Unit Four Writing Practice - Education: Educational Goals

Aims: Describing a chart | Expressing language of quantities and numbers
Comparing and contrasting quantities and numbers
Selecting and organising ideas | Writing a basic argument outline

Part 1: Vocabulary

1 Match the school subjects a–h with the pictures 1–8 above.

a Mathematics _____
b Biology _____
c Chemistry _____
d Art and Design _____
e Media, Film and Television Studies _____
f Physical Education (PE) _____
g Health and Food Technology (HFT) _____
h Computing _____

Answers

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

f.

g.

h.

2 Each adjective in column 1 commonly collocates with one of the nouns in column 2. Complete the sentences 1–6 with one adjective and one noun.

Adjectives	Nouns
rote	standards
critical	education
higher	*dishonesty*
academic	assessment
continuous	learning
formal	thinking
educational	examinations

Example: *Cheating in examinations is one form of academic dishonesty.*

1 If you need to memorise large amounts of information, _____ is probably a good method to use.
2 If you need to evaluate information, you need _____ skills.
3 In many countries, students sit _____ in order to graduate.
4 Access to _____ is often determined by performance in university entrance examinations.
5 In some countries, progress is measured by _____ instead of by end-of-term examinations.
6 Some people worry that without examinations, _____ will decline.

Answers

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

3 The expressions i–vi are useful for describing quantity. Match them with the percentages a–f below.

i nearly half ____	a 85%
ii the vast majority ____	b 75%
iii a small minority ____	c 46%
iv three quarters ____	d 31%
v just under a third ____	e 24%
vi roughly one in four ____	f 15%

Answers

i.

ii.

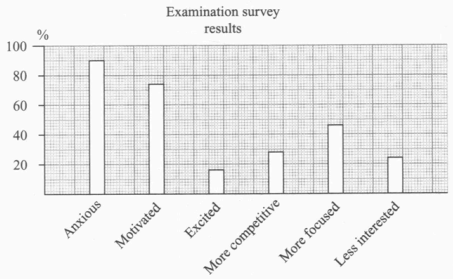
iii.

iv.

v.

	vi.

4 The bar chart below shows the results of a survey of how people felt about examinations. Complete the sentences 1–6, which describe the chart, using the expressions i–vi from Exercise 3.



1 _____ of those surveyed said they found the challenge exciting.
2 _____ of respondents said they felt anxious.
3 _____ said they felt more competitive.
4 _____ of those surveyed replied that they felt more focused.
5 _____ indicated that examinations made them lose interest in their studies.
6 _____ of those who responded said they felt motivated to work harder.

Answers
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Part 2: Practice exercises: Task 1

1 The bar chart below shows the numbers of students sitting examinations in eight different subjects and the percentage of students gaining top marks. For this type of data, you are expected not just to describe, but also to compare and contrast the information.

You can use comparative forms to compare two or more items:

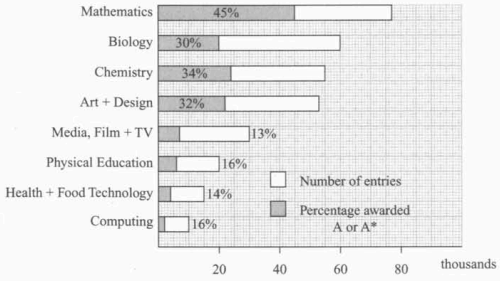
- ***more/fewer/less* + noun + *than***
  Overall, more students sat examinations in science-related subjects than in arts-related subjects.
- **adjectives of one syllable: *-er* + *than***
  A higher percentage of students gained top marks in Mathematics than in Chemistry.
- ***more/less* + adjective of two or more syllables + *than***
  Science-related subjects were more popular than arts-related subjects.

You can use superlative forms to compare one item with the remainder of the group:

- ***the most/least* + adjective**
  The most popular subject was Mathematics.
- **adjectives of more than one syllable: *-est***
  The highest percentage of students gaining top marks was in Mathematics.

You can use *as* + adjective + *as* to express similarity: *Art and Design was nearly as popular as Chemistry.*

Complete the sentences 1–6 with a comparative or superlative form.



1 Nearly _____ many students sat the Art and Design exam _____ did the Chemistry exam.
2 The percentage of students gaining top marks in Art and Design was slightly _____ than the percentage of students achieving top marks in Chemistry.
3 The _____ popular subjects were Physical Education, Health and Food Technology, and Computing.
4 The HFT examination was taken by _____ students than the PE examination.
5 However, a _____ percentage of students taking the HFT exam gained top marks.
6 The _____ percentage of students gaining top marks was in Media, Film and Television Studies.

Answers
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Exam tip: Use adverbs to make your comparisons more exact.
To emphasise a difference, you can use: *many, much, far,* and *significantly.*
Many more students sat examinations in science subjects.
Science-related subjects were much more popular than arts-related subjects.

For small differences you can use: *slightly* or *nearly as ... as.*
The percentage of students gaining top marks in Chemistry was slightly higher than the percentage of students gaining top marks in Art and Design.
Nearly as many students sat the Art and Design exam as did the Chemistry exam.

