

Female Voice: You are now listening to the IELTS podcast. Learn from tutors and ex-examiners who are masters of IELTS preparation. Your host, Ben Worthington.

Ben: IELTS Writing: five band 9 words to impress the examiner. Appalling, classical, adolescent, communicative, attainable. Now, I will tell you why they are band 9, how to use them and near the end, I'll give you an example of how to implement them in a natural way when you're writing.

First, let's have a look at the international English exam equivalency chart. We can see that this chart, this is an adapted version and the official version is very similar and it all equates to the same and that can be found on Cambridge-- if you just do a search, cambridgeesol.org.

Anyway, what we can deduce-- that's the word. What we can find with this chart is that if we look at the common European framework of reference or CEFR, which is developed with Cambridge University, we can find that C2 level equates to band 9, band 8.5. Also, it equates to between 120 and 117 on the TOEFL scale if you're wondering.

Now, this is important because if we go to the Cambridge dictionary, we can find that next to certain words, there is a little blue icon and it might say B2, C1, C2. This means that the word has been graded. So, an intermediate user might be just using words from the B1 or B2 scale whereas the proficient or advanced or in this case band 9, band 8.5 user will be using the C2 and C1 words.

That's exactly what we've got here. All of these words are C2 level, which basically means band 9. Obviously, just using these words alone in your writing is not going to deliver you a band 9. However, it is going to help you improve your writing especially if you adopt this strategy that I'm going to use, but just adopting the strategy isn't going to be enough.

You need to get feedback and you need to know whether you are using the right words in the right context and as I said, the best way to do this is to get feedback. You can get feedback online at ieltspodcast.com and the Essay Correction Service or just go do the online course.

There are lots of opportunities during the online course for you to send your essay and get feedback. It's an integral part of the online course actually.

Let's jump into these words. First of all, we have appalling, which means extremely bad. I wanted to start with this word because it is very versatile. Let me give you an example. Imagine that you've written the sentence in your IELTS essay. You've written, "In some parts of the world, war, poverty, and malnutrition have created bad conditions for the poor souls who live there."

This is a very easy word to upgrade from. We've used the word 'bad'. Now, if we substitute that and just change it with 'appalling' in this example, we've instantly upgraded the sentence which is perfect. So, we have, "In some parts of the world, war, poverty, and malnutrition have created appalling conditions for the poor souls who live there." This is a super upgrade.

What I want to say is that when you've finished your writing, look through the writing and if you've used the word bad or very bad, experiment and see if you can substitute it for the word appalling.

Another example, "Our historical past is filled with very bad acts of hatred and cruelty much of it committed in the name of religion." I think Europe would be glad... the main culprits there. Anyway, the adapted version, "Our historical past is filled with appalling acts of hatred and cruelty much of it committed in the name of religion." Instant upgrade.

I'm not going to say that because of that upgrade we're going to get a band 9. No, but we are going to get closer and it does help our lexical resource and maybe some of the words require restructuring of the whole sentence in which case you might have to-- you might be improving grammatical range and accuracy as well.

Last example, "Climate change is said to be the cause of not so good weather conditions experienced in many parts of the world. These include hurricanes, floods, and freezing conditions." Hopefully, you've identified already the parts of the sentence that need to be upgraded and I'll tell you straight away.

If we switch 'not so good weather conditions' for 'appalling', the sentence instantly becomes more concise, becomes more succinct and we've upgraded the sentence especially with this C2 word. So, the new sentence, "Climate change is said to be the cause of appalling weather conditions experienced in many parts of the world." Beautiful.

Next one, "Clothes cut along normal lines tend to be more formal and will look good no matter what the current day fashion trends." Which word could we upgrade here? Classical is the word that we want to place into this sentence to upgrade it. First-- well there are two words we could upgrade. We could upgrade 'normal' and we could upgrade 'look good'.

We're just going to focus on one of the words now. "Clothes cut along classical lines tend to be more formal and will look good no matter what the current day fashion trends." While we're here why we not upgrade the word good? Well, we can upgrade that with look trendy, look fashionable, look delicious.

The amount of creativity you want to put into your IELTS essay largely depends on your confidence, but as a general rule, don't risk it. I'm just playing around there. Maybe you could use delicious if you are-- but play it safe. Go for something like look stylish. That would be much better.

Next one, "Old-style ballet remains popular despite the introduction of many more modern dance forms." Quite simple this one, we upgrade it by saying, "Classical ballet remains popular despite the introduction of many more modern dance forms." You see, instead of using two words, we're using one. Boom! Much, much better.

Last one, "Old and traditional style architecture is typically based on ancient Greek and Roman buildings." Easy upgrade, "Classical architecture is typically based on ancient Greek and Roman buildings." All of those sentences with the word classical replacing traditional, old, old style, old traditional style. They're much more concise, much more direct and of course, they're using C2 words. Much, much, more sophisticated way of writing.

Next word: adolescent. Now, I've suggested this before and this is a very useful word because we often have to use the word child or children or kids in our essay. Maybe not kids because it

sounds a little bit more informal but child or children. There are not that many synonyms for the word child or children.

