

IELTSdeal Quarterly

Inspiring your IELTS learning



IELTS Deal

one-stop IELTS learning

A welcome message:

This digital magazine is dedicated to those who are struggling with their IELTS preparation or have passion about this course.

In this issue we look at some tips to do better in IELTS Writing.

We also take a look at some recent IELTS Speaking questions reviewed by some examiners.

A good range of vocabulary is important for IELTS and we also have a page of vocabulary practice.

IELTS Candidates will find some Task 2 essay samples as well as a complete IELTS Speaking tests.

Please enjoy reading the first issue of IELTSdeal Quarterly.

We look forward to addressing many more interesting topics in the months ahead.

Najibur Rasul,
Admin,
ieltsdeal.com

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WRITER'S BLOCK: A PHENOMENON YOU LIKE TO AVOID

*Life**experience*

*This article is entitled *Writer's Block: A Phenomenon You Like To Avoid*. It is part of a creative writing project for ieltsdeal.com. In this article, the admin of the website has taken the opportunity to simplify the phenomenon 'Writer's Block' to many people who face it all the time yet have very little idea about it. The history, some causes and probable solutions to the condition have also been discussed here. Hopefully, students will have a good idea about the matter by going through this article.*

By Najibur Rasul

Will you be surprised if I say the British Singing prodigy Adele could not write for a period of time? Writer's block is something explained as a peculiar state of mind which is, according to Wikipedia, "... primarily associated with writing, in which an author loses the ability to produce new work, or experiences a creative slowdown." This awkward mental condition ranges in complexity starting from producing creative ideas to being incapable of generating original work for a given period of time. Fascinatingly, this condition is not a new one and more renowned people than Adele even had to deal with it. It is my hope in this article to provide you, mostly, the students, a short insight into this mental condition and suggest some steps by which you can rely on without any doubt. This is not any scientific writings, so do not worry.

This mental condition can be fatal in many cases. Successful writers like F. Scott Fitzgerald, Herman Melville, Joseph Mitchell faced the same problem in different parts of their career. The phenomenon was first described in detail by an Austrian-born American psychoanalyst Edmund Bergler in the year 1947. Herman Melville's Writer's block was an example before Edmund Bergler could explain the matter. Herman failed to compose any more novels after writing his masterpiece *Moby-Dick*.

Adele admitted that it was something crazy and she could explain why she could not finish writing a duet with her co-writer Jamie T and, most interestingly, it was her debut album '19'. She explained the situation in an interview with BBC 6 Music, "... . . we started writing a duet when I was writing my album but never got round to finishing it. It would be good to finish that." Adele explained in another interview that it was not that she could not produce a song because she was suffering from any anguish. Actually, it was something reverse. She explained that she was more than happy and that created a kind of distraction because she generally wrote excellent lyrics when she was sad or upset about something.

This clearly indicates that Writer's block does not depend on sufferings only. Though, most of the researches done on this phenomenon describes the causes such as the writer's personal struggle in life, career, anguish, physical illness, depression, work-pressure, broken relationships, financial problems, etc. Some writers even ran out of inspiration or they became distracted by something that did not happen to them for years (Adele's case). So, it is extremely difficult to identify the actual causes of this condition. However, the most familiar causes are related to mental depression over something. Some even go so far as to compare writer's block with creativity shortage, though this notion is criticized by a handful of experts.

Students may face writer's block during their school or college life and it is quite normal. There is nothing to be alarmed about. It may happen due to the failure of the trainers or tutors. Teachers are often seen to pressurize students to start writing on a given topic even though they did not explain how to write, what to write, how to start the writing process or even how to generate ideas. This is not acceptable because a teacher has taken the duty to train a student, not to force a student to produce an original.

