

Lesson plan: *Get Ready for IELTS Writing* Unit 8

Student preparation for this class: Have students complete all of Part 1: Language development before the class. (40–50 mins)

Teacher preparation: For Language development spot check 1 & 2, photocopy and cut up two hand outs. Prepare one per pair for Spot check 1 and one per student for Spot check 2. (15 mins)

Part 1: Language development (up to 40 mins)

Focus: Exercises 1 & 2 introduces common words used in describing personal finance; Exercises 3–5 introduce the use of pronouns for reference within a text.

Spot check 1:

Remind learners how words are used together in different kinds of collocations or other links. For example, verb + noun or noun + noun, opposites, etc. Distribute Language development spot check 1 hand out and have learners work in pairs: they match the words from Language development exercises 1 & 2 with each 'brain teaser'. (Answers: 1. wealth/possessions, 2. rich/wealthy, 3. save/spend, 4. wealth/poverty, 5. savings/income, 6. tax/income/salary/wealth/savings, 7. salary/income.)

Spot check 2:

To provide further practice in using reference within a text, have learners work in groups of four to match corresponding sentences.

1. Distribute Language development spot check 2 hand out.
2. Nominate one student in each group to say their first sentence. The student who has the corresponding second sentence reads it out. Continue in a clockwise direction.
3. Have learners discuss what they think of each sentence, e.g. whether they agree or disagree or have some experience of their own. Answers: 1d, 2c, 3h, 4a, 5f, 6g, 7b, 8e).

Part 2: Skills development (50 mins for Exercises 1–3; 50 mins for Exercises 4 & 5)

Focus: These exercises train learners to write opinion essays that include a range of opinions, including the writer's, in preparation for writing one of the question types in Task 2.

Exercise 1

Spend 3–4 minutes discussing the Exam information at the top of page 56. Ask questions such as: *Why should you include a range of opinions in your essay when it asks for yours? How does this link with what you learned Unit 7 about writing advantages and disadvantages? What verbs can be used to introduce your own opinion? What about other people's opinions?*

Then ask learners to do the exercise following the instructions in the book and compare their answers in pairs. Discuss the variety of phrases that introduce opinions in class feedback. Follow up by asking learners if they identify more with the writer's opinions, other opinions or don't identify with one more than the other.

Typical mistakes: As mentioned in Unit 7, students often fail to use a range of vocabulary in their essays. Point out the importance of using a variety of verb phrases in their writing and that this is an easy way to gain marks.

Exercise 2

Draw attention to the Exam tip before Skills development exercise 2. Point out that it should be clear from the start what the writer thinks – they will see this in the introduction they are about to read. Have learners do Exercise 2 individually. Encourage them to write the opinions in full so that they focus their full attention on the arguments. Highlight in feedback how the writer states a general opinion at the beginning, goes on to say what two others think and then clearly states his/her own opinion.

Exercise 3

Go through the instructions carefully. Make sure learners understand that they can add their own opinions to the notes provided, i.e. the notes are just there to help. Point out that the exam question has very similar wording to the one in Exercise 2 so they can use that introduction as a model. However, encourage them to use different phrases for introducing opinions and linking ideas.

Exercise 4

Draw attention to the Exam tip in the middle of page 57. Remind learners that they dealt with these linking words in Unit 7. Then introduce Exercise 4, pointing out that the gap-fill paragraph follows from the one in Exercise 2, i.e. the first reason for the writer's opinion. Have them do the gap-fill in small groups. There are several answers for each gap: encourage learners to discuss the answers fully so they feel comfortable in how they are used.

Have learners work individually on the second paragraph. First they extend the notes, and then write the paragraph. Point out that they should express views that continue naturally from paragraphs 1 and 2.

Exercise 5

Have learners complete the gapped paragraph. During class feedback establish the kind of opinions being expressed, i.e. that you have to find happiness in yourself. Discuss what kind of second paragraph such a person might write. Highlight that it should complement the first paragraph. Elicit possible extensions:

- Extend one of the examples mentioned of the 'good things in their life': family, friends, good health, or pets.
- Bring in another more general point: enjoying small things, helping others, etc.

Have learners write the second paragraph individually and ask them to compare their paragraphs with a partner.

Typical mistakes: Many students find it difficult to make connections. This is a skill that can be learned if they are given regular practice. One way to do this is to ask students to read an article and identify the opinion of the author. Then ask students to think about what other views the same author might have.

Get Ready for IELTS Writing

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Have learners type up the three-paragraph essay in Exercise 2 and 4 with different linking words and phrases to introduce opinions. Tell them they can make any other modifications they wish that they feel might improve the essay. (50 mins)

Part 3: Exam practice (Homework – 50 mins)

This can be done in class or assigned for homework. Suggest that learners spend up to 50 minutes on the exercise, getting closer to the official exam allotted time as printed on the paper.

PHOTOCOPIABLES

Unit 8: Language development spot check 1**Brain teasers: words that link together**

1. You can inherit both of these.
2. Two words with a similar meaning.
3. Two opposite things you can do.
4. Two opposite situations people live with.
5. You can live on either of these two.
6. You can do this with four of them.
7. One is the main source of another.

PHOTOCOPIABLES

Unit 8: Language development spot check 2

1. Not everyone thinks that wealth leads to happiness. ...

a) ... These changes are not welcome by everyone.

2. Governments are taking an interest in why so many people are unhappy. ...

b) ... This simple action can save a lot of money.

3. There are many stories of people winning the lottery. ...

c) ... Many people think this problem is linked to advertising and TV.

4. New gadgets are making us do things in different ways. ...

d) ... In fact it is often linked to dissatisfaction.

5. Money is no substitute for a good family life. ...

e) ... This approach can only work if some of it is for other people.

6. The weather in the UK can often be dull and rainy. ...

f) ... This is why parents need time off with their children.

7. You easily change gas and electricity suppliers these days. ...

g) ... This can be very depressing.

8. These days, people use shopping as a way of finding happiness. ...

h) ... Some of these stories have a happy ending, but many of them do not.