



Teaching and assessing writing at B1 and B2 levels

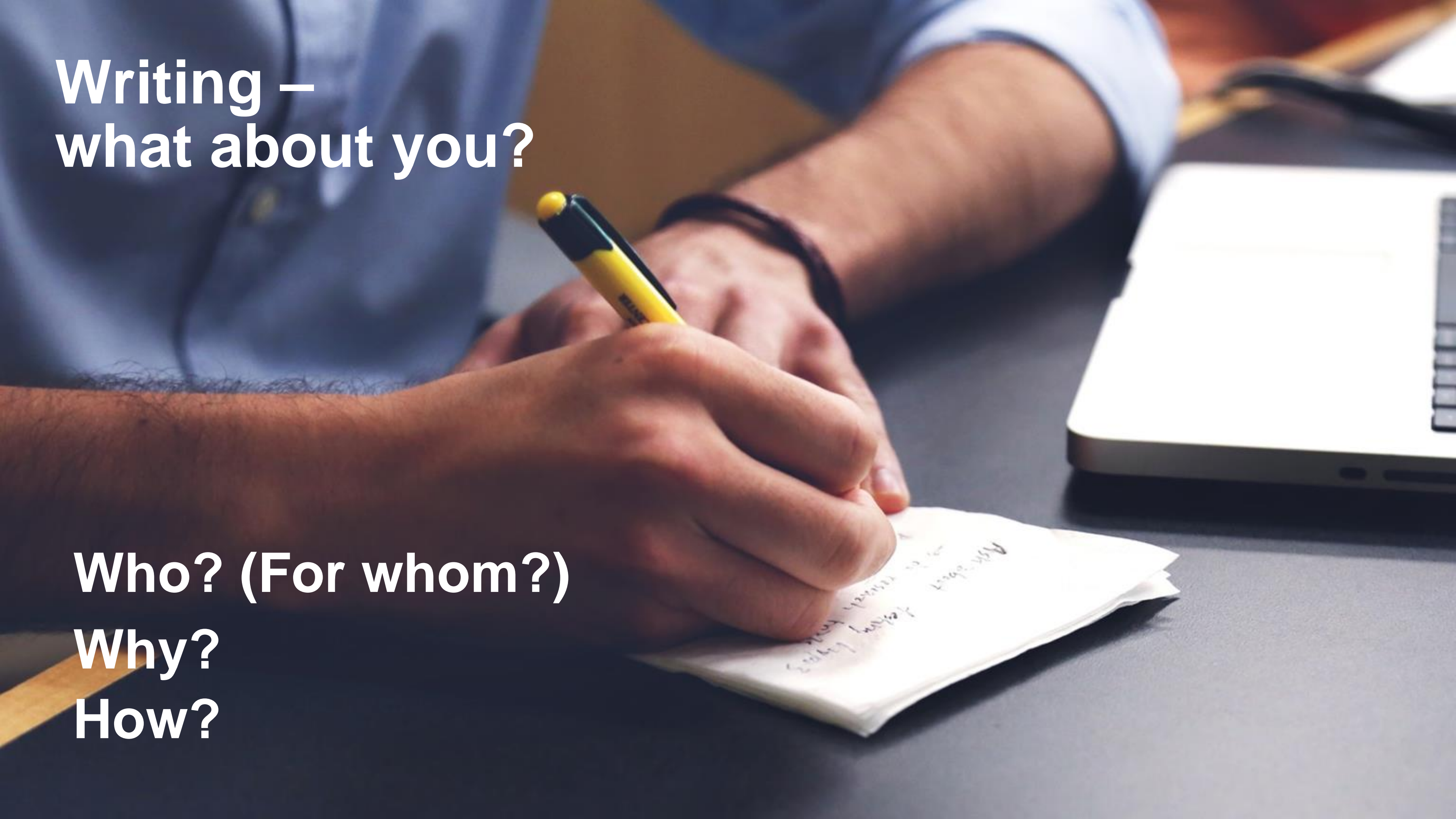
Richard Twigg

**Writing –
what about you?**

Who? (For whom?)

Why?

How?