2 **You can use expressions such as *in contrast* to express difference, or *the same* to express similarity. Read the sentences 1–4 below. Write S if the sentence expresses similarity and D if it expresses difference. Underline the words which helped you decide.**

1 The percentage of top marks was quite high in subjects such as Mathematics, which are traditionally regarded as difficult. On the other hand, the percentage of top marks was relatively low in subjects such as HFT, which are commonly regarded as 'soft'. _____

2 Whereas 45 per cent of Mathematics candidates gained top marks, only 12 per cent of Media, Film and Television candidates gained top marks. _____

3 Similar numbers of students sat examinations in Art and Design and in Chemistry. _____

4 Sixteen per cent of students gained top marks in both Physical Education and Computing. _____

Answers

1.

2.

3.

4.

3 To do well in IELTS Writing Tasks, you must show that you can use a range of expressions and structures for functions like comparing and contrasting. Re-write the sentences 1–5 using the words in brackets.

1 More girls than boys passed their English examinations. (fewer)

_____

2 The same number of boys and girls achieved a passing grade in Mathematics. (as… as)

_____

3 Boys did well in Technology; girls, in contrast, did well in language-related subjects. (whereas) _____

4 The number of passes in Religious Studies was higher for girls than for boys. (lower)

_____

5 Nearly as many girls as boys passed the Economics exam. (similar)

_____

Answers

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Part 2: Practice exercises: Task 2

4 Read the Task 2 question below.

> *In order to be truly employable, the educated person should be able to demonstrate not just knowledge but also the ability to work independently in teams.*
>
> *How can teamwork best be encouraged and assessed in educational settings?*

Once you have analysed the question, taken a position and generated some ideas, you need to decide which of your ideas to include and in what order to include them. You can use an essay outline to do this. Look at the example below and answer questions 1–4.

Ideas

	Solutions	Specific action	Positive consequences	Drawbacks
1	require students to work on group projects outside school	assign group research project investigating aspect of local history	• motivating for students • students would learn to work as a team • students would make more friends	• difficult to assess individual students' contribution to team • some projects would be poor quality
2	group project could be done partly in school, partly outside school	ask students to periodically present 'work in progress' in class	• teacher could monitor students' work more easily • it's better for students to be in classrooms because that's what people expect	• some teachers wouldn't be good at this • time-consuming for large classes
3	some teacher monitoring + student self-assessment	students keep a learning journal throughout the project	• burden of monitoring and assessing progress shared by teacher and students	• some students would dishonestly claim they worked harder than they did

Essay outline
Introduction: importance of training students in teamwork
Body paragraph 1:
Solution 1: require students to work on group projects outside of school
Specific action: assign group research project investigating aspect of local history
Positive consequences: motivating for students; students would learn to work as a team independently
Drawback: difficult to assess individual student's contribution to team effort
Body paragraph 2:
Solution 2: group project could be done partly in school, partly outside of school
Specific action: ask students to periodically present 'work in progress' in class
Positive consequences: teacher could monitor students' work more easily
Drawback: time-consuming for large classes

Body paragraph 3:
Solution 3: in addition to some teacher monitoring, students assess own progress
Specific action: students write a learning journal throughout the project
Positive consequences: burden of monitoring and assessing progress shared by teacher and students
Conclusion: teamwork can be taught and assessed but needs to be done in the right way

1 What type of question is this: **A**: propose a solution, **B**: evaluate a solution, **C**: present an idea or **D**: evaluate an idea?

2 Which of her ideas has the writer omitted from body paragraphs one and two? Why?

3 Why has the writer chosen to list her main ideas in this order?

4 Why has the writer included drawbacks in body paragraphs one and two but not in three?

Answers

1.

2.

3.

4.

5 Read the Task 2 question below and complete the table with your own ideas. Take a position. Then select the most appropriate ideas and write an outline using the headings given.

Success in formal 'pen and paper' examinations is often seen to be a sign of intelligence.

To what extent do you agree with the view that formal examinations measure intelligence?

Ideas

Template D: Evaluate an idea		
What are the ideas?	**What is the evidence for?**	**What is the evidence against?**
Idea in the question: Exams measure intelligence.	People who do well in exams often do well in other types of tasks, e.g. assignments. Exams usually include a range of tasks to measure different abilities.	Pen & paper exams are often predictable – students can prepare by rote learning. **1** _____
Other possible idea: There are probably different types of intelligence – these can only be measured in different ways.	Some people express themselves much better verbally than in writing. **2** _____	**3** _____

Essay outline
Introduction:
Body paragraph 1:
Evidence for:
Evidence against:
Body paragraph 2:
Evidence against:
Evidence for:
Conclusion:

Answers

1.

2.

3.

Exam information:
If you are aiming for an IELTS band 6.0, it is probably sufficient simply to list your main points along with reasons and examples (*Firstly, … Secondly, … Thirdly, …*). If you are aiming for a band 6.5 or above, you are more likely to achieve this score if you demonstrate some critical thinking skills. This means discussing the advantages *and* disadvantages of different solutions and ideas.

6 Read the Task 2 question below and complete the table with your own ideas. Take a position, select the most appropriate ideas, and write an outline.

In many countries, students attend private 'cram schools' for extra coaching in test-taking techniques.

What is your view of this practice?

Ideas

Template B: 'Evaluate the solution' essay questions		
What are the possible solutions?	**Positive consequence(s)**	**Drawback(s)**
Solution in the question:		
Other possible solution:		

Essay outline
Introduction:
Body paragraph 1:
Body paragraph 2:
Conclusion:

7 Look at Template C 'Discuss your ideas' in Unit 2. Draw up headings for an outline for this type of question.

Introduction:
Body paragraph 1:
Body paragraph 2:
Conclusion:

Answers