

IELTS TOP TIPS

WRITING TASKS ONE AND TWO



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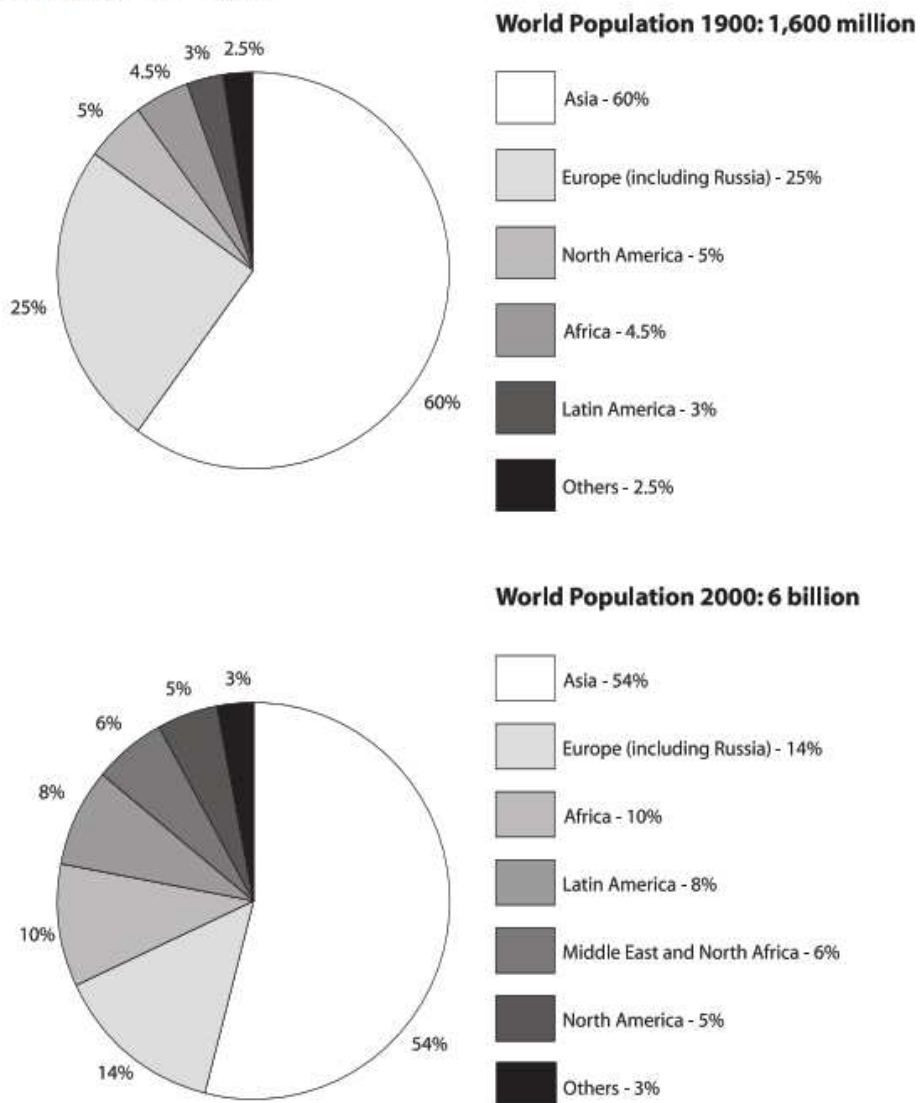
WRITING TASK ONE

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The two pie charts below show changes in world population by region between 1900 and 2000.

Summarise the information by choosing and reporting the key features, and make any relevant comparisons.

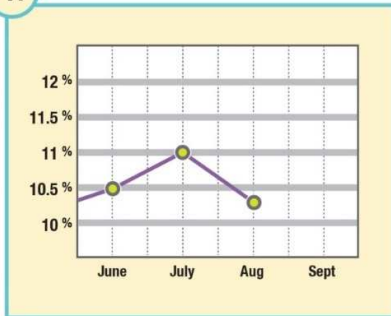
Write at least 150 words.



1. Overall, what happened between 1900 and 2000?
2. Which tense (past, present or future) do you need to describe the data?
3. What do the sections of the pie charts represent? (Think carefully!)

How to describe change over time – the easy way

1.



