

The language of graphs

IELTS with Fiona

Describing the data/paraphrasing the introduction

The bar chart / line graph / pie chart / flow diagram / maps

.... present / represent / illustrate / portray / depict

..... the number of / the amount of / the percentage of / the proportion of

.... over a 20-year period from 1980 to 2000.

.... across three age groups (0-25, 25 – 50 and 50+)

..... in three different countries

The language of change

increase	decrease	Adverbs: SIZE	Adverbs: SPEED
go up grow climb rocket shoot up soar surge improve reach a peak/ an all-time high	go down fall drop decline slump plummet plunge worsen hit a trough/ an all-time low	...considerably ...significantly ...substantial ly ...dramatic ally * ...noticeably ...moderately ...slightly ...marginally	...suddenly ...sharply ...steeply ...rapidly ...quickly ...steadily ...gradual ly ...slowly
Level off/ plateau / remain constant Fluctuate / vary		<i>At a (steady/rapid/gradual/slow) pace/rate</i>	

PAST: increased	PAST: decreased
<i>went up</i> <i>grew</i> <i>climbed</i> <i>rocketed</i> <i>shot up</i> <i>soared</i> <i>surged</i> <i>improved</i>	<i>went down</i> <i>fell</i> <i>dropped</i> <i>declined</i> <i>slumped</i> <i>Plummeted</i> <i>plunged</i> <i>worsened</i>
Levelled off / plateaued / remained constant Fluctuated / varied	

Using 'analytical' verbs:

Her score **increased** =

It **doubled** (going from 10 to 20)

It **tripled** (rising from 10 to 30)

It **quadrupled** (increasing from 10 to 40)

It **increased fivefold** (from 10 - 50)

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Her score decreased =

It **halved** (*falling from 20 to 10*)

It decreased **by a third**

No change: Her score...

- remained stable/steady/constant/unchanged
- did not change
- stabilized/levelled off
- stagnated
- saw very little change

Using verb + adverbs or adjective + nouns:

Her score increased dramatically

There was a dramatic increase in her score.

Her score fell suddenly

There was a sudden fall in her score.

Her score rose gradually.

There was a gradual rise in her score.

Her score declined slowly.

There was a slow decline in her score.

Writing an overview

It is clear from the charts that, of the 6 sports considered, football is the most popular amongst boys, while table tennis is the least popular. With girls, on the other hand, participation rates are highest for swimming and very few take part in cycling.

The most noticeable features of the data presented are that football is by far the most popular sport amongst boys, and that the other sports, though less popular overall, are generally speaking equally popular amongst both girls and boys.

In brief, the data suggests that most people prefer pop music although this tends to decline as people get older.

Identifying the subject

Turning to / Let's look at / As for / As regards

I will deal with the 6 different sports in order of popularity / importance.

First, let's consider the US.

China, on the other hand ...

As for Japan, it is the second largest producer of ...

Turning to Europe, it can be clearly seen that ...

As regards the other countries, the data indicates that ...

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Proportion

China **accounts for** 70% of TV production.

Most / Nearly all / Very few / Hardly any.... of the TVs produced worldwide are accounted for by European companies.

Less than a third of all TVs are produced in Japan – a quarter / two-thirds / three-quarters.

The USA **represents** more than half the number of TVs manufactured worldwide.

Women **make up/account for/represent/constitute/comprise/form** the majority of the workforce.

The majority of the workforce is **composed of/made up** of women.

Stand at / reach / reach a peak of

In 2000, the average house price stood at £100,000.

It reached a peak of £150,000 in 2011 before falling back to £130,000 by the end of the decade.

It is expected to reach £150,000 again in early / late / mid 2025.

Rise and Fall in sentences

Generally speaking, in the first part of the period in question there was a steady increase in the number of people who did active sports, though the rate levelled off after 2005. Thereafter, participation fluctuated at around 35% until 2008, when there was a sharp increase in sports club membership. The increase was however only temporary and by 2010 the figure had fallen back to 33%. It is expected to remain unchanged in the foreseeable future.

Data

In 1999, unemployment stood at 8%, rising to 9% the following year.

In 2001, the number of people out of work peaked at 10%, before falling back to 7% in 2002.

Japan and China produce most of the TVs in the world (56% and 38% respectively).

Comparison

He is (much / slightly) taller than me.

I'm not (nearly / quite) as tall as him.

I am as tall as him. We are as tall as each other

He has (a lot / slightly) more free time than me.

I don't have (quite / nearly) as much free time as him.

He has made (a lot / a few) more mistakes than me.

I haven't made (nearly / quite) as many mistakes as him.

Qualification

China is (considerably / significantly / noticeably / markedly) bigger than

There is a (significant / considerable / noticeable / marked) difference between China and Japan.

Approximation

Approximately 50% of boys / (Somewhere) in the region of two-thirds of all the men surveyed / Roughly a quarter of university students

Grammar

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Relative clauses – adding extra information

Japan, **which** produces most of the world's TVs, is very dependent on its electronics sector.

In China, **where** the population now stands at 1.5 billion, there has been a huge increase in investment in education.

Younger people, **who** don't have their own transport, prefer to spend their evenings at home.

China, the population **of which** is increasing rapidly, spends less on imports than ...

(China, **whose** population is approaching 2 billion, is by far the biggest consumer of ...)

In 2005, **when** the Chinese population stood at 1.9 billion, the number of jobless was 1.1 million or 8%, **which** is significantly higher than in Europe, **where** only 5% of those **who** were of working age could not find employment after 3 months.

Tenses

Between 2000 and 2010, the prices of land rose by £1000 per square meter from £1000 to £2000.

Since then / Over the last ten years / In recent years ... it **has been rising** steadily

Land prices are still rising (now).

Land prices tend to rise in the winter and fall in the summer (each year).

Land prices are expected / anticipated / predicted to (continue to) rise next year.

It is expected that land prices will continue to rise.

Concurrence

The higher your level of English, the more you should study by yourself.

As your level of English improves, you should study more and more by yourself.

As people get older, they tend to become more conservative.

The older you get, the increasingly conservative you become.

There is a direct correlation between age and ability to learn a new language. Basically, **the younger you are**, the easier you will find it. It gets **more and more difficult** to learn a language as you get older.

There is a (positive) correlation between age and preference for classical music. The older you get, the more likely you are to prefer classical music.

There is a (negative) correlation between driver age and the number of accidents. As people get older they tend to have fewer accidents.

Conclusion / Summary

In conclusion, it could be said that ...

To summarise the key points above, the USA is the most while Japan, in contrast, has the lowest number of ...

In conclusion, **it can be said that, generally speaking**, girls prefer individual sports such as cycling, tennis and swimming while boys, in contrast, prefer team games (e.g. football and baseball).

In short, after a steady increase TV production rose dramatically in the mid-1980s. China is by far the largest producer of TVs, with Europe and the US second and third respectively.

To summarise the above, overall there is an upward trend in home ownership, though renting is still the more common with the newly married.

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