The writing process

A journalist has been set the task of producing an article for the Sunday edition of a local newspaper on problems faced by young people in the local area/city.

- 1. What would the journalist do first?**
- 2. What would they NOT do?**

Go to their computer and start writing!!

What does the writing process include?

- Data collection
- Selecting
- Planning
- Drafting
- Crafting
- Editing
- Rewriting
- Proof-reading



Setting the task

- Make sure that the task you set is clear
- What do the students have to do?

Important questions to ask yourself:

- When should you set the task?
- How familiar are the learners with the communicative context?



Three questions

- Audience: Who are you writing to?
- Purpose: Why are you writing?
- Result: What effect/result you do you want to achieve?



Small steps

- Change or improve words
- Write or rewrite sentences



I set another goal ... a reasonable, manageable goal that I could realistically achieve if I worked hard enough. I approached everything step by step.

(Michael Jordan)

Feedback – what do you do?

- cross out
- correct
- self-correct
- [correction code/notation scheme]
- tick
- comment
- highlight



What do you do post correction?

- grade
- comment
- give feedback
- invite to redo
- utilise

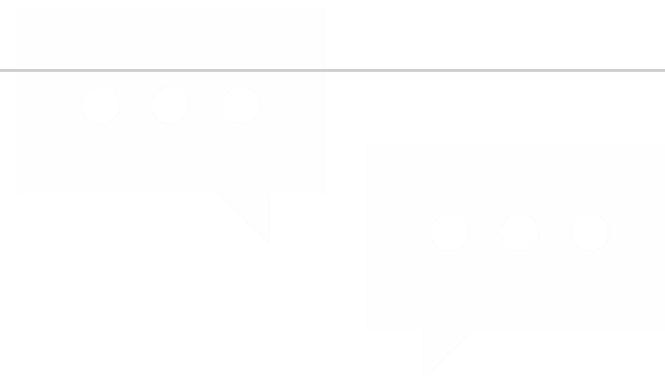


Correction code

Mark	Error indicated
^	A word is missing
/	Start a new sentence
//	Start a new paragraph
Gr	Grammar error
Sp	Spelling error
P	Punctuation error
Art	Error with articles (a, an, the)

Grade – criterion highlighting

Content:	
Organisation	
Communicative Achievement	
Language: accuracy and range	



Criterion highlighting

- This is part of a letter you receive from an English friend.

My grandmother has given me some money. There's enough to buy a really good camera or go on holiday with my friends. My parents want me to save the money. What do you think I should do?

- Now write a letter, giving your friend some advice.
- Write your **letter** in about 100 words on your answer sheet.

Criterion highlighting

Hellow Cris,

That good new! Your grandmother is good. With the money you can to buy a camera or may be go holidays.

May be you can visit me! You can to save money to, good idea! What your parents think? I think yes camera good idea you can make fotos and send me.

Have nice time and tell me your decide what you do.

I wait your answer.

Kiss Ana

Cambridge English: Preliminary for Schools Writing Examiners use the following assessment scale, extracted from the one on the previous page:

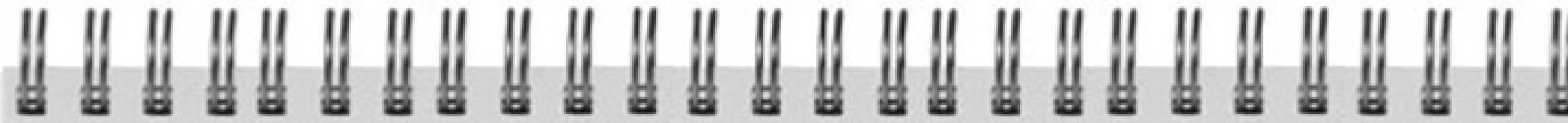
B1	Content	Communicative Achievement	Organisation	Language
5	All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward ideas.	Text is generally well organised and coherent, using a variety of linking words and cohesive devices.	Uses a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately, with occasional inappropriate use of less common lexis. Uses a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control. Errors do not impede communication.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>			
3	Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task in generally appropriate ways to communicate straightforward ideas.	Text is connected and coherent, using basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices.	Uses everyday vocabulary generally appropriately, while occasionally overusing certain lexis. Uses simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control. While errors are noticeable, meaning can still be determined.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>			
1	Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present. Target reader is minimally informed.	Produces text that communicates simple ideas in simple ways.	Text is connected using basic, high-frequency linking words.	Uses basic vocabulary reasonably appropriately. Uses simple grammatical forms with some degree of control. Errors may impede meaning at times.

