weak link in the chain (informal)

3. **DELICIOUS** /dɪ'lɪʃəs/ adjective

NOTE: *You cannot say 'very delicious',*

e.g. French food is very delicious.

Instead say: French food is very tasty.

- tasty /'teɪsti/
- palatable /'pælətəb(ə)l/
- appetizing /'æpə'taɪzɪŋ/

- mouth-watering /'maʊθ wɔ:tə(r)ɪŋ/
- juicy /'dʒu:si/
- succulent /'sʌkjʊlənt/ = tender, juicy and tasty
- toothsome /'tu:θs(ə)m/
- savoury /'seɪvəri/
- tempting /'temptɪŋ/
- melting in the mouth
- delectable /dɪ'lektəb(ə)l/ (formal)
- nectareous /nek'tɛ:rɪəs/ (formal)
- ambrosial /æm'brəʊziəl/ (formal)
- delish /dɪ'liʃ/ (informal)
- scrumptious /'skrʌmpʃəs/ (informal) = extremely appetizing
- yummy /'jʌmi/ (informal)
- lip-smacking /'lɪp smækɪŋ/ (informal)
- flavoursome /'fleɪvə(r)səm/
- inviting /ɪn'veɪtɪŋ/
- very enjoyable /'ɪn'dʒɔɪəb(ə)l/
- yum-yum /jʌm 'jʌm/ (informal)
- moreish /'mɔ:riʃ/ (BE, informal)
- sapid /'sæpɪd/ = having a strong, pleasant taste

4. **TO RELAX** /rɪ'læks/ verb

Note: *This verb is intransitive, which means you cannot say: Relax yourself/myself! (x)*

e.g. Jogging relaxes me.

- to rest /rest/
- to unwind /ʌn'waɪnd/
- to wind down /waɪnd 'daʊn/
- to loosen up /lu:s(ə)n 'ʌp/
- to de-stress /di:'stres/
- to tranquilize /'træŋkwɪlaɪz/

- to unbend /ʌn 'bend/ (informal)
- to take things easy
- to let your hair down
- to put your feet up
- to chill (out) /tʃɪl/ (informal)
- to veg out /vedʒ 'aʊt/
- to chillax /tʃɪl 'æks/ (informal)
- to ease up /i:z 'ʌp/
- to calm down /kɑ:m 'daʊn/
- to become less tense
- to slack off /slæk 'ɒf/ (informal)
- to sit back /sɪt 'bæk/
- to unbutton /ʌn 'bʌt(ə)n/
- to kick back /kɪk 'bæk/ (AmE, informal)

5. SCHOOL /sku:l/ noun

- college /'kɒlɪdʒ/ = after high school
- academy /ə 'kædəmi/ = place of study in a specific field e.g. a police academy
- institute /'ɪnstɪ,tju:t/ = an educational organization e.g. the Institute of Social Studies
- educational institution /,edʒʊ 'keɪf(ə)nəl ,ɪnstɪ 'tju:f(ə)n/
- university /,ju:nɪ 'vɜ:(r)səti/
- alma mater /,ælmə 'mɑ:tə(r)/ = a school that one once attended

6. A SKILL /skɪl/ noun

- ability to do sth /ə 'bɪləti/
- skillfulness of sth /'skɪlf(ə)lnəs/
- aptitude for sth /'æptɪ,tju:d/
- handiness for sth /'hændɪnəs/
- adeptness at sth /ə 'deptnəs/

- **deftness** /'deftnes/ = quick and neat skill
- **adroitness** /ə'drɔɪtnɪs/ = cleverness or skill
- **talent for sth** /'tælənt/
- **knack for sth** /næk/
- **technique for sth** /tek'ni:k/
- **expertise** /,ekspə(r)'ti:z/ = an expert skill in a particular field
- **expertness** /'ekspɜ:(r)tɪs/
- **finesse** /fi'nes/ = a skill of being able to handle delicate situations
- **mastery of sth** /'mɑ:stəri/
- **artistry** /'ɑ:(r)tɪstri/ = a creative skill
- **competence in sth** /'kɒmpɪtəns/
- **dexterity in sth/with sth** /dek'sterəti/ = a skill in performing tasks, especially with hands
- **prowess** /'praʊes/ = a great skill or ability
- **capability of doing sth/to do sth** /,keɪpə'bɪləti/
- **virtuosity** /,vɜ:(r)tʃʊ'ɒsəti/ = a great skill in music or another artistic pursuit
- **strength** /strenθ/
- **skill set** /'skɪl set/

