

Sample lesson plan for *Writing for IELTS* Unit 6

Student preparation: Have learners complete all of Part 1: Vocabulary before the class. (1 hour)

Teacher preparation: For Vocabulary spot check 1, write the following numbered words on separate cards so you can put them in a pile to use in the activity: 1. change, 2. distribution, 3. reason, 4. trend, 5. banking, 6. pattern, 7. change, 8. networking, 9. correlation. (5 mins)

Part 1: Vocabulary (20–30 mins)

FOCUS These exercises introduce learners to key expressions associated with the theme of science and technology and provide practice in collocation.

Spot check 1:

To practice collocation in the context of words associated with science and technology, do the following group activity in groups of four.

- Write the following words on the board: *noticeable, underlying, distinctive, online, widespread, social, significant, main, gradual*.
- Explain that group members will take it in turns to come to the front of the class. When the first group member comes up, show them word number one. They must remember the word and tell their group. As a group they then find one word that collocates and write the two words. As soon as they finish, another member of the group comes to the front to look at the next word.
- The first group to finish gains one point; each group gets one point for a correct answer. The group with the most points wins.

Note: there may be more than one possible collocation for some words.

Spot check 2:

To check learners' recall of vocabulary associated with science and technology and practise collocation, have them work in pairs and write down the nine collocations practised in Spot check 1. When they finish swap lists with another pair and have them mark each other's work. They get two points for each correct collocation that is correctly spelt (one mark if there are any spelling mistakes)

Note: Make sure you clean the list off the board before you begin and check that the learners are not using the list they wrote in Spot check 1.

Part 2: Practice exercises: Task 1 (40–50 mins)

FOCUS These exercises train learners to interpret tables and summarise the information contained in them. Exercises 1 & 2 develop skills in interpreting data and finding patterns. Exercise 3 provides practice in writing general statements with supporting details.

Exercise 1

Books closed, elicit examples of popular online activities. Then have learners guess which are the most popular. Have them check the table in Exercise 1 to find recent data on the issue. Tell learners to read the instructions and answer the first question. Give feedback and have them answer the second question. Give feedback and have them answer the third question. Students then read the commentary in the answer key and discuss in pairs.

Typical mistakes: The aim of the activity is to guide learners step by step to understand why response 2 is better than response 1. For this reason it is better to insist they do the activity in three stages.

Exercise 2

Go over the Exam tip at the top of page 51. Highlight the importance of being flexible when interpreting tables, i.e. being prepared to switch focus if necessary, to see patterns. Point out that your learners will be able to see how this works as they go through the four steps in the exercise.

This exercise encourages learners to notice and use a variety of ways of combining sentences. Have learners discuss the commentary in the answer key when they have completed the exercise.

Exercise 3

This exercise focuses on how to signpost general statements in a summary. Go over the Exam tip towards the bottom of page 51. Then have learners identify the signpost, the general statement and supporting statement in the example, i.e. sentence 1, clause 1 in sentence 2, clause 2 in sentence 2. Have learners write similar general statements, each one preceded by signposting and followed by supporting detail. In pairs, learners compare the suggested answers with what they have written themselves.

Typical mistakes: Learners often find it difficult to focus on two things at once – in this activity, signposting the general statements as well as providing supporting details. You might need to write sentence stems on the board to help and tell them to choose three:

One significant trend is ...

The smallest growth in the percentage of ...

Another noticeable feature of ...

However, the biggest growth in ...

Part 2: Practice exercises: Task 2 (50 mins–1 hour)

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These exercises develop learners' ability to plan for summarising a table and improve their ability to see sophisticated patterns of interpretation.

Exercise 4

This exercise requires discussion, so organise learners in groups of six. Have them first look for strengths – if they notice weaknesses at this point they can bring them up later. Have all learners in the group agree and then have a secretary write their views. Use the same procedure for weaknesses. They then compare what they have written with the answer key.

Typical mistakes: Students are often reluctant to commit to a particular view so it is sometimes useful to get a group consensus which is then written down and agreed by the whole group. The answers will then have more impact when they compare them with what they have written.

Exercise 5

As in Practice exercise 1, highlight the step-by-step process: first learners read general statement 1, then complete general statements 2 and 3 that follow. Once they have done this, they go back and add the supporting evidence, writing the appropriate letter as in the examples. Finally, have students discuss the advantages of the plan over the one in Exercise 4, before checking with the answer key.

Exercise 6

You might wish to begin with books closed as follows. Write the two sentences on the board and elicit which is more appropriate. Then elicit other possible ways of modifying sentence 1. Books open, have learners complete the task using language from the Exam tip below the exercise.

Typical mistakes: Students often use a narrow range of language because they think it is safer to do so. Highlight the importance of using a variety of expressions – this is not only important in academic writing, but will gain marks in the exam. You could give learners a quick practice as follows: say a part of speech, e.g. *modal verbs* and elicit suitable examples, i.e. *can, could, may*. You could extend this by having learners practise in a similar way in pairs, one with book open and the other with book closed.

Exercise 7

Have learners complete the exercise according to the instructions, then compare with the suggested answers.

Exercise 8

Learners read the instructions and essay title and then follow steps 1 & 2 to complete the first part of the activity. Check answers before going on to step 3. Give sufficient time for learners to complete the final step. Encourage them to edit their first draft and then write out a final version.

Part 3: Exam practice (Homework – 1 hour 15 mins)

This can be assigned for homework.

FOCUS

Emphasise the importance of using signposting language and a suitable academic style.

- For Task 1, allow 5 minutes for planning and 20 minutes for writing.
- For Task 2, allow 10 minutes for planning and 40 minutes for writing.

Note that these time allowances are slightly longer than the student would have in the exam. For Units 7–12, ask students to complete the work within the official exam-allotted time as printed on the paper.