We have to stretch it out a bit and we could use young adults, we could use adolescent or adolescents-- by the way, using one word in different forms shows the examiner you've got flexibility with your range and structure, your grammatical range and structure and also helps with lexical resource.

Anyway, let's get back to this. "Hormonal disturbances in teenage boys and girls have a tendency to lead to skin outbreaks. This, in turn, can damage their self-esteem." How can we modify this? How can we upgrade the language? Well, we obviously switch 'teenage' for 'adolescent'.

Next sentence, "Children who are almost adults undergo many physical and emotional changes which can be confusing for both the teenagers and their parents." How do we upgrade this? Let's see. "Adolescent children undergo many physical and emotional changes which can be confusing for both the teenagers and their parents."

Once again, just this upgrade is very, very simple to do. You go through your essay and just look for opportunities where we might find lower level vocabulary, jump into a thesaurus or even better get the Cambridge online dictionary and start looking for substitutes.

Here's a quick guide. If you see words like good, bad, very good, very bad, be, have, get, all of this type of vocabulary usually has a more accurate and more precise substitute and that more precise substitute will more likely have a higher level in the Cambridge dictionary and that higher level, obviously, is going to equate to a better chance of scoring higher in your IELTS essay.

Next one: cumulative-- I don't really-- I'm not going to say. Anyway, "It is vital not just the financial accounts for the month but-- it is vital to study not just the financial accounts for the month, but to evaluate the long-term effect on the annual results." Here we've slightly changed the meaning if we substitute cumulative for long-term. However, in this context, we can get

away with it because they broadly mean the same. However, we've upgraded the sentence slightly.

Next one, "Lots of detailed measures allow financial analysts to follow trends over time." Again, we switched this for cumulative and we say, "Cumulative measures allow financial analysts to follow trends over time." So, once again, in the context we can get away with this because we broadly mean the same and we're not writing an accounting paper. We're just writing an IELTS essay and if it's broadly the same and it fits with the context, then go ahead and upgrade it.

How will you know if it's broadly the same? How do you know if it's in context? Well, the best way is to get feedback as I've mentioned before. Get feedback. The tutor who is giving you the feedback will be able to say, "No. Well done for trying to use this. However, you should have used this word instead." Probably gives you a substitute or even rephrases the sentence or even gives you the definition. This way, you can be sure. It's a fast way to improve.

Final example: cumulative. "It is not just a single incident but repeated sun exposure that causes skin cancer." Here what have we got? We change repeated for cumulative, which in this context again does make sense. So, we say, "It is not just a single incident but cumulative sun exposure that causes skin cancer."

Final example: attainable. Once again, here's the sentence. "Managers should set easy-to-reach targets." Now, where's the opportunity to upgrade the sentence there with attainable? Quite straight forward, "Managers should set attainable targets." Once again, we're saying the same with less words. It's more succinct, it's easier to read and C2 level. We're getting there. We're picking up the points.

Next sentence, "Dieters who set easy weight loss goals are much more likely to keep going and lose the weight." Once again, we switch easy for attainable. Why do we want to do this upgrade? Because 'easy' is probably one of the words you first learned when you were learning English. It's basic. Every learner of English probably knows this word; attainable, different story. This is why we want to use this higher-level vocabulary. Also attainable is more specific, more accurate.

Next one, "The highest possible score in the exam was band 9." Again, hopefully, you're screaming now and you're saying, "Don't use possible; use attainable!" Possible has a wide--like easy, possible can be used in a lot of different circumstances. Attainable has a more narrow, defined use and in this case, we improve the accuracy of the sentence by saying, "The highest attainable score in the exam was band 9."

As I've been saying throughout this tutorial, use these C2 words and upgrade your essay, upgrade your sentences when you are confident that you're using it accurately because if you don't do it without your self-confidence assurance or with any niggling idea that this could be wrong, then on exam day, it's better not to do it because you could really modify the whole grammar structure and it could become difficult to understand.

So, when you're practicing and when you're writing your essays at home, sending them for feedback, that's the opportunity to experiment. In the exam, avoid experimentation. You don't want to gamble with the exam fee. When you're getting feedback, when you're planning your essay and you're writing your essay, that's the time to start incorporating these higher-level words.

Also once you've finished your writing, go through and look at opportunities to upgrade your writing. Try do this online with the C2 dictionary, just put into Google 'Cambridge online dictionary' and you'll find the little blue icon that says C2, B1, C1, whatever and you'll be able to go through your text and look for upgrades.

Final point: as I've said before, make sure you're getting feedback. It's a fast way to improve. The online course, which we're getting a lot of success from as you've probably heard on the podcasts, we're interviewing students all the time and they're sharing tips and what they did and how they passed and the success they have and where they're going and it's really quite exciting actually. Just a couple of months ago, we were talking with Maria. She shared some fantastic tips.

By the way, this course comes with "Jump to band 7 or it's free" guarantee. There are some details there, but go to ieltpodcast.com/onlinecourse and you'll be able to find all the details

and you'll be able to see all the stories of the students passing. I'll just mention because I've been going on and on and on about feedback, but it's important. This is why we built it into the online course because this is-- it's just the most effective way to learