

TASK 1**AVOIDING MISTAKES**

Everyone looks at information in a different way. You need to remember there is no correct or incorrect answer, it is how **you** present the information in a data report that will get you a good band score.

ADVICE:

Look at the data **carefully**. Ask yourself what type of report it is? The most common are **a line graph, a table** (sometimes comparing two tables), or **a pie chart** (again often being asked to make comparisons). The less common types of data reports are; **describe a process, a diagram** or comparing **maps**.

1. **Don't** copy the question for your introduction. You should **paraphrase** the question (i.e. rewrite it using some different words).
The **vertical axis, horizontal axis, title** and **KEY**, all give you what you need to write your introduction for most of the charts. Don't forget the **source** of the information.

What type of chart is it? The **line graph** clearly **shows**

What can you see on the **vertical axis**? ...**the number of** exports in **millions of tonnes**...

What can you see on the **horizontal axis**? ...**over a period of 50 years**...(years)

What does the title tell you? **Wheat exports in millions of tonnes**.

What does the key tell you?  **Australia**

 **Canada**

 **European Community**

The **line graph** clearly **shows** the figure for the **exportation of wheat** in **millions of tonnes** from **three** different **geographical locations**, namely, Australia, Canada, and the European Community, over a **50 year period**, from ... to... 38 words.

2. Use a **FOUR** paragraph format.

Intro:

Overview:

Body 1:

Body 2:

3. Don't forget to separate your paragraphs clearly. (Leave sufficient space between paragraphs so that you can add a sentence if you think you need to improve your word count).

4. **Don't** forget to write a good overview/summary of the information. A quick one-sentence conclusion at the end is not good enough. Put the overview straight after the introduction, try to write 2 sentences describing the information in general. You won't get a high score if you don't write a good **overview**.

What's the difference between a conclusion and an overview?

First, a conclusion is really a **final judgement, decision** or **opinion**. This is ideal for the **TASK 2** essay, but **TASK 1** asks you to write a description **without** analysis or opinions. An "overview" is a simple description of the main points. It is basically, a summary of the information shown in the graph or chart.

Second, a conclusion should be at the end of a piece of writing. An overview or general summary could go either at the end or near the beginning. It's a good idea to describe the main features of the graph or chart near the beginning of your essay.

5. Don't describe items separately (e.g. 2 lines on a graph). You should always try to **compare** things if it is possible to do so. Instead of describing **2 lines** separately, compare the 2 lines at key points in the chart.
In 1970, A was higher at 50%, **B** was slightly lower at 35%, and **C** was the lowest for that year at just under 20%. **By 2000, A** remained quite stable, **C** increased by 25%, and **C** was the highest at the end of the period at around 45%.
6. Don't try to describe every number on a chart or graph (unless there are only a few numbers). A **key skill** in **TASK 1** is being able to **choose** the key information and describe or compare it well. Mention around 6 or 7 numbers in the main paragraphs.
7. Don't spend longer than **20 minutes** on **TASK 1**. Practise spending **5 minutes** on each of your 4 paragraphs. **Stop yourself** after 20 minutes; remember that **TASK 2** is worth more marks.

A suggested structure for **TASK 1** looks like this:

1. **Introduction: what does the chart show?**
2. **Overview / summary: what are the most noticeable features?**
3. **Specific details: try to write 2 paragraphs.**