Part 1

You **must** answer this question. Write your answer in **140 – 190** words in an appropriate style on the separate answer sheet.

- 1** In your English class you have been talking about the environment. Now, your English teacher has asked you to write an essay.

Write an essay using **all** the notes and give reasons for your point of view.



Every country in the world has problems with pollution and damage to the environment.
Do you think these problems can be solved?

Notes

Write about:

1. transport
2. rivers and seas
3. (your own idea)

Paragraphing

What is a paragraph?

A paragraph is a group of related sentences that develop a main thought, or idea about a **single** topic

3 **basic elements** of a paragraph are:

1. A topic
2. A topic sentence
 - a) This states the main or controlling idea
3. Supporting details
 - a) These explain the main point and include examples

Example paragraph

One factor contributing to homelessness is the lack of cheap accommodation. Many major cities like New York face homelessness problems, mainly because there is a shortage of family houses along with high property rents. In addition there are many empty properties in these cities, which could be used to alleviate the situation.

Topic sentence

Supporting sentences

Linkers and signposts

Example paragraph cont.

One factor contributing to homelessness is the lack of cheap accommodation. Many major cities like New York face homelessness problems, mainly because there is a shortage of family houses along with high property rents. In addition there are many empty properties in these cities, which could be used to alleviate the situation. (52)

Governments should therefore encourage property owners to rent out their properties to those without homes. For example, incentives could be offered to owners by giving tax relief or subsidies in order to help make empty properties available. Such measures would then help to alleviate the situation. Although this is not a complete answer, it ought to be considered. (58)

How does IELTS Task 1 work?

It provides a defined input requiring a predictable response

- ✓ direct test
- ✓ tightly controlled to maximise reliability
- ✓ no time wasted on thinking up ideas
- ✓ no analysis of data expected or rewarded

How does IELTS Task 2 work?

It introduces a topic followed by questions requiring a discursive response.

It is worth twice as much as Task 1.

- provides a valid framework to stimulate ideas
- provides opportunity for candidates to show their strengths
- no right answer but a defensible point of view is required
- sufficiently prescribed to limit 'learned answer' approach

Format of Task 2

- a point of view is stated
 - candidates are asked if they agree or not and to give reasons
- a possible alternative view is given
 - candidates are asked to comment on the two views; do they agree/disagree?
- a statement is made followed by two questions
 - candidates must cover both questions
- two opposing views are given
 - candidates must discuss both views and give their own opinion with reasons