So, now comes the big deal, how to solve this condition! Actually, there is nothing better to discuss this matter in groups because a group-discussion is something where chunks of ideas can come and different people can provide thoughts on different matters. Another step that can be considered is to brainstorm over an issue, write down the ideas on a piece of paper and then produce a general writing on the ideas. This writing can be checked by an expert later on who can suggest further improvements. Inspiration from peers and friends can be helpful in this respect. So, writer's block is recoverable and students can do it with a little help from the surroundings.

One great thing? I could not find anything to write about for one whole week. Now, look! I wrote about something I was suffering from! Crazy, isn't it?

An IELTS candidate shares the questions & topics she could remember right after the exam !



This recent IELTS exam- topics & questions review is based on my interview with one of my students who has recently appeared in IELTS Academic Test in July 2019 and shared her personal experiences with me. She's shared the latest topics and questions which she remembered after attending the exam. I hope these examples help you in your personal IELTS prep.

IELTS Academic Test held on 18/07/2019

Listening Test:

Section 1: A dialogue between two students about taking a course in a university

Section 2: A monologue on the map of an area

Section 3: Couldn't remember

Section 4: A monologue on the history of garments (silkworm cocoons)

Reading Test:

Reading Passage 1: Ancient Greek coin

Reading Passage 2: Motor-bike accidents

Reading Passage 3: A passage on something related to research on human brain (Couldn't remember clearly)

Writing Test:

Task 1: A table on the rate of car per 1000 people in 6 countries

Task 2: Agree-disagree topic

It is very important for people to attain some social skills as well as academic qualifications. How far do you agree or disagree?

Speaking Test:

Part 1:

Personal questions:

How are you?

Could you tell me your name, please?

Tell me in brief about your education.

Did you like to study in your school? Why? / Why not?

What do you remember most about your school life?

Were you given a lot of homework?

Did any teacher irritate you more?

Social Networking:

Do you use social networks sometimes?

How much time do people in your locality spend in social networking?

Do you think that social networking makes us social?

Are there any drawbacks in using social networks?

Is it easy to find friends through social networks?

Transport system in my country:

How did you get here today, by a car or bus or train?

Do you use public transport regularly?

Are you satisfied with the transportation system in your country?

What can be done to improve it?

Part 2:

Describe a situation when your transport (by a bus or car) broke down on the way.

You should say:

- when it happened
- where you were going and who accompanied you
- how long it took to fix the vehicle
- and explain how you felt about that situation

Part 3:

How do most people travel long distances in your country?

Did you witness any major changes on the use of transports in your country over the last few decades?

Has there been any big improvement in transport in your country lately?

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IELTS Listening Tips

1. Listen to BBC, SKY News, CNN, Fox News etc. everyday and at least for half an hour.
2. Watch an English movie.
3. Listen to great speeches by great people on youtube. Try to mimic them.
4. Practice IELTS Listening questions from Cambridge IELTS books regularly.
5. First do works only on Section 1 or Section 2. Later you can go for complete mock tests.
6. Take help of an English language expert who can correct your mistakes. Take feedback about your mistakes and learn how to solve them from the expert.
7. Practice listening to 'homonyms' or 'same sound words' (heart, hurt, heard etc.)

Learn more at <https://www.ieltsdeal.com>

IELTS Writing Task 2 - Sample Essay

A great sample answer for recent a writing task 2 question

Some languages spoken by fewer people are going to extinct in the near future. What are the reasons for this? Do you think it is a positive or negative development?

Sample answer:

Language has been the finest mode of communication since the dawn of modern human civilization. According to infoplease.com there are around 6500 spoken languages in the world but unfortunately and most shockingly about 2000 of these languages have less than 1000 speakers and they are on the verge of extinction. I personally feel that losing any language is not a good sign and this essay will look at the causes of this issue and clarify my point of view.

