

Writing task one: pie charts

You will be given one or more pie charts. Your task is to describe the information given in the graph by writing a 150 word report. You are not asked to give your opinion. You should spend around 20 minutes on the task.

What is being tested is your ability to:

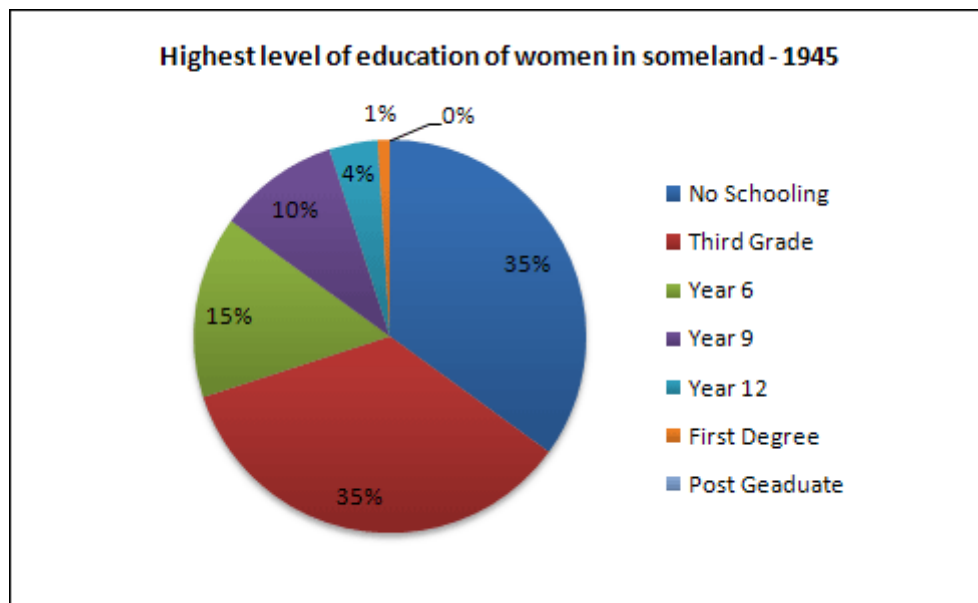
- objectively describe some graphic information
- compare and contrast
- report on an impersonal topic without the use of opinion
- use the language of graph description

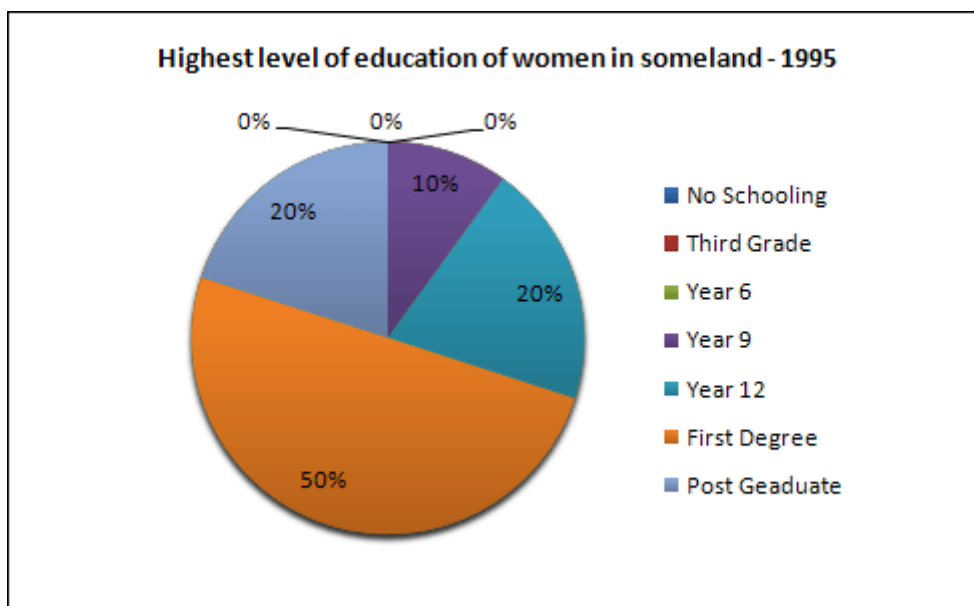
Sample task

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information in the graphs below.

Write at least 150 words.





Your task

Complete the task one report writing exercise above. Spend only 20 minutes. Then look at the guidelines and the sample answer below.

Guidelines for a good answer

Does the report have a suitable structure?

- Does it have an introduction, body and conclusion?
- Does it include connective words to make the writing cohesive within sentences and paragraphs?

Does the report use suitable grammar and vocabulary?

- Does it include a variety of sentence structures?
- Does it include a range of appropriate vocabulary?

Does the report meet the requirements of the task?

- Does it meet the word limit requirements?
- Does it describe the whole graph adequately?
- Does it focus on the important trends presented in the graphic information?

Now read sample answer one. How well does it follow the guidelines?