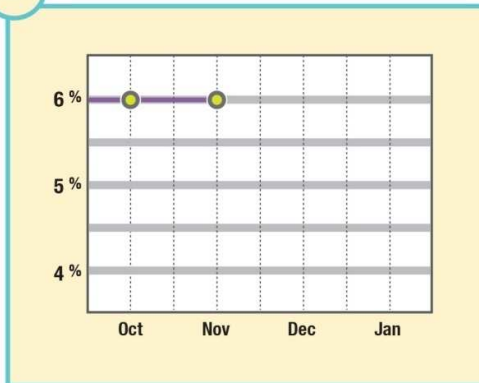
The unemployment rate increased to 11% in September.

2.



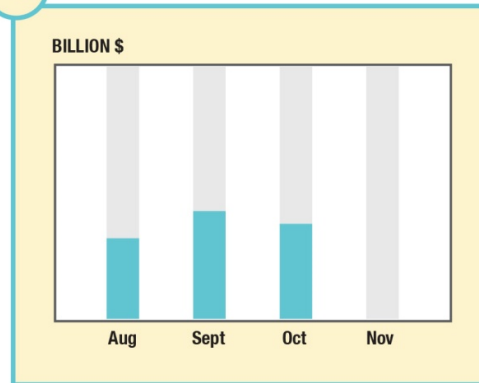
Interest rates decreased by 2% in May.

3.



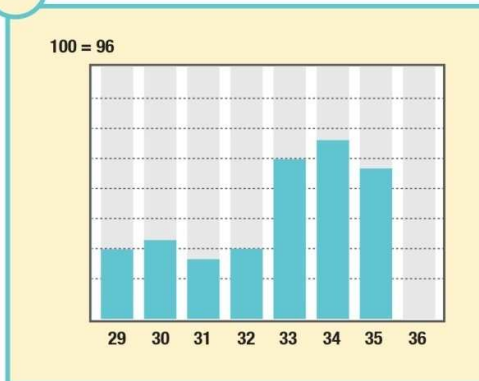
Inflation went down from 5.5% in December to 5% in January.

4.



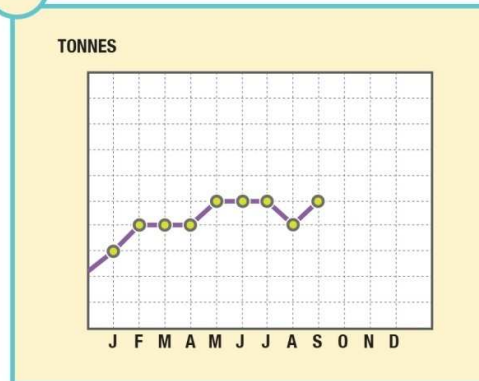
Consumer spending rose sharply in November.

5.



The retail price index went up slightly in week 36.

6.



Production remained the same in the last quarter of the year.

Popular mistakes ... you don't want to make!

Mistake	Correct version	Comment
Production was increased	Production increased	<i>No need for the passive</i>
It is shown by the chart that ...	The chart shows ...	<i>Clear and simple is best</i>
There were some countries increased ...	Some countries increased	<i>SVO, not SVSV</i>
Regions that had ...	Some regions had ...	<i>Avoid 'that', especially right after the Subject.</i>
A slightly decreased	A slight decrease or X decreased slightly	<i>5 for grammar : (</i>
On May/on 1900	In May/in 1900	
People in Africa like to have large families.	-----	<i>No explanations necessary! Just describe.</i>
i like manchester united.	Capitals for names and 'I' and beginning a sentence.	<i>You know this!</i>
While production went up.	Sentence fragment.	<i>Keep 'while', 'although', 'because', 'whereas' etc. for the middle of a sentence, not the beginning.</i>

- Begin with a clear subject: *The Asian percentage ...*
- Continue with an active verb: *rose, fell, increased* etc. Check agreement and tense.
- Continue with the correct preposition (*from ... to, in ...*) phrases.
- Avoid 'that' (especially *yang di ...*)
- Avoid *happened/occurred*

Developing your answer

Compare:

The world population increased dramatically in the last century.

It is interesting to see that the world population increased dramatically in the last century.

