



Practising IELTS Academic Writing Task 1

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A. TEACHERS' NOTES

Description

Time required:	60 minutes
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One copy per student of <i>Classroom Handout 1 & 2</i>
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To introduce and practise vocabulary to describe charts and graphs in Part 1 of the Academic Writing test

A1. Lesson Plan

- Warmer: In pairs the students answer the following questions:

“What type of music do you like?”

“How do you buy and listen to music?”

“How are your choices in music different to your parents or people of other generations?”

Timing 3 mins

- Give out A2. *Classroom Handout 1* to each student.

Focus the students on the graph. In pairs or small groups, the students discuss the graph and any general trends they can see.

Timing 3 mins

- On their own, students complete exercise a)

(Answers)

VERBS		
↑	↓	→
go up	go down	remain steady
Increase	decrease	stay the same
Rise	fall	
Climb	drop	

NOUNS	
↑	↓
increase	decrease
rise	fall
climb	drop

Timing 6 mins



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4. Draw the attention of the students to the graph in *Classroom Handout 1*.

Ask the class what happened between 1995 & 1996.

Possible answers:

Sales	went down decreased fell dropped	
There was	a decrease a fall a drop	in sales

Write the possible answers on the board. Draw the students' attention to the difference in structure when using the noun.

Next, ask the class what happened to sales between 2000 and 2001.

Answer: the same as between 1995 & 1996

Ask the class if the falls between 1995 & 1996 and 2000 & 2001 were the same.

Answer: No. The fall between 2000 & 2001 was bigger.

Explain to the class that the verbs and nouns only describe the direction of the movement of the graph. Ask them what they can use to add more information to the verbs and nouns.

Answer: Adverbs and adjectives.

Timing 15 mins

5. In small groups, the students complete exercise *b)* on *Classroom Handout 1*.

Monitor and help the students as appropriate.

(Answers)

ADVERBS		ADJECTIVES
ciamalrtdlay yasginincftil myratdeloe gihllsy	dramatically significantly moderately slightly	dramatic significant moderate gradual slight

Timing 10 mins



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6. Write the five adverbs on the board. Invite any students who feel they might know the answers, to come and draw a line next to each word to demonstrate the degree of movement it describes.

Suggested answers:

dramatically	
significantly	
moderate	
slightly	

Point out to the class that the adjectives and adverbs have been presented in the order of the degree of change. i.e. the smallest amount of change is at the bottom of the list and the greatest at the top.

Timing 5 mins

7. Write the following two sentences on the board

Sales fell dramatically by 100 million in 2001

There was a dramatic fall in sales of 100 million in 2001

Elicit from the class the different structures used with verbs and nouns. Point out

- that the adverb comes after the verb, whereas the adjective comes before the noun
- the use of the word 'by' before the amount of change when using a verb
- the use of the word 'of' before the amount of change when using a noun

Timing 10 mins

8. Individually, the students write two sentences to describe what happened in 1998. One sentence using a verb and adverb, and the second sentence using an adjective and noun.

Monitor the students and correct as necessary.

Suggested answers: Sales went up/increased/rose/climbed moderately by 50 million in 1998.

There was a moderate increase/rise/climb in sales of 50 million in 1998



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Individually, each student writes five or six sentences to describe all of the activity on the graph.

As they are writing, monitor the students and correct as necessary.

Timing 10 mins

9. Each student swaps their sentences with another student.

The students check each other's work to make sure that the facts, grammar and spelling are correct.

The students then feed their corrections back to each other.

Timing 7 mins

10. Share any particularly successful answers with the whole class.

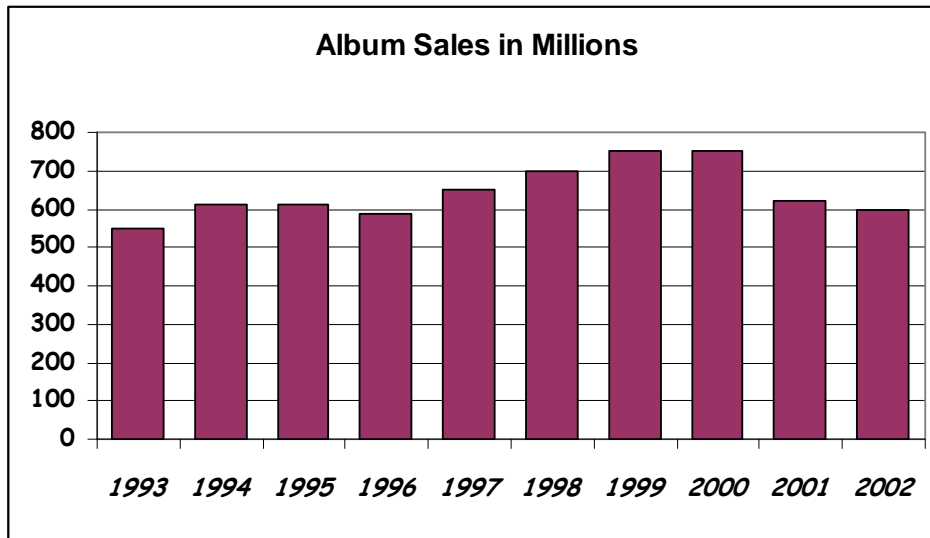
Timing 3 mins

11. The teacher sets the homework. (see A4. *Suggested homework/self-study activities*).



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A2. Classroom Handout 1



go up	go down	rise
decrease	increase	fall
remain steady	drop	climb
stay the same		

a) Place the verbs in the box into the correct column in the table below. Then wherever possible, convert the verbs into nouns.