4 Assessment Criteria

**‘Getting’
the task and
sticking to it**

**Having the
grammar and
syntax to
produce a
coherent
answer**

**Planning
and writing
coherently
in the time
given**

**Having
the right
vocabulary to
match
the task**

What to teach for Task 1

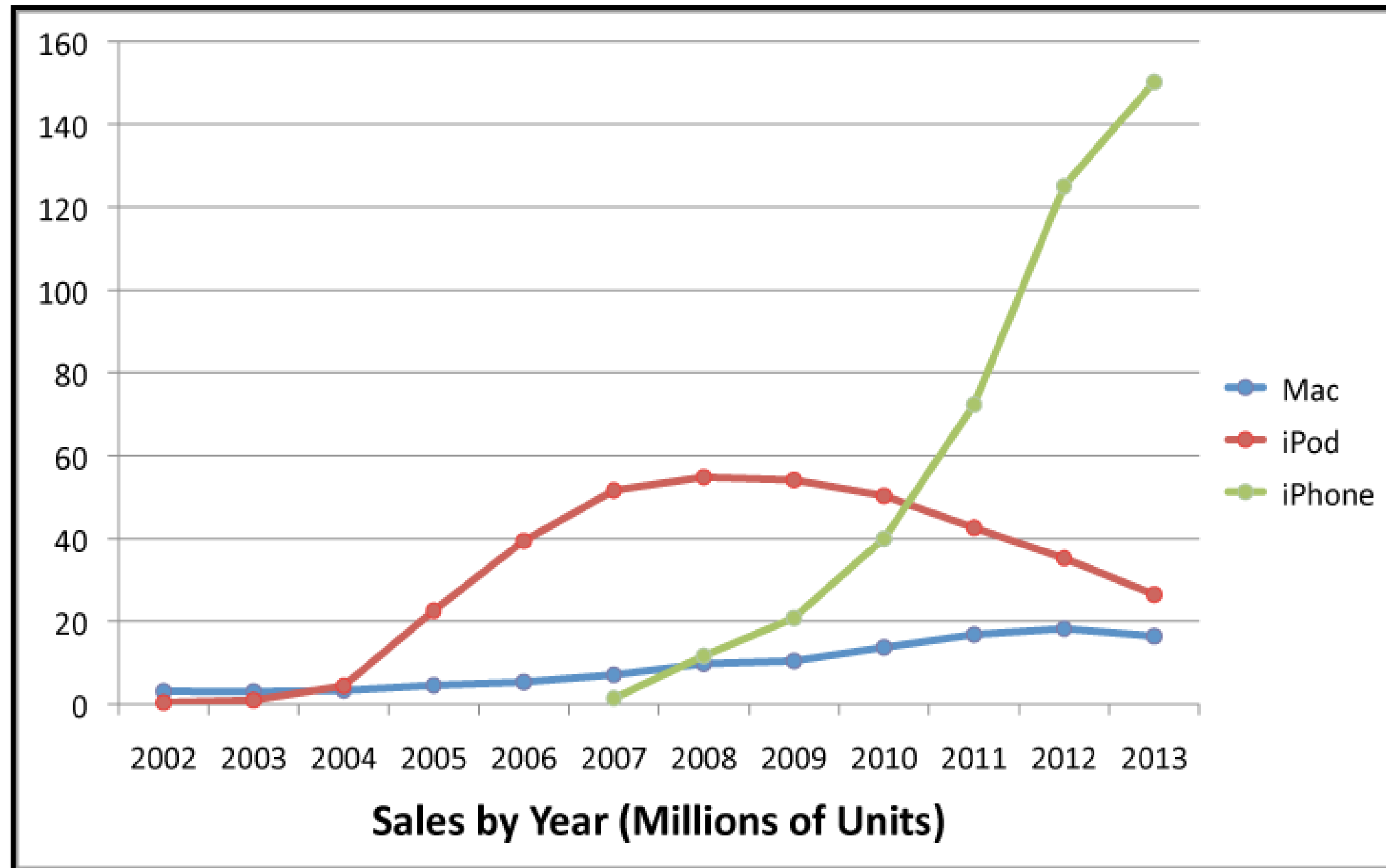
IELTS Academic

- Understanding graphs and diagrams: types and purpose of chart
- Selecting the main points / summarising the information
- Describing trends / using the right vocab
- Comparing and grouping information
- Describing a process
- Describing how something works

Academic Task 1: Test day strategy

- Write an introduction: what, where, when?
- Highlight the key features with figures
- Write a rounding-off statement / overview

The graph below shows the global sales by year of a number of Apple devices.



Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features and make comparisons where relevant.

Task 1: Introduction

What

Where

The graph illustrates *worldwide sales* of three Apple devices: Mac, ipod and iPhone, over the eleven year period from 2002 to 2013.

When

Task 1: Overview

From the data provided we can see that Mac and iPod sales continued to drop whereas the iPhone was selling well and the upward trend looks set to continue.

Test Day Strategy – Task 1

- Write an introduction: what, where, when?
- Write an overview
- Highlight the key features with figures

Task 2 – What to Teach?

- Generating ideas – having something to say
- Planning the essay / organising ideas / main and supporting ideas
- Writing an opinion / point of view
- Balancing your views
- Making concessions
- Linking ideas
- Writing a conclusion



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