<p>First paragraph</p>	<p>The chart/table shows/indicates that ...</p> <p>We can see from the chart/table that...</p> <p>It is interesting to see that ...</p> <p>In general, ...</p> <p>The most notable trend is that ...</p>	<p>.... the world population increased dramatically in the last century.</p>
<p>Body</p>	<p>Turning to the first graph, it can be seen that ...</p> <p>On the other hand, ...</p> <p>Surprisingly, ...Interestingly</p> <p>For example, ...</p> <p>One thing that clearly stands out is that ...</p>	<p>... the European percentage</p> <p>...</p> <p>... the African share of ...</p>
<p>Last paragraph</p>	<p>In conclusion, ...</p> <p>Overall, ...</p> <p>We can conclude that ...</p>	<p>... Earth's population is likely to increase further ...</p>

The World Population writing task

Use the words and phrases below to help complete the writing task about the world population:

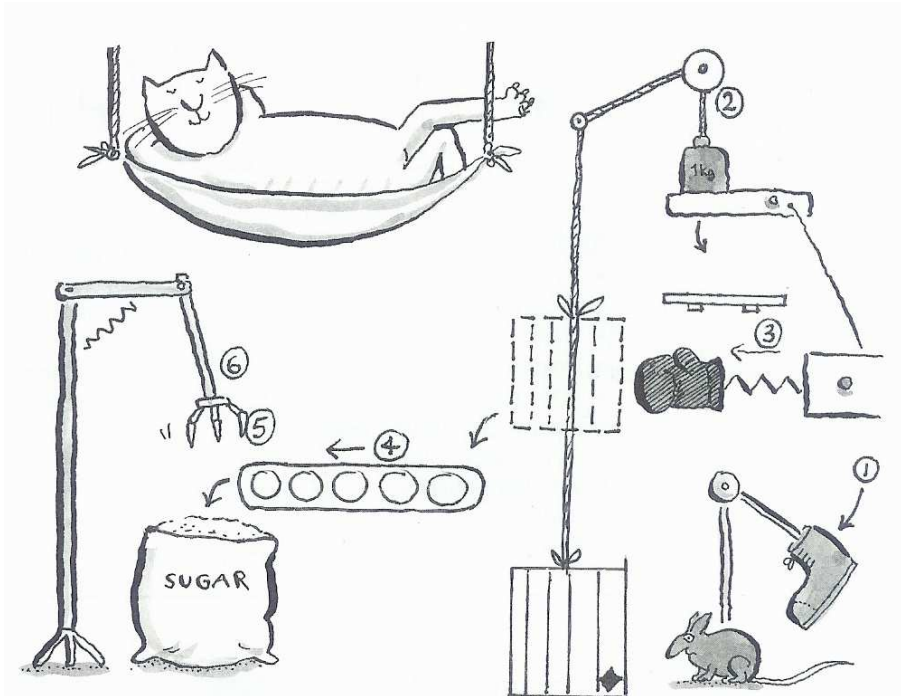
Subject	Verb	Other
<i>The world population...</i>	<i>increased</i>	<i>... from ... to</i>
<i>The percentage of the world population in (Asia)...</i>	<i>decreased</i>	<i>... by ...</i>
<i>The population percentage in (Asia)...</i>	<i>went down</i>	<i>As we can see in the second pie chart, ...</i>
<i>The percentage in (Asia)...</i>	<i>rose sharply</i>	<i>Turning to the second chart,</i>
<i>The (Asian) percentage</i>	<i>went up slightly</i>	<i>Furthermore, ...</i>
<i>But not: Asia went down ...</i>	<i>remained the same</i>	<i>In conclusion, ...</i>
		<i>Overall, ...</i>

Notes

ACADEMIC TASK ONE WRITING: PROCESSES

The Cat and the Mouse

Label the diagram with the words in the box, and then explain how the cat gets its breakfast.

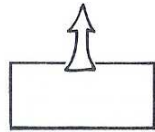


Nouns	Verbs
piece of cheese	to kick into
boxing glove	to lift up
pulley	to punch onto
conveyor belt	to carry along
boot	to drop into
cage	to pick up
crane	to eat

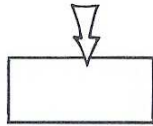
For this kind of Task One, remember to:

- Use the Present Simple;
- Use the Passive for artificial processes;
- Use linking words (First, ... After that, ... etc.) to connect the stages;
- Use the Active for natural processes (The rain falls ... Water condenses ...)
- Use the nouns in the diagram to form verbs.