Many native tongues of the world are on the brink of annihilation because of two foremost causes. The first one is the recent technological advancements in different fields. In other words, many countries of the world now mainly communicate in English, Spanish, French, Mandarin and some other major or leading languages due to the advancement brought by technologies. For example, most automated machines are programmed to understand the major tongues which induce people to learn those common languages. The other reason behind language endangerment is the creation of a powerful incentive for individuals to discard their mother tongue in favour of prestigious languages like English, Spanish or French. For instance, from my personal life experience I have seen guardians encourage their children to speak in English not only in school but also in playgrounds and houses as English has a big career focus.

However, I strongly disagree with such notion as I believe that leaving a native tongue gradually means that the language will disappear in the near future. When a language vanishes, it also takes away the customs, cultures and identity with it and this slowly uproots the entire community. As different tongues unveil cultural and historical meaning, we lose a link to past when we lose a language.

In fine, languages represent races, customs and identities of different parts of the world and takes humongous amount of time to enrich. Losing them should not be accepted; and so planned and integrated approaches are essential to prevent this loss to protect the culture, identity and history of people associated with those languages.

(342 words)

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IELTS Speaking - Complete Test from Cambridge 14

Here's a complete IELTS Speaking Test from Cambridge 14 for IELTS learners and candidates. This sample test gives you an overall idea about different parts of the test in details.



PART 1

The examiner will ask the candidate about him/herself, his/her home, work, studies, and other familiar topics.

Future

Q: What jobs would you like to have 10 years from now? [Why/Why not?]

A: Right now I'm working as a Junior Teacher in an elementary school. I've already done three minor courses on teaching development. After a decade I wish to become the head of any elementary school. I don't wish to quit teaching children and the reason behind this is that I've already fallen in love with my institute. So, it would be nice if I successfully become the head where I'm teaching now.

Q: How useful will English be for your future? [Why?]

A: English has already played a major part in my life to secure this current job I'm doing. This language is vital for me and I believe it will be the same in the coming future. I wish to become a travelling teacher in Europe. I want to teach in different countries and knowing English clearly can surely help me here in the future as it is spoken all over Europe.

Q: How much travelling do you hope to do in the future? [Why/Why not?]

A: As I've already told you that I wish to become a travelling teacher, I have a firm travel plan and I've already started to save some money. In the future, I wish to visit some countries in Europe, especially Italy, France, Portugal, Denmark, and Sweden. This means I am to do lots of traveling in the future.

Q: How do you think your life will change in the future? [Why/Why not?]

A: Well, that's quite difficult to say. As far as my career goes, nothing special will change as I've always wanted to work as a teacher. However, age is something we can't keep hold of and so it may play a great role in changing my attitude and taste on different matters.

I am generally a very enthusiastic and agile person but in the future, I might become sluggish though I never want that. Plus the way technology is gaining on us, I think I might not have to do so many works that I do currently. I already teach in a multimedia classroom. Newer forms of teaching aids may change the way we teach now in the forthcoming days.

PART 2

CUE CARD/TOPIC CARD:

Describe a book that you enjoyed reading because you had to think a lot.

You should say:

- what this book was
- why you decided to read it
- what reading this book made you think about
- and explain why you enjoyed reading this book.

Model answer: As reading is my most favorite hobby, I like to read as many books as I can. For this cue card, I'm going to talk about such a book that not only gave me a lot of pleasure but also made me think about life and achievements in life.

When I was a student at A-level, I was given a reading list by my teacher in my college. That reading list contained the names of different blogs, written documents and 30 books. One of the books was a short novel entitled "The Old man and the Sea" written by the great American author 'Ernest Hemingway'. It was written in 1951 in Cuba and was published the following year. I decided to read the book because one of my favorite teachers knew that I was a bookworm and recommend it highly.

