

Describing and Analysing the Visuals

1/ STUDY THE EXPRESSIONS

Writing Module

Academic Task 1

Making an overview statement

We can see from the chart/table ...
The chart/table shows (us that) ...

Introducing an overall trend

One of the first things to note is that ...
It is (generally) true to say that ...
On the whole/Generally, we can see that ...
One thing that clearly stands out is ...

Introducing a point of interest

It is interesting to see that ...
A striking point is that ...
Interestingly/Surprisingly ...

Introducing supporting details

More specifically, ...
For example, ...

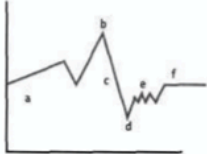
Comparing data

The percentage/amount/quantity of X is (not) -er than Y
There are (slightly/significantly) more/fewer X than Y
There are (twice) as many X as Y

Approximating

... approximately/about ...
... just above/over/under/below ...
... a little/slightly less/more than ...

Describing trends



a ... (steadily/gradually/slowly) increased/rose/went up (from ... to ... /by ...)

b ... reached a peak/high point of ...

c a (sharp/dramatic/significant) decrease/drop/fall/dip/decline (from ... to ... /of ...)

d ... reached a low (point) of ...

e ... fluctuated between ... and ...

f ... remained steady at ...

... over (the year)/ in the same period/ between ... and ... /from ... to ...



(The temperature) doubled/tripled within (one year)

Making forecasts





(The trend) looks set to (continue) ...
... is/are/seems likely to ...
... is/are estimated to ...
... is/are predicted to ...

2/ When you describe the visuals, you may need:

- to write about **the kind of change**
- to write about **the period of time**
- to compare **different sets of information**

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| 1 The kind of change | |  |  |
| verbs | 30 20 10 0 | 30 20 10 0 | to increase to go up to rise |
| nouns | an increase a rise | a decrease a fall a reduction | |

We can give more information about the increase, decrease or change:

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| verb + dramatically verb + significantly <i>The figure rose dramatically.</i> |   | dramatic + noun significant + noun <i>There was a dramatic rise.</i> |
| verb + a little verb + slightly <i>The figure decreased slightly.</i> |   | small + noun slight + noun <i>There was a slight decrease.</i> |

2 Time

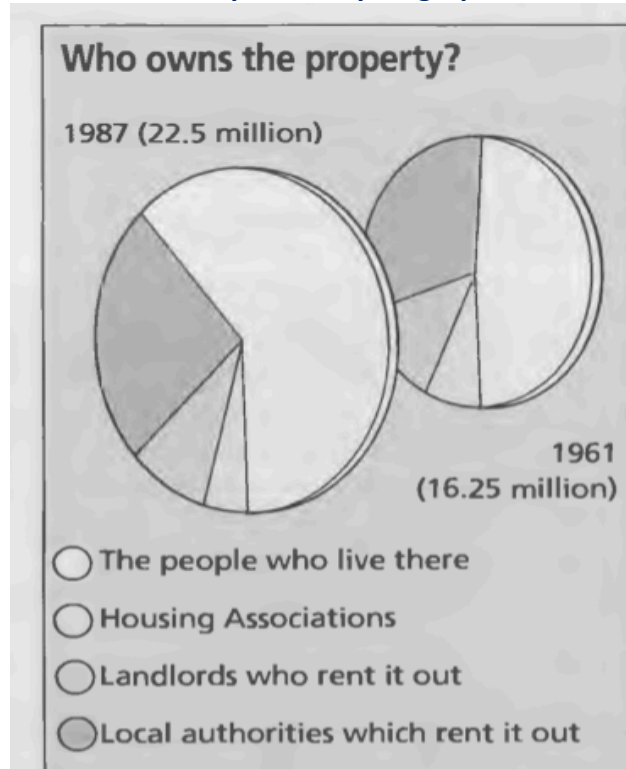
| | |
|---|--|
| Between 1980 and 1990 the figure fell a little. | between + time + and +time + past tense: finished time |
| In 1980 the figure was just under 60%. | in + time + past tense: finished time |
| Since 1980 it has increased slightly. | since + time + present perfect: time up to now |

3 Comparing

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| In 1980, 30% of rural dwellers had a drinking water supply, | compared with 50% in 1990. | compared with + noun phrase |
| | whereas in 1990 50% had it. | whereas + verb phrase |

| | | | | |
|-------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|----------|
| More | urban | dwellers have a water supply than | rural | dwellers |
| Fewer | rural | | urban | |

3/ Practice. Complete the paragraph about the pie chart below:



From the chart we can see that in _____ 16.25 million people owned property, _____ 22.5 million in 1987. This shows a _____ in the numbers of property owners. There has also been a _____ change in the number of people who live in their own homes. There seems to be no significant _____ in the number of houses rented out by local authorities. _____ people live in their own accommodation _____ in any other kind of accommodation.