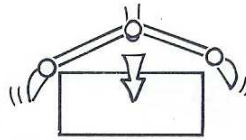
Other process actions:



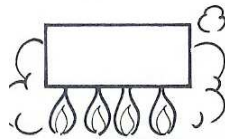
is raised
is lifted up



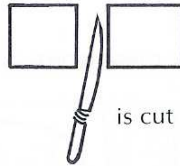
is lowered



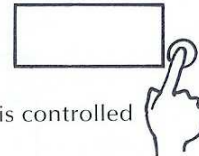
is dropped



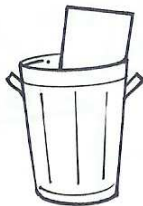
is heated



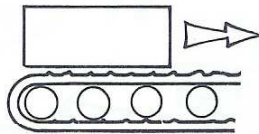
is cut



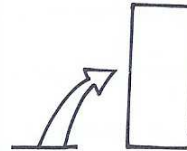
is controlled



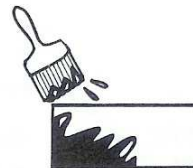
is discarded
is thrown away



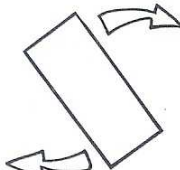
is carried



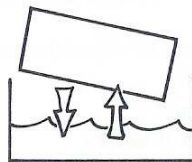
is turned



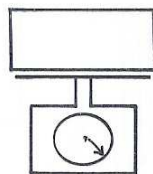
is painted



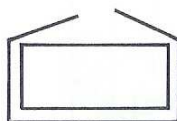
is rotated



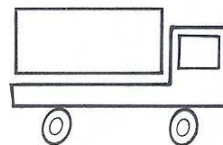
is dipped



is weighed



is packed



is transported

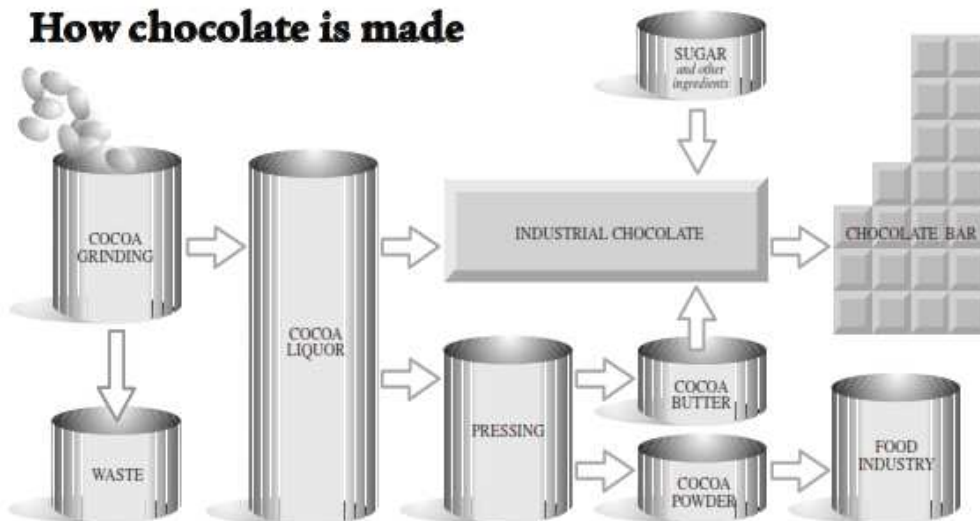
You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The diagrams below show how chocolate is made and how the price of a chocolate bar is divided up among those involved in the process.

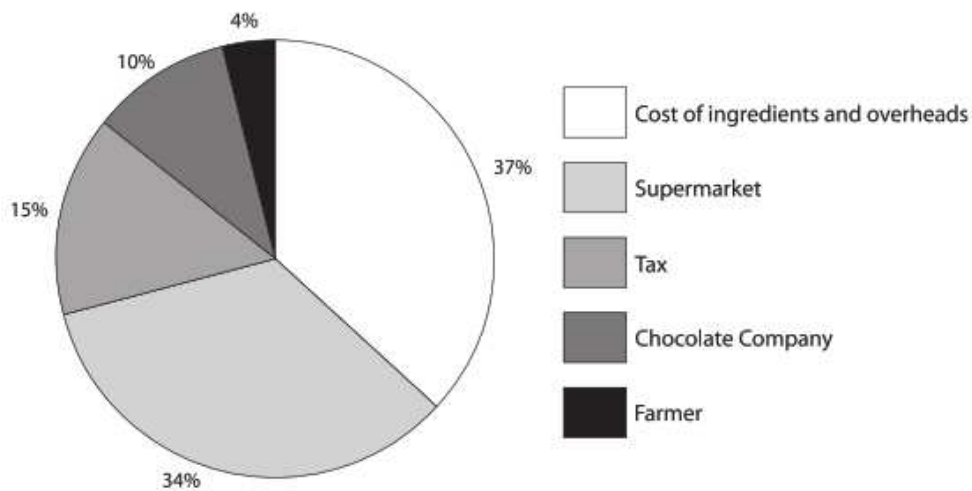
Summarise the information by choosing and reporting the key features, and make any relevant comparisons.