Sample answer 1

The pie charts compare the highest level of education achieved by women in Someland across two years, 1945 and 1995. It can be clearly seen that women received a much higher level of education in Someland in 1995 than they did in 1945.

In 1945 only 30% of women completed their secondary education and 1% went on to a first degree. No women had completed post-graduate studies. This situation had changed radically by 1995. In 1995, 90% of women in Someland had completed secondary education and of those, half had graduated from an initial degree and 20% had gone on to postgraduate studies. At the other end of the scale we can see that by 1995 all girls were completing lower secondary, although 10% ended their schooling at this point. This is in stark contrast with 1945 when only 30% of girls completed primary school, 35% had no schooling at all and 35% only completed the third grade.

In conclusion, we can see that in the 50 years from 1945 to 1995 there have been huge positive developments to the education levels of women in Someland.

Teacher's comments on the sample answer

“The report structure is clear and well organised with an introduction, body and conclusion. The candidate uses a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary so that the writing is not repetitive. In terms of task requirements, the report meets the word limit. Although the candidate has not included every figure presented in the charts, the answer does accurately reflect the content of the graphic material and gives a strong impression of the trend of change in the education of women which is the main point of the comparison of those particular charts. The sample answer above is therefore a very good one.”

Strategies for improving your IELTS score

Selecting information

In completing this task, it is important that you fully describe all of the graphic information given. However, this does not mean that you should note every detail. In most cases there will be too much information for you to mention each figure. You will therefore need to summarise the graph in meaningful segments. In other words, you will describe the significant trends in your report.

Report structure

As in the line graphs task, your report should be structured simply with an introduction, body and conclusion. Tenses should be used appropriately.

Use two standard opening sentences to introduce the graph or graphs and your report. These opening sentences should make up the first paragraph. Sentence one should define what the graph is about, that is the date, location, what is being described in the graphs etc. For example:

The pie charts compare the highest level of education achieved by women in Someland across two years, 1945 and 1995.

Notice that in the single line graph we said that ‘the graph shows’ but with two charts we can more accurately say ‘the pie charts compare’.

Note the tense used. Even though it describes information from the past, the graph shows the information in the present time.

Notice that the sample opening sentence does not simply copy the words used on the graphic material. Copied sentences will not be assessed by the examiner and so you waste your time including them.

Sentence two (and possibly three) might sum up the overall trend. For example:

It can be clearly seen that women received a much higher level of education in Someland in 1995 than they did in 1945.

Notice the Simple Past tense is used. Here we are talking about what happened in the past.

The body of the report will describe the chart or charts in detail. You will need to decide on the most clear and logical order to present the material. In this case it might be best to work through the charts one by one.

Ideally your report should end with one or two sentences which summarise your report or draw a relevant conclusion.

Grammar and vocabulary

You will receive a higher mark if your writing uses a range of structures and vocabulary correctly rather than a limited number.

Pie charts generally show figures in percentages and your language in writing the report should reflect this. You will talk about 'the percentage of graduates' or the 'proportion of people who completed secondary school'.

Make sure that you are confident with comparatives and superlatives used to compare and contrast and the language used to describe pie charts.

Comparing and contrasting

One syllable

Adjectives with one syllable form their comparatives and superlatives like this:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
cheap	cheaper	cheapest
large	larger	largest
bright	brighter	brightest
Exceptions:		
good	better	best

bad	worse	worst
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Two syllables

Some adjectives with two syllables form their comparatives and superlatives like this:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
pretty	prettier	prettiest
happy	happier	happiest

But many form their comparatives and superlatives like this:

striking	more striking	most striking
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Although some can form their comparatives and superlatives like this:

common	more common	most common
clever	more clever / cleverest	most clever / cleverest

Three or more syllables

All adjectives with three or more syllables form their comparatives and superlatives like this:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
attractive	more attractive	most attractive
profitable	more profitable	most profitable
expensive	more expensive	most expensive

Exercise

What are the comparative and superlative forms of these adjectives:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
accurate		
useful		
convenient		
correct		
dangerous		
happy		
likely		

modern

new

possible

probable

Show Answers - Hide Answers

Describing one part of the chart

Starting with the adjective:

The highest	percentage of	women	are employed in the X category			
The greatest						
The lowest						
The most						
A significant				proportion of	cars sold	are red
The smallest				number of	holiday makers	come from Spain
The largest						

Starting with the subject:

Red is the	most	popular	car colour
Professional is the	second/third most	prevalent	employment category
Spain is the	least	common	holiday destination

Describing two parts of the chart

Starting with the adjective:

As many	red cars	are sold	as ...		
Twice as many					
Three times as many				women	are employed in X
Not as many				holiday makers	come from X
More			than		

Far more Much more Many more A lot more Substantially more Considerably more Significantly more Slightly more Fractionally more			
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Starting with the subject:

	as quite as just as nearly as almost as not as	common popular prevalent	as ...
Blue cars are Women are Spain is	more much more far more substantially more considerably more slightly more fractionally more less much less far less considerably less	women cars sold holiday makers	than

	fractionally less		
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