7. **ENVIRONMENT** /ɪn'vaɪrənmənt/ noun

- **habitat** /'hæbɪtæt/ = a natural home of plants and other organisms
- **territory** /'terət(ə)ri/ = an area (both physical and mental)
- **surroundings** /sə'raʊndɪŋz/
- **environs** /ɪn'vaɪrənz/ = the surrounding area
- **conditions** /kən'dɪʃ(ə)nz/
- **the natural world** /ðə 'nætʃ(ə)rəl wɜ:(r)ld/
- **nature** /'neɪtʃə(r)/
- **the Earth** /ði: 'z:(r)θ/
- **the planet** /ðə 'plænɪt/
- **the ecosystem** /ði: 'i:kəʊ,sɪstəm/

- the biosphere /ðə 'baɪəʊ, sfiə(r)/
- Mother Nature /'mʌðə(r) 'neɪtʃə(r)/
- wildlife /'waɪld, laɪf/
- flora and fauna /'flɔ:rə ən' fəʊnə/
- domain /dəʊ'meɪn/ = a physical area or sphere of knowledge

8. **CITY** /'sɪti/ noun

- metropolis /mə'trɒpəlɪs/ = a capital/chief city of a country or region
- town /taʊn/ = smaller than city
- conurbation /,kɒnɜ:(r)'beɪf(ə)n/ = an extended urban area
- megalopolis /,megə'ləpəlɪs/
- metropolitan area /,metrə'pɒlɪt(ə)n 'eəriə/
- concrete jungle /'kɒŋkri:t 'dʒʌŋg(ə)l/ = has high density of modern buildings
- urban sprawl /'ɜ:(r)bən sprɔ:l/ = an uncontrolled expansion of urban areas
- micropolis /maɪkrəʊ'pəlɪs/ = a small city
- cosmopolis /,kɒzmə'pəlɪs/ = a city occupied by people from many different countries
- municipality /mju:ˌnɪsɪ'pæləti/ = a city with local government
- metroplex /'metrəʊpleks/
- the big smoke /ðə bɪg'sməʊk/ (informal)

9. **NOWADAYS** /'naʊə, deɪz/ adverb

- These days, ... /'ði:z deɪz/
- At the present time, ...
- In this day and age, ...
- Currently, ... /'kʌrəntli/
- Presently, ...
- In modern times, ...

- Contemporarily, ...
- In these times, ...
- In this present climate, ...
- In the present circumstances, ...
- Things being what they are, ...

10. **LITTLE & FEW** /'lɪt(ə)l & 'fju:/ determiner

NOTE: Remember to use 'little' with uncountable nouns, whereas 'few' with countable ones.

UN = Uncountable Noun

CN = Countable Noun

- hardly any + UN/CN /'hɑ:(r)dli 'eni/
- not much + UN /nɒt mʌtʃ/
- slight + CN /slaɪt/
- scant + UN/CN /skænt/
- limited + UN/CN /'lɪmɪtɪd/
- minimal + UN /'mɪnɪm(ə)l/
- negligible + UN/CN /'neglɪdʒəb(ə)l/
- scarcely any + UN/CN /'skeə(r)sli/
- a small number of + CN /ə smɔ:l 'nʌmbə(r) əv/
- one or two + CN /wʌn ɔ:(r)'tu:/
- a handful of + CN /ə 'hænd(d)fʊl əv/
- a couple of + CN /ə 'kʌp(ə)l əv/
- a bit of + UN /ə 'bɪt əv/

11. **DEVICE** /dɪ'vaɪs/ noun

- gadget /'gædʒɪt/ = a novel device
- implement /'ɪmplɪmənt/ = a piece of equipment for a particular purpose
- utensil /ju:'tens(ə)l/