The book tells the story of an old Cuban fisherman named Santiago who has lost all his fishing skills due to being old. *(continued to next page)*

He takes a daunting attempt to set out on a fishing trip into the wild sea one last time. Fortunately, he succeeds to catch a huge Marlin fish after 84 days but the Marlin is way too big for him to handle. However, Santiago does not let it go even though he is very weak and feeble. A great tug of war builds up between the man and the fish but Santiago wins. When he is returning with the Marlin, he has to tie it with his boat and keep it in the water as it is too big. Sharks get attracted by Marlin's blood and start eating it. When Santiago finally reaches the shore, all which is left is the skeleton of the Marlin. However, the fishing community finds out about the matter and they praise Santiago for his courage and let him know that they would take him to fish with them.

The book gave me such pleasure and I was so worried about Santiago. When reading the book, I felt I was Santiago and I was doing my fight with the Marlin and the sharks. The book is a great source of entertainment and thought-provoking. We can learn that age is just a number if our determination is strong. If we try, everything is possible for us and Santiago is the greatest example of it. This book made me think about supporting old people and regaining faith in myself to move forward. We should never lose hope whatever the circumstance we face in our life. We should hope for the best and continue to do our good work. This is what I learned from this book. I also learned that no good result can be attained without hardship.

Part 3

Discussion topics

Children and reading

Q: What are the most popular types of children's books in your country?

A: In my country children love to read books which mainly deal with the fantasy world, as we find in 'Harry Potter' and 'The Lord of the Rings'. Children also like to read DC and Marvel comics such as Superman, Batman, Spiderman, The Flash, etc. They also love to read local folk stories. Nowadays, they also read a lot of adventure books.

Q: What are the benefits of parents reading books to their children?

A: There are a number of benefits, in my opinion. The most vital of them is that when parents read books, they are getting closer to their children which develops a bond. It is important for parents to be close to their children.

Moreover, when a child finds out that his/her parents love books, he/she also becomes more and more interested in books than all other activities. As we know that reading skills are essential for anyone dreaming to be a champion, these children can get in touch with different books when parents read them different stories. It also improves their decision-making skills. They can judge between right and wrong.

Besides, by reading books to children parents are forming their children's personalities and values too.

Q: Should parents always let children choose the books they read?

A: Yes and no.

Parents should give some freedom to their children in choosing books but that should be restricted in some cases. For example, parents can take children to the child section of a big book store and let them browse and choose books alone.

However, in some book stores, there are some 'age restricted' books and parents and guardians should be careful when there are adult books around. Some books depict the cruel and horrific matters and so they are called 'age restricted'. Parents should not let their children go near that section.

Electronic books (e-books)

Q: How popular are electronic books in your country?

A: Well, it's quite difficult to say. E-books are not that much popular in the place where I live. I personally love to read e-books as I use computers and laptops regularly. In big cities and towns, e-books are gaining popularity. My friends have different tech devices which they use to read e-books. However, e-books are not so popular in rural areas like urban areas.

Older people love to read hard-copies as they feel more comfortable reading them. They don't feel comfortable handling technology at all.

I think e-books are gaining popularity day by day. Children are learning to read books on different devices in their schools nowadays. I hope it will be very popular in the coming years.

Q: What are the advantages of parents reading electronic books (compared to printed books)?

A: That's an interesting question. I believe that if parents read e-books, they become experts in using new technologies. This not only helps them adjust with the faster technologies but also makes them able to pass some great time and gather knowledge. They can store a lot of books in one device which doesn't take any room space at all. This also helps their children become accustomed to new technologies and build up a habit of reading books on tech devices and online. Compared to printed books this is the main benefit of reading electronic books.

Q: Will electronic books ever completely replace printed books in the future?

A: The way the world is moving forward, I think e-books will be able to take the place of printed books, unfortunately. I generally prefer printed books. I love the smell of printed books and turning over pages brings me great pleasure. However, printed books also contribute to deforestation, if you think in a broader sense. So, e-books are a great way to keep our forests alive and anew. There is also the advantage of publishers not to think about transport costs, warehouse costs and so on. You also need not go to a book store nowadays to buy a book. Just order online for a virtual version of the book and you can easily get it online.

