

The overview below contains tips that can help you improve your IELTS score in a matter of few minutes.

PRIOR TO STARTING

Underline the significant keywords on the text. You should try converting nouns into verbs (and vice versa) and adjectives into adverbs while also outlining words with similar meanings (synonyms) and opposite meanings (antonyms). This way you can boost your vocabulary and expand your answer.

In order to make the overall idea stand out, you should highlight and circle the graph or graphs used.

You should then proceed to identify the trends of the graph.

Here are some guiding questions to help you:

- What is the overall idea?
- What are the major changes (stable and unstable ones)?
- Can you identify something that stands out (e.g. a peak, a trough, etc.)?
- Is there a pattern forming?
- Can you compare and contrast elements (e.g. people, locations, etc.)?

WRITING YOUR PARAGRAPHS

After you have done the procedures mentioned above, look at your paragraph structures. Also try incorporating these tips:

- When starting your paragraph, use the fundamental rule- start with general ideas and work down to specific details.
- Start your paragraph with a general idea, avoid starting with numbers. An example of a general idea is, “In the United Kingdom, the gender wage gap was slowly shrinking over, especially towards the end of the period.”
- Follow the general idea with specific ones. Use numbers to elaborate the general thought (e.g. In 2012, the wage gap closed down to below 10% for full-time workers, etc.)

In analysing the changes in graphs start:

- from the largest area in a pie chart,
- from the left (or y axis) on a bar graph and
- from the earliest point on a line graph.

In naming the parts of the diagram, be sure to use relevant vocabulary like:

- “The curvilinear” or “The curve”,

- “The broken line” or “The solid line” or “The dotted line”,
- “The shaded area” or “The un-shaded are”,
- “The coloured bars”.

These words will aide the description of the graph.

You can use approximations to give emphasis on your estimates. Say for example, “Roughly 10%”, “Nearly 12 million women”, “Over a hundred men”, “approximately half of the population” and so on.

In describing the speed of change, you can use adjectives and adverbs that can best describe the movement. A few are given in the table below.

ADJECTIVE ADVERB

Rapid	Rapidly
Swift	Swiftly
Quick	Quickly
Hasty	Hastily
Dramatic	Dramatically
Sudden	Suddenly
Steady	Steadily

In explaining the graph, do not describe the X and Y axis. Rather,

- Give the information/data plotted on the graph,
- Do not write everything that you see on the graph,
- Choose the main points/trends (e.g. the major ideas),
- Group similar things to avoid over piling of ideas,
- Narrow down the idea to its most specific sense (Say “Women’s wage satisfaction increased dramatically by 16% in the past three years” instead of “The line went up through the years”),
- Be statistical, never emotional (Instead of using “I believe”, use “Based on the data”) and
- Avoid starting with conjunctions (e.g. but, and, or, for, since, so, also, because, etc.).