

## IELTS General Training: Improving coherence and cohesion, lexical resource and grammatical resource.

An activity which helps students improve their performance on the marking criteria of coherence and cohesion, lexical resource and grammatical resource for *IELTS* General Training: Writing Task 2. This activity can be used after *IELTS* General Training Writing Task 1 Planning your writing or alone.

---

**Time required:** 60–70 minutes

---

**Additional materials required:**

- sample task: One copy per student or display on board. [https://www.ielts.org/pdf/115030\\_General\\_Training\\_Writing\\_sample\\_task\\_-\\_Task\\_2.pdf](https://www.ielts.org/pdf/115030_General_Training_Writing_sample_task_-_Task_2.pdf)
- Worksheet 1 – one copy for each student (folded along the dotted lines before the lesson)
- Worksheet 2 – one copy for each student
- Worksheet 3 – one copy for each student

---

**Aims:**

- to enable students to plan their writing to get good marks for cohesion and coherence
- to enable students to use a better range of lexis through paraphrase and synonyms
- to enable students to use a range of more complex grammatical structures appropriately

---

### Procedure

1. Introduce/remind students of the topic of who should pay for care in old age. Ask students to brainstorm/recall some arguments for and against the two options = the government and the family. Ask a few students to share their answers in open class.
2. Show students the **sample task** (available with this lesson plan or online from [https://www.ielts.org/pdf/115030\\_General\\_Training\\_Writing\\_sample\\_task\\_-\\_Task\\_2.pdf](https://www.ielts.org/pdf/115030_General_Training_Writing_sample_task_-_Task_2.pdf)) and get them to underline the following words and phrases:

*gets old      go to live in a home with other old people      nurses*  
*look after      the government      pay for      this care      the family*

Elicit a few synonyms for one of them, then ask the students to work in pairs to think of synonyms for the others. Have pairs compare ideas before open class feedback. Some possible answers:

gets old	enters/reaches old age; becomes elderly
----------	---

go to live in	<b>move into</b>
a home with other old people	<b>an old people's home; a retirement home; a care home; sheltered accommodation</b>
nurses	<b>Carers; medical professionals</b>
look after	<b>take care of; care for</b>
the government	<b>the state; the country; the taxpayer</b>
pay for	<b>foot the bill for; finance</b>
this care	<b>this help/service/assistance</b>
the family	<b>closest relations/relatives, siblings, children, spouse</b>

3. Ask students to work in pairs or small groups to write their opening paragraphs, avoiding using the exact wording of the question as far as possible. (If students have already written this essay for homework having done the other lesson, they should redraft the work they have already done). Ask pairs to compare their work before sharing the best examples in open class. Then get them to compare with the sample answer on **Worksheet 1**, making sure they don't unfold it yet. Elicit the structure of the paragraph and the function of the three sentences and write this on the board:

- a) Background to the situation.
- b) Introduce the problem.
- c) Introduce the choices.

4. Remind students of the need to paraphrase and to use the paragraph structure above, then ask them to turn over their worksheets and read the *IELTS* question about children's leisure time. Give them 5 minutes to write their paragraphs, then compare their work and finally compare with the example on the last part of **Worksheet 1**.

**Option:** Give students extra practice of this with other sample questions.

5. Give students **Worksheet 2** and allow them a minute to read the first paragraph and decide if they agree with it or not. Conduct a quick discussion of their responses then elicit the structure of the paragraph and write it on the board:

Sentence 1 = Introduces an issue.

Sentence 2 = Explains why it is an issue.

Sentence 3 = Shows the possible consequences.

Elicit the grammar structure used in the third sentence (2<sup>nd</sup> conditional). Point out that this is a useful way for a candidate to show a range of more sophisticated grammar, but it is not essential for all paragraphs to end with a conditional.

**Option for higher levels:** Elicit other ways of starting a conditional sentence (provided, unless, should, were), then ask students to rewrite sentence 3 starting with these words in the space provided on **Worksheet 3**:

Provided the state continues to finance care homes, those elderly people who require specialist care will not be left in unsuitable accommodation.

Unless the state is willing to finance care homes, many elderly people who require specialist care will be left in unsuitable accommodation.

Should the state stop financing care homes, many elderly people who require specialist care would be left in unsuitable accommodation.

Were the state to stop financing care homes, many elderly people who require specialist care would be left in unsuitable accommodation.

6. Ask students to finish paragraph 2 on **Worksheet 2** using this paragraph structure. The first sentence has been done for them, they just need to add some explanation of the issue in sentence 2 and show the effects in sentence 3 (hopefully using a conditional), e.g.:

However, cost is also a significant reason why families should at least contribute to the payment of care home fees. Sheltered accommodation costs the government billions of pounds a year, but it also has to find money for schools and hospitals. If families paid even just a proportion of the costs of looking after their elderly relatives, the government would be able to provide better education and health services to the whole population.

7. Ask students to write one more 'government should pay' paragraph and one more 'family should pay' paragraph using the same formula. (If students have done the previous lesson they can redraft their homework to fit this formula).
8. Elicit the four marking criteria (task achievement; coherence and cohesion; grammatical resource; lexical resource) and make sure students understand what each one means. Ask students to look at the different paragraphs they have written and discuss what features of their writing would help them get good marks in each criteria. Possible answers:

<b>Task response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given both sides of the argument.</li> </ul>
<b>Coherence and cohesion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logical development of ideas within paragraphs (topic sentence, evidence, effect).</li> <li>Use of linking phrases and topic sentences in paragraphs.</li> </ul>
<b>Grammatical resource</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of conditionals.</li> </ul>
<b>Lexical resource</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paraphrasing the rubric shows a range of vocabulary.</li> </ul>

## IELTS General Training Writing sample task – Task 2

General Training Writing sample task – Task 2

### Task 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

***In Britain, when someone gets old they often go to live in a home with other old people where there are nurses to look after them. Sometimes the government has to pay for this care.***

***Who do you think should pay for this care, the government or the family?***

***Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.***

Write at least 250 words.

## IELTS General Writing Task 2: Worksheet 1

### Part 1 – The introduction

Advances in medical science, healthier diets and better living conditions are helping us live longer than ever. Consequently more and more elderly people require specialist accommodation such as care homes and this can be expensive. This raises the question of whether these services should be financed by the state or by the closest relatives of the old person.

..... fold here .....

*Some people believe that children's leisure activities must be educational, otherwise they are a complete waste of time.*

*Do you agree or disagree?*

*Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your knowledge or experience.*

..... fold here .....

Advances in technology mean that children have a huge array of new and exciting ways to spend their free time. But these activities are sometimes criticised by those who claim that children cannot learn anything valuable from them. This raises the question of whether children's hobbies and pastimes have to have an educational value, or whether they simply need to be entertaining.

## IELTS General Writing Task 2: Worksheet 2

### Paragraph 1

One of the main reasons why the government should bear the financial burden of care homes is cost. Most families simply could not afford the high price of the accommodation and nursing provided by these institutions. If the state stopped providing these services, most old people who need specialist care would be forced to remain in unsuitable accommodation.

### Paragraph 2

*However, cost is also a significant reason why families should at least contribute to the payment of care home fees.*

## IELTS General Writing Task 2: Worksheet 3

One of the main reasons why the government should bear the financial burden of care homes is cost. Most families simply could not afford the high price of the accommodation and nursing provided by these institutions. ***If the state stopped providing these services, most old people who need specialist care would be forced to remain in unsuitable accommodation.***

Provided ...

Unless ...

Should ...

Were ...