

# How To Improve Your IELTS Writing Score

In this PDF, we look at some practical tips and ideas on how to improve your IELTS essay writing. Specifically, we'll be looking at:

1. Generating ideas
2. Managing your time

## 1. How to generate ideas

When it comes to being able to quickly come up with relevant ideas and examples there are two main ways to approach this:

1. When you're writing your essay
2. In your preparation time

### 1. When you're writing your essay

#### - Use the "multiple-perspectives approach"

This is where you brainstorm all the people/groups that are affected and consider the question from their perspective.

For example, take a question like:

*All high school children should have to wear a school uniform. Do you agree or disagree?*

#### *Step 1: Brainstorm all the people affected:*

1. High school students
2. Student's parents
3. Teachers

#### *Step 2: How might these groups feel:*

##### *1. High school students*

- *Some teenagers might feel that they can't express their individual style because they're being asked to dress in the same way.*
- *Some students might feel relieved because they won't stand out by wearing unfashionable/ cheaper clothes. This might lead to less bullying.*
- *Students might be judged less on their appearance and more on their personality and intelligence. This might lead to the prioritising of studying and being friendly; rather than focusing on looking cool.*
- *There might be less emphasis placed on social class and wealth as all students will look the same.*

## 2. Student's parents

- Many parents will be relieved that they don't have to constantly choose and buy new clothes for their children to go to school in.
- Parents might be able to save money as uniforms tend to be cheaper than clothing from high-street brands. They also tend to be more durable, so they can be passed down to younger siblings.
- Having a school uniform may improve punctuality as students won't have to spend time in the morning considering what to wear to school.

## 3. Teachers

- When there is a uniform, the dress code is simple to follow and teachers don't have to spend class time arguing with students over whether their clothes are within the school's dress code.
- Some teachers might find that students behave better in class when they are dressed in the same way. This might be because the students see themselves as a team in a uniform rather than individuals.

### Step 3: Choose the ideas that are easiest to write about

Now choose the ideas which are easiest to write about. Try to come up with **examples** for these ideas:

#### Idea

*Some teenagers might feel that they can't express their individual style because they're being asked to dress in the same way.*



#### Example

*Teenagers often choose clothing that makes a statement about their beliefs/ ideas. Such as t-shirts that express musical preferences.*

#### Idea

*Parents might be able to save money as uniforms tend to be cheaper than clothing from high-street brands.*



#### Example

*School uniforms are often subsidised by the school while high-street brands such as Nike add a sizeable margin to their clothing.*

Your examples should be your observations about society. They don't have to be real quotes from research articles or facts and figures.



## 2. Before your test day (your preparation time)

Being able to quickly come up with relevant ideas and examples comes from developing **good habits in your preparation**. Here is an effective method for preparing for your IELTS writing test that will help you develop good habits:

Step 1: Choose an IELTS essay question

- You can find a list of IELTS essay questions + model essays here: [IELTS Model Essays](#).

Step 2: Plan your essay

- Use the **multiple-perspectives** approach to brainstorm ideas.
- You can do this with a friend by discussing the topic.

Step 3: Research the topic

- Use a search engine (like Google) to research more ideas about the topic.
- There are lots of good debate websites like [www.procon.org](http://www.procon.org) which analyse the kinds of topic that appear in IELTS.

Step 4: Write your essay

- Choose the ideas you feel most confident writing in your essay (remember, you don't need to have lots and lots of ideas- usually just 2-4 ideas is enough)
- Practice developing each idea with an example.

Step 5: Compare your essay with a model answer or a friend's essay

- If you chose your IELTS essay from my list of [IELTS Model Essays](#), you can compare your ideas with the model essays. Think about which ideas are similar/ different and how those ideas are expressed.

Obviously, in your final exam you can't just hop out and research the topic on the internet, so make sure to practice some writing tests under exam conditions before your real test!



## 2. Managing your time

You have 1 hour to write Task 1 and Task 2. Here are some tips for how to best manage your time.

### 1. Read Task 2 first, but start writing Task 1 first

By doing this, your mind will begin to subconsciously think of ideas for your essay topic while you are writing your answer for Task 1 😊

### 2. Experiment with different timings before you do your IELTS test

Your question paper says that you should spend 20 minutes on Task 1 and 40 minutes on Task 2. However, many students have said that they do a lot better if they spend 25 minutes on Task 1, 30 minutes on Task 2, and 5 minutes at the end to check over their writing. You should experiment with different timings before you go to do your IELTS test to find out what works best for you.

### 3. Do the computer based IELTS test

A lot of people can type much faster than they can write by hand. If that's you, try to do the computer based IELTS test.

### 4. Get familiar with the common topics and question types in IELTS

There are 5 main question types, and many of the themes in IELTS are repeated again and again.

#### Main Question Types

**Agree/ Disagree**

**Advantage/ Disadvantage**

**Discussion Questions**

**Double Questions**

**Direct Questions**

#### Main Themes

**The Environment**

**Buildings and Transport**

**Education**

**Work**

**Health and Happiness**

If you read and write essays from my [Model Essays](#), you will cover all the question types and themes.

### 5. Know which essay structure you are going to use

If you know which essay structure you are going to use in your exam, you'll be clear about how many ideas you need to think of. You'll also have a much better idea of what you need to include in each paragraph of your essay. **In the next lesson, we'll now look at a useful essay structure we can use in our writing test...**