

Student's Notes

IELTS: Writing

Find out before the test how many words you usually write on a line. If your average is ten words a line, then write at least 15 lines (10 words x 15 lines = 150 words). Before you start writing, count 15 lines and make a mark, so that when you start writing you will have something to aim for. You will need to write 150 words for Task 1 and 250 words for Task 2. You will be **PENALISED** for not writing enough words as this will mean that you have not completed the task. This is the easiest way to lose marks.

You can write more than the minimum number of words if you wish, but you should consider whether you are keeping to the point of the question.

Keep an eye on the time. You have two difficult tasks to complete. You are advised to spend 20 minutes on Task 1 and 40 minutes on Task 2. Remember Task 2 is worth two thirds of the total mark.

Read the question carefully. The examiner will be looking at the content of your writing. You will be penalized/lose marks if your writing does not answer the question or if your ideas are irrelevant or lack clarity.

Make sure you understand the question – don't jump to conclusions and start writing without fully understanding what the question is looking for. Fulfill the task, don't write irrelevant rubbish.

Write down some ideas. Brainstorm using the question sheet to make notes.

Plan what you are going to write. The examiner will also be looking at the organisation of your writing. It is much easier to organise your writing if you plan first.

Write in sentences and paragraphs. Notes are not acceptable. Use words which link sentences together, for example, *however*, *although*, *in contrast to*, etc. Show how paragraphs are connected. Failure to separate your writing into paragraphs will result in lower marks.

Practise writing clearly. It may have been a long time since you last had to write a handwritten essay, and the examiner is marking a lot of papers so will not want to spend time deciphering unintelligible scripts.

Leave enough time to check your writing. Read through your answers and look for grammar and punctuation errors.