VERBS		
↑	↓	→
go up		

NOUNS	
↑	↓

b) Unscramble the letters in the table below to find the adverbs. Then convert the adverbs into adjectives.

ADVERBS	
ciamalrtdlay	dramatically
yasginincftil
myratdeloe
gihllsy

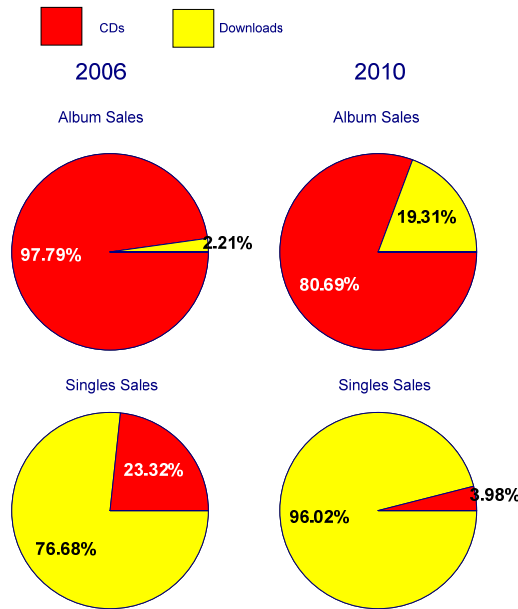
ADJECTIVES
.....
.....
.....
.....



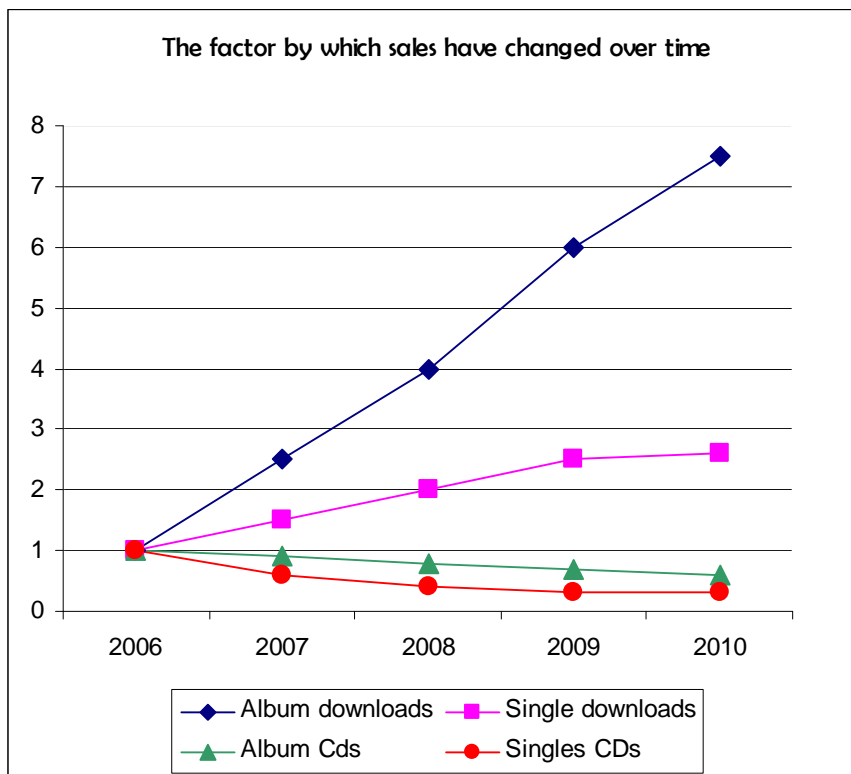
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A3. Classroom Handout 2

1.



3.





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A4. Suggested homework/self study activities

1. Students write 10 sentences describing the information on *A3.Classroom Handout 2*.

Remind the students to try to

- use a variety of verbs and nouns to describe the trends
- include linking words
- modify the verbs with adverbs such as slightly, dramatically, significantly, rapidly, considerably, etc
- modify the nouns with adjectives such as; slight, dramatic, significant, rapid, considerable, etc.

2. In the following lesson students swap their written homework with someone else in the room. The students then read the text in front of them and give feedback on the correct use of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and the accuracy of the information given.

Remind the students that they should not give opinions or invent data in Academic Writing Task 1.



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B. GUIDANCE FOR FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

1. Get students used to the idea of describing information displayed in graph/chart form first generally, then looking for any exceptions to the general trend while using the verb & adverb, adjective & noun combinations.

You can find graphs to use in class in

- business coursebooks
- the internet - search for “graphs” and select images
- the internet – many news websites (e.g. www.bbc.co.uk) have a lot of articles using graphs

2. You could ask your students to find graphs on the internet at home, print them and write some sentences about them.

Remind them to always bring a copy of the graph with their writing so the graph can be used for checking their writing.

3. Get students used to the idea of reading each others’ written work and giving each other feedback.

Make sure that you focus the students’ attention on a particular area or areas.

- Don’t say, “Correct this piece of writing”
- Do say, “Check the information is accurate” or “Check that the verbs have been used correctly”

4. If your students are higher level and more experienced, they could try using the Writing Band Descriptors for IELTS Task 1 to give each other feedback. See http://www.ielts.org/pdf/UOBDs_WritingT1.pdf