Write at least 150 words.

How chocolate is made



How the price of a chocolate bar is divided up



The cat and mouse

The diagram shows how a cat uses a complicated system to catch a mouse. There are four main stages in the process.

First, the mouse is kicked into the cage by the boot. Then the cage is lifted up by the pulley and the mouse is punched onto the conveyor belt by the boxing glove. After the mouse is dropped into the bag of sugar, it is picked up by the crane. Finally, the mouse is eaten by the cat.

Overall, we can see that this is an effective and efficient method for a lazy cat to catch a mouse.

(100 words)

How chocolate is made

The diagrams illustrate how chocolate is produced, and how the price of a chocolate bar is determined. Overall, the process involves several stages before the chocolate bar is ready for sale.

The main ingredient is cocoa, in the form of cocoa beans. First, the beans are ground to produce cocoa liquor. The cocoa liquor is retained, and the crushed cocoa beans are discarded. Next, the cocoa liquor is pressed to make cocoa powder and cocoa butter. After that, the powder is sold to the food industry, and the cocoa butter is mixed with cocoa liquor and sugar to produce industrial chocolate. From this, chocolate bars are made.

The pie chart shows how the price of a chocolate bar is shared between the various people involved in its production. The largest share, 37%, is spent on ingredients and overheads. Just over one-third of the price goes to the supermarket, and the chocolate company takes 15%. Unfortunately, the poor farmer only receives 4%. (161 words)

Sample Task Two questions

Writing Task 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

People move to new cities or new countries more than ever before.

What challenges do they experience? What strategies are there to help them meet these challenges?

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

Write at least 250 words.

- 1. We live today in an electronic information age. It is easier to be connected by technology yet many people seem no closer to feeling happy in their lives. Discuss.*
- 2. Some people think that robots are very important for humans' future development. Others however, think that robots are a dangerous invention that could have negative effects on society. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.*
- 3. Tourism can be an excellent way to develop a country but it can also cause harm. How can countries ensure that tourism benefits their development?*
- 4. Some people say that it is impossible to live comfortably in large cities. What problems are faced by people who live in large cities? What can be done to help solve these problems?*
- 5. Many people complain about stress in the workplace. What can employers do to reduce workplace stress and what can the workers themselves do?*

The Strange Island of Tango



Have you ever been to a remote island? Did you enjoy staying there? Do you think that the people there are happier than people who live in cities?

You will hear a story about the island of Tango, a small island not far from the east coast of Fantasia. The story is about the inhabitants of Tango, who have given up worrying and working more or less completely.

Listen and answer the questions:

1. What effect did the drug have on people's minds?
2. What effect did it have on the country's economy?
3. What did the government do, and why weren't they successful?
4. What did the government do in the end, and why was this a better solution?

The Story of Tango

The inhabitants of the island of Tango, a small island in the Pacific, discovered a plant that contained a powerful drug. This drug made it more difficult for them to think rationally. It stopped them worrying about the future and enabled them to forget all their problems. At the same time, it made it much easier for them to relax and enjoy themselves. So much so, indeed, that the whole population of the island stopped working and spent all their time singing and dancing and looking at the sea. Unfortunately, this had a very bad effect on the country's economy, and people began to run short of food.

This, however, didn't discourage the people from taking the drug. The prime minister made speeches on the TV, warning them about the drug, but nobody took any notice. Before long the economy was in ruins. This forced the government to make the drug illegal. But that only made the situation worse. The law couldn't prevent the people from taking the drug, which grew wild all over the island. On the contrary, the fact that the drug was illegal merely encouraged people to take it. Eventually, the government found a better solution. They exported the drug to other countries. This saved the islanders from having to work more than one day a week, and allowed them to spend the rest of the time sitting in the sun without a care in the world.

As you listen again, choose verbs from the list and write sentences which have the same meaning as those below.