- tool /tu:l/
- apparatus /,æpə'reitəs/ = technical equipment
- instrument /'instrʊmənt/
- hardware /'hɑ:d(r),weə(r)/
- machine /mə'ʃi:n/
- mechanism /'mekə,nɪz(ə)m/
- equipment /ɪ'kwɪpmənt/
- paraphernalia /,pærəfə(r)'neɪliə/
- impedimenta /ɪm,pedɪ'mentə/
- resource /rɪ'zɔ:(r)s/
- contrivance /kən'traɪv(ə)ns/ = a skilfully created tool
- contraption /kən'træpʃ(ə)n/ = a complicated and strange machine

12. **VILLAGE** /'vɪlɪdʒ/ noun

- hamlet /'hæmlət/ = smaller than a village
- settlement /'set(ə)lmənt/
- little town /'lɪt(ə)l 'taʊn/
- one-horse town (informal) /wʌn'hɔ:(r)s 'taʊn/
- dorp /dɔ:(r)p/
- whistle-stop /'wɪs(ə)l stɒp/

13. **MUCH & MANY** /mʌtʃ & 'meni/ determiner

NOTE: Remember to use 'much' with uncountable nouns, whereas 'many' with countable ones.

UN = Uncountable Noun

CN = Countable Noun

- a lot of/lots of + UN/CN /ə'lɒt əv & 'lɒts əv/
- a great/large amount of + UN /ə' greɪt/lɑ:(r)dʒ ə'maʊnt əv/
- plenty of + UN/CN /'plenti əv /
- ample + UN /'æmp(ə)l/ = enough
- copious + UN/CN /'kəʊpiəs/

- plentiful + UN/CN /'plentɪf(ə)l/
- abundant in + UN/CN /ə'bʌndənt/
- considerable + UN/CN /kən'sɪd(ə)rəb(ə)l/
- numerous + CN /'nju:mərəs/
- a great/good deal of + UN/CN /ə'greɪt/gʊd di:l əv/
- countless + CN /'kaʊntləs/
- innumerable + CN /ɪ'nju:mərəb(ə)l/
- a multitude of + CN /ə'mʌltɪ,tju:d əv/
- multitudinous + CN /,mʌltɪ'tju:dɪnəs/
- profuse + CN /prə'fju:s/
- an abundance of + CN/UN /ən ə'bʌndəns əv/
- several + CN /'sev(ə)rəl/
- multiple + CN /'mʌltɪp(ə)l/
- substantial + UN/CN /səb'stænʃ(ə)l/

14. **PEOPLE/POPULATION** /'pi:p(ə)l/ noun

- individuals /,ɪndɪ'vɪdʒuəlz/
- citizens /'sɪtɪz(ə)nz/
- masses /'mæsɪz/
- community /kə'mju:nəti/
- natives /'neɪtɪvz/
- denizens /'denɪz(ə)nz/
- society /sə'saɪəti/
- humans /'hju:mənz/
- residents /'rezɪd(ə)nts/
- inhabitants /ɪn'hæbɪtənts/
- citizenry /'sɪtɪz(ə)nri/ can be followed by both singular and plural verb
- public /'pʌblɪk/
- folks /fəʊks/
- humanity /hju:'mænəti/

- persons /'pɜ:(r)s(ə)ns/
- the human race /ðə 'hju:mən reɪs/
- mortals /'mɔ:(r)t(ə)ls/

15. **TO INCREASE** /ɪn'kri:s/ verb (ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR WRITING TASK 1)

NOTE: *You can also use this phrase: on the increase.*

e.g. The numbers of tourists visiting England every year are on the increase.

!!! *Get it right: increase (n.)*

Don't use increase of when you want to say what is increasing.

Use increase in:

(x) Is death penalty connected with the increase of conservative judges?

() Is death penalty connected with the increase in conservative judges?

Use increase of with a number or percentage when you want to talk about the amount by which something increases.

There has been an increase of nearly 20% in spending on public safety.