Some Essential Words/Phrases for IELTS Writing



Here's a list of important words/phrases that candidates may need in enriching their IELTS Writing. This will also provided them with added benefit to arrange their writing logically.

In IELTS Writing, both in task 1 and task 2, using cohesive devices/ linkers/connecting words/connectors or linking words are very important. As the IELTS exam checks a person's ability in using the English language, the Writing exam becomes very crucial. It is because the examiner can, in fact, has an overview of the test taker's use of vocabulary, the range of grammar, coherence, cohesion, etc. Coherence and cohesion cover a quarter of the Writing exam marks. So, to make the description of the picture (task 1) and the essay (task 2) more effective in terms of coherence and cohesion, the successful use of linkers needs to be accurate and to the point. The following discussion on linkers is, hence, quite essential and you should have a close look at it. If you don't understand the word or phrase, please have a look at the example sentences.

To express the result of what is said:

You can use **As a result / Therefore / So / As a consequence / Thus / Hence / Eventually / As an outcome / Consequently** to show the result of an action:

Example in a sentence: **She worked hard. *Consequently*, she became successful.**

To express any sequence / listing:

- The first step: **First / Firstly / At first / In the first place / Initially / At the initial point / At the outset / At the beginning / In the beginning**

Example in a sentence: ***At first*, we need to warn the simple rural folks about this problem.**

- The following steps: **Next/ Subsequently/ After that / Afterwards / Then / In the subsequent stage**

Example in a sentence: ***Subsequently*, we have to call a meeting with the village council.**

- The final step: **In the end/ At the end / Lastly / At last / Finally / At the closing stage**

Example in a sentence: ***In the end*, we should invite everyone to the meeting and discuss the issue.**

Find more in www.ieltsdeal.com

IELTS Grammar: Infinitives

This short discussion on 'infinitives' can guide you to use a variety of sentences in the IELTS exam.



The structure for **infinitive** is **to+verb**

In traditional descriptions of English, the infinitive is the basic dictionary form of a verb when used non-finitely, with or without the particle *to*. Thus *to go* is an infinitive, as is *go* in a sentence like "I must go there" (but not in "I go there", where it is a finite verb). The form without *to* is called the bare infinitive, and the form with *to* is called the full infinitive or *to*-infinitive. (wikipedia)

For example:

He wants **to help** the poor.
The man wishes **to meet** the director of the company.
The authority tried **to manipulate** the system.

Negative infinitive:

The negative infinitive is formed by putting **not** in front of any form of the infinitive.

She decided **not to go** to Lisbon.
My father asked me **not to be** late.
I'd like you **not to talk** so loudly.

Bare infinitive

The infinitive is used without *to* after certain verbs like **bid, let, make, see, hear, need, dare** etc.

We bade her go. (NOT We bade her to go.)
Let him sit there. (NOT Let him to sit there.)
He made me cry. (NOT He made me to cry.)

The bare infinitive is also used after the verbs **will, would, shall, should, may, might, can, could** and **must**.

They will wait. (NOT They will to wait.)
She **must obey my instructions.** (NOT She must to obey my instructions.)
He can speak seven languages. (NOT He can to speak seven languages.)
You should come to school in time. (NOT You should to come to school in time.)

Sample GT letter questions for practice

1. You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

You are looking for a part-time job. Write a letter to an employment agency.

In your letter:

- introduce yourself
- explain what sort of job you would like
- say what experience and skills you have

Begin your letter as follows: Dear Sir/Madam. . . .

You should write at least 150 words.

2. You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

You stayed at your friend's house when you attended a seminar in Canada. Unfortunately, you left a side bag with some important documents in your room. Write a letter to your friend.

In the letter:

- thank your friend for the stay
- describe where you left the sidebag
- ask him/her to return it to you by post

Begin your letter as follows: Dear _____,

You should write at least 150 words.