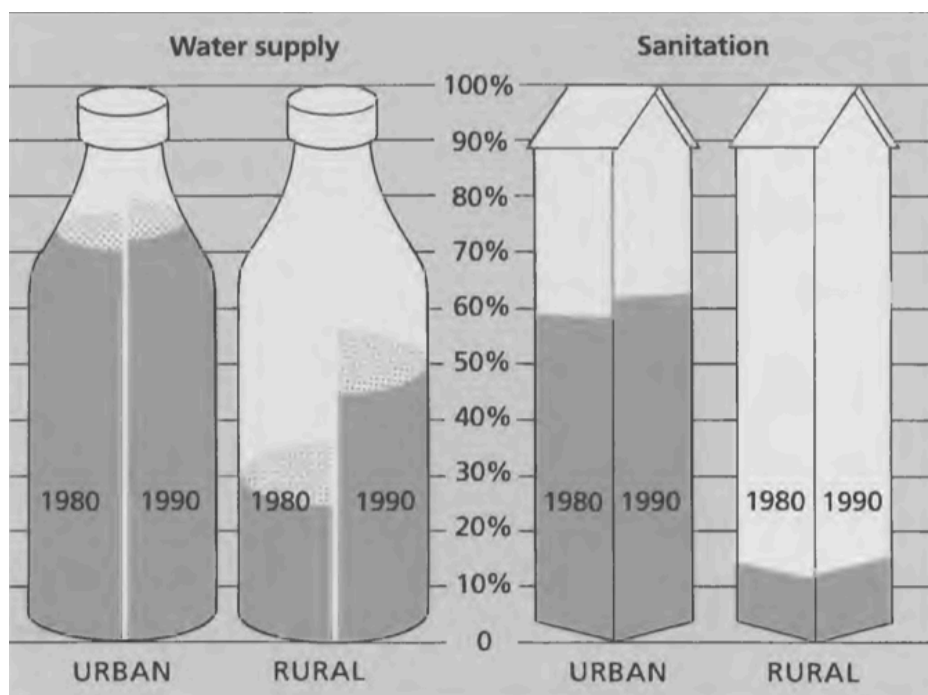
4/ **Practice.** Write your own paragraph, using the pie chart below, to describe changes in share of world manufacturing trade between 1973 and 1987. *You should spend about 20 minutes on this task and write at least 150 words.*



5/ **Practice.**

The United Nations International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade was launched in 1980 to provide 'water and sanitation for all by 1990'. The tables below show changes in water supply and sanitation levels during that decade.

TASK Write a short report for a university lecturer describing the changes in water supply and sanitation in urban and rural areas between 1980 and 1990. To what extent did the UN achieve its aims?



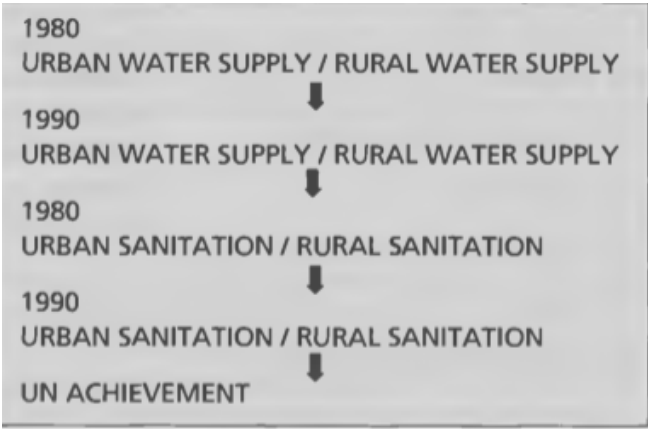
Skills focus

- notice or underline the key words;
- notice that the task asks you to do TWO things –
 - a) to describe changes and
 - b) to assess the UN's achievements; both should be in your answer;
- leave a couple of minutes for checking.

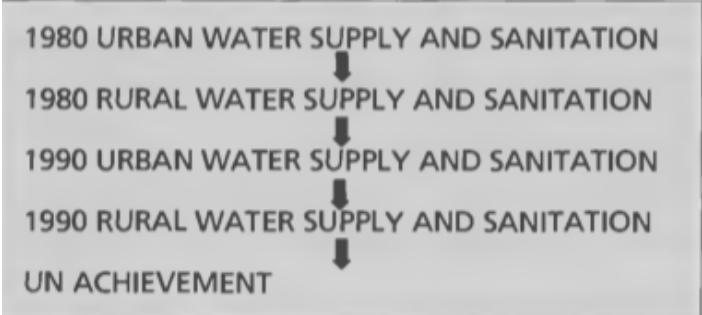
Consider three possible organisations of your paragraph:

Organisation 1 does not answer the question precisely. Why?

TASK Write a short report for a university lecturer describing the changes in water supply and sanitation in urban and rural areas between 1980 and 1990. To what extent did the UN achieve its aims?



Organisation 2 does not answer the question precisely. Why?



Organisation 3 answers the question the most precisely. Why?