- to grow /grəʊ/
- to get larger /lɑ:(r)dʒə/
- to rise /raɪz/
- to escalate /'eskəleɪt/ = to increase rapidly
- to rocket /'rɒkɪt/ = to increase very rapidly and suddenly
- to intensify /ɪn'tensɪfaɪ/
- to spread /spred/ = used most often with an area
- to mount up /maʊnt 'ʌp/ = to grow more numerous or larger
- to enlarge /ɪn'lɑ:(r)dʒ/

- to expand /ɪk'spænd/
- to climb /klaɪm/
- to soar /sɔ:(r)/ = increase rapidly above the usual level
- to shoot up /ʃu:t'ʌp/ = to rise suddenly
- to extend /ɪk'stend/
- to multiply /'mʌltɪplaɪ/
- to pile up /paɪl'ʌp/
- to accumulate /ə'kju:mjʊleɪt/
- to inflate /ɪn'fleɪt/
- to magnify /'mægnɪfaɪ/
- to amplify /'æmplɪfaɪ/
- to become greater /bɪ'kʌm'greɪtə/
- to advance /əd'vɑ:ns/
- to swell /swel/
- to proliferate /prə'lɪfəreɪt/ = to increase rapidly in numbers
- to go through the roof (informal)
- to boost /bu:st/
- to enhance /ɪn'hɑ:ns/
- to widen /'waɪd(ə)n/
- to hike up /haɪk'ʌp/ (informal)

16. **TO DECREASE** /di:'kri:s/ verb

(ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR WRITING TASK 1)

NOTE:

!!! *Get it right: decrease (n.)*

Don't use decrease of when you want to talk about what is decreasing.

Use decrease in:

(x) The programme has not led to the expected decrease of crime.

() The programme has not led to the expected decrease in crime.

Use decrease of with a number or percentage, when you want to

talk about the amount by which something decreases:
These graphs show a decrease of 15 per cent over the past year.

- to lessen /'les(ə)n/
- to reduce /rɪ'dju:s/
- to drop /drɒp/
- to diminish /dɪ'mɪnɪʃ/
- to decline /dɪ'klaɪn/
- to dwindle /'dwɪnd(ə)l/ = to decrease gradually
- to abate /ə'beɪt/ = to become smaller or less intense
- to subside /səb'saɪd/
- to ebb /eb/ = to lessen gradually
- to plummet /'plʌmɪt/ = to decrease rapidly
- to plunge /plʌndʒ/ = to fall suddenly
- to cut down /kʌt 'daʊn/
- to curtail /kɜ:(r)'teɪl/ = to reduce in extent or quantity
- to deplete /dɪ'pli:t/ = to use up (resources, supply)
- to minimize /'mɪnɪmaɪz/
- to become less /bɪ'kʌm 'les/
- to go down /gəʊ 'daʊn/
- to slide /slaɪd/
- to shrink /frɪŋk/
- to trim /trɪm/
- to wane /weɪn/ (neg. in meaning) = to decrease in power
- to die down /daɪ'daʊn/
- to slump (informal) /slʌmp/ = to decline substantially

17. **NUTRITIOUS** /nju:'trɪʃəs/ adjective

- full of nutrients /fʊl əv 'nju:trɪənts/
- nutritive /'nju:trətɪv/
- healthful /'helθfl/
- sustaining /sə'steɪnɪŋ/

- nourishing /'nʌrɪʃɪŋ/
- wholesome /'həʊls(ə)m/
- health-giving /'helθ ɡɪvɪŋ/
- beneficial /,benɪ'fɪʃ(ə)l/
- substantial /səb'stænj(ə)l/
- invigorating /ɪn'vɪɡə'reɪtɪŋ/
- strengthening /'streŋθ(ə)nɪŋ/

