

## Review ~ IELTS Advantage: Writing Skills

Clearly structured writing practice to enhance exam techniques.

- ISBN: 978-1905085620
- Publisher: Delta Publishing
- Components reviewed: Class or self-study book
- Authors: Richard Brown and Lewis Richards

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### IELTS Advantage: Writing Skills

Writing is undeniably challenging and an area in which many students struggle to achieve a good exam score. Given that the IELTS Academic exam has two quite different writing tasks, practice is essential. Knowing and understanding what is needed to achieve a good mark is really useful, and in this book the authors, both IELTS writing examiners, clearly guide the reader through the different sections, practising key skills and building a range of expressions.

One great feature of the book is the “Try It First” sections. People using the book are encouraged to write an essay before studying the unit, in order to gauge how much they already know and what they need to work on. This should be effective in motivating them, and shows them the worth of the book by giving them the knowledge to fill the gaps identified. The book could be used as a self-study book or as a class course book.

Six key topics are covered in the book, including living abroad, crime and work. However, I felt that with the range of topics the IELTS writing paper might touch on, perhaps more topics could have been included.

Grammar and vocabulary practice is fitted to the theme covered in each unit, with texts utilised to highlight key words and phrases. All the basics are covered this way, with some more advanced areas also introduced where applicable. The collocations exercises as well as the structure and linking practice areas target important areas which students should work on to avoid engrained mistakes and to be better prepared for formal writing. Useful tips are inserted along the way, which helpfully draw the reader’s attention to the most important guidance being given.

A complete range of writing skills are covered: advantages and disadvantages essays; problems and solutions essays; opinions essays; graphs showing a trend; graphs to compare; processes; and maps. Solid practice in these areas should set the reader up nicely for the exam.

For me one highlight of the book was including model essays from which the reader can find information through which to complete charts, see how essays are organised and to see key vocabulary and linking expressions being used in context. The other particularly useful area was the section of example essays at the back of the book, which offer comments and probable marks. These really give an idea of what standard of work falls into which marking band, and more importantly, why it would gain that score. For both teachers and students alike this kind of information is extremely useful.

I would recommend this book. I was impressed with its content, layout and advice and think this will be an invaluable resource for any student looking to improve their writing skills and gain a solid IELTS writing mark.

<http://edition.tefl.net/reviews/esl-exams/ielts-advantage-writing-skills/#more-6004>