Don't forget to put the 'Tango' verb in the past simple tense, and be sure to complete the sentence. The first has been done for you.

allow	stop	make it easier
enable	prevent	make it more difficult
encourage	discourage	
force	save	

1. When they took the drug, it was more difficult for them to think rationally.
The drug **made it more difficult for them to think** rationally.
2. When they took the drug, they didn't worry about the future.
The drug ...
3. When they took the drug, they were able to forget about all their problems.
The drug ...
4. When they took the drug, they could relax and enjoy themselves more easily.
The drug ...
5. Although there was a shortage of food, people still wanted to take the drug.
Even the food shortage did not ...
6. Because of the economic crisis, the government had to take some decisive action.
The economic crisis ...
7. After the new law was introduced, people still took the drug.
The new law didn't ...
8. After the new law was introduced, people wanted to take the drug even more.
The new law ...
9. When the drug was exported, the islanders didn't have to work more than one day a week.
Exporting the drug ...
10. When the drug was exported, they were able to sit in the sun all day long.
This...

The 'Tango' verb plus verb combinations

Pattern One: plus infinitive

enable allow encourage force	someone	to do something
-------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------	------------------------

Pattern Two: make it ...

make it	easier more difficult	for someone to do something
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Pattern Three: plus gerund

stop prevent save	someone	(from) doing something
discourage	someone	from doing something

Discussion

Example: *package holidays*

- A** Package holidays **enable people to travel** abroad cheaply.
- B** Ah yes, but they **discourage people from being** adventurous, because everything is organised for them.
- C** But on the other hand, they **make it easier for single people to make friends** on holiday.
- D** Yes, but they **force you to spend** your holiday with people you may not like.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the following? Choose five topics and write a sentence on each one. Try to use a different Tango verb for each topic.

A credit card	Car-free day	Sharing a flat with friends
Instagram	Being married	A part-time job
Living with parents	Living in Jakarta	A personal trainer
Having your own car	Having a Master's degree	Being a celebrity
Being able to play the piano	Learning Mandarin	Instant noodles
TV advertising	Google maps	Studying psychology

Your sentences:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Supermarkets or small shops?

Rewrite the sentences about supermarkets below, beginning with the words given.

1. People tend to buy more in supermarkets because of the open display.
The open display encourages people to buy more.
2. There is a wide range of goods, so you can do all your shopping in one place.
The wide range of goods
3. Some supermarkets use cameras, so that people are less likely to steal things.
The use of cameras
4. Because supermarkets sell things at cut prices, smaller shops have to lower their prices too.
The cut prices in supermarkets
5. Because of the competition from supermarkets, it is harder for smaller shops to stay in business.
The competition from supermarkets

The Tango answers

1. The drug **made it more difficult** for them to think rationally.
2. The drug **stopped** them worrying about the future.
3. The drug **enabled** them to forget all their problems.
4. The drug **made it easier** for them to relax and enjoy themselves.
5. Even the food shortage **did not discourage** people from taking the drug.
6. The economic crisis **forced** the government to take some action.
7. The new law didn't **prevent** people from taking the drug.
8. The law only **encouraged** people to take the drug.
9. Exporting the drug **saved** the islanders from having to work more than one day a week.
10. This **allowed** them to sit in the sun all day long.

And some final tips

Useful phrases for the four-paragraph essay:

- [Information technology] has had a major impact on people's lives/everyday life
- [Information technology] has a number of advantages. First, ...
- On the other hand, it cannot be denied /many people would argue that ...
- [Information technology] has a negative effect overall
- Few people would deny that [information technology] has had several undesirable consequences/effects/results
- In conclusion, it is clear that ... can benefit people in a number of ways.
- However, parents/the government should make sure that children/people do not

Link ideas with these words at the beginning of a sentence:

For example, ...	As a result, ...	In conclusion, ...
For instance, ...	However, ...	To sum up, ...
Moreover, ...	On the other hand, ...	In my opinion, ...

Using Tango verbs (1)

The easiest way to use the Tango words is to simply think of the topic of your essay, then add the Tango verb:

High school examinations (allow, enable, prevent, force etc.) ...

Or: Living in Jakarta/Having a cat or dog/Getting married at an early age ...

Using Tango verbs (2)

Use **This** plus a Tango word to develop an idea:

*Many people now choose to work from home one day per week. **This** (enables/allows) them to ...
However, working from home may ...*

People and everyday examples

Think of people and everyday examples when you write a topic. Compare the following topics. Which would be easier to write about?

1. Urban problems
2. Traffic
3. Traffic in Jakarta
4. My journey to school/work everyday