18. **LATEST** /'leɪtɪst/ adjective

- most recent /məʊst 'ri:s(ə)nt/
- newest /'nju:west/
- just released /dʒʌst rɪ'li:st/
- up-to-the-minute /ʌp tə ðə 'mɪnɪt/
- up-to-date /ʌp tə 'deɪt/
- state-of-the-art /steɪt əv ðə 'ɑ:(r)t/
- current /'kʌrənt/
- contemporary /kən'temp(ə)r(ə)ri/
- fashionable /'fæʃ(ə)nəb(ə)l/
- in fashion /ɪn'fæʃ(ə)n/
- in vogue /ɪn'vəʊɡ/
- trendy /'trendi/
- modern /'mɒdə(r)n/
- space-age /'speɪs eɪdʒ/ = very modern, technologically advanced
- hip /hɪp/ = following the latest fashion (clothes, music)
- ahead of its time /ə'hed əv ɪts 'taɪm/
- just out /dʒʌst 'aʊt/
- hot /hɒt/

19. **PHENOMENON** /fə'nɒmɪnən/ noun

- occurrence /ə'kʌrəns/
- happening /'hæp(ə)nɪŋ/

- situation /,sɪtʃu'eɪʃ(ə)n/
- circumstance /'sɜ:(r)kəmstəns/
- case /keɪs/
- status quo /,steɪtəs 'kwəʊ/
- event /ɪ'vent/
- incident /'ɪnsɪd(ə)nt/
- episode /'epɪsəʊd/
- fact /fækt/
- occasion /ə'keɪʒ(ə)n/
- state of affairs /steɪt əv ə'feə(r)z/

20. CONVENIENT /kən'vi:niənt/ adjective

- nearby /,nɪə(r)'baɪ/ = not far away
- suitable /'su:təb(ə)l/ = appropriate for sb or sth
- appropriate /ə'prəʊpriət/
- fitting /'fɪtɪŋ/ = meeting the standard required
- suited /'su:tɪd/
- timely /'taɪmli/ = opportune
- favourable /'feɪv(ə)rəb(ə)l/
- well situated /wel 'sɪtʃueɪtɪd/ = of a place
- handy /'hændi/
- practical /'præktɪk(ə)l/
- easy-to-use /'i:zi tə 'ju:z/
- well-designed /wel 'dɪ'zaɪnd/
- user-friendly /'ju:zə(r)'fren(d)li/
- user-oriented /'ju:zə(r)'ɔ:riəntɪd/
- functional /'fʌŋkʃ(ə)nəl/
- serviceable /'sɜ:(r)vɪsəb(ə)l/
- at hand /ət 'hænd/
- within reach /wɪð 'ɪn 'ri:tʃ/ = nearby
- accessible /ək'sesəb(ə)l/ = able to be reached

- at your disposal /ət jə(r) dɪ' spəʊz(ə)l/
- useful /' ju:sf(ə)l/
- labour-saving /' leɪbə(r) 'seɪvɪŋ/
- opportune /' ɒpə(r)tju:n/
- expedient /ɪk' spi:diənt/ = convenient and practical (but might be immoral)
- at you fingertips (informal)
- just round the corner (informal) = nearby

21. **GAP & DIFFERENCE** /gæp/ & /' dɪfrəns/ noun

- chasm between A & B /' kæz(ə)m/
- split between A & B/in sth /split/
- contrast between A & B/to sth /' kɒntrɑ:st/
- disparity between A & B /dɪ' spærəti/ = a great difference
- divergence of sth /daɪ' vɜ:(r)dʒ(ə)ns/ = conflict in opinions, interests etc.
- imbalance of sth /ɪm' bæləns/ = a lack of proportion
- dissimilarity between A & B /dɪ ,sɪmɪ' lærəti/
- distinction between A & B /dɪ' stɪŋkʃ(ə)n/
- variation of sth / ,veəri' eɪʃ(ə)n/ = a different version of sth
- polarity between A & B /pəʊ' lærəti/ = a contradiction
- contradistinction / ,kɒntrədɪ' stɪŋkʃ(ə)n/ = A is in contradistinction to B
- unlikeness to/from sth /ən' laɪknəs/
- discrepancy between sth /dɪs' krepənsi/
- clash of A & B /klæʃ/

22. **DATA & INFORMATION** /' deɪtə/ & / ,ɪnfə(r)' meɪʃ(ə)n/ noun (ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR WRITING TASK 1)

- details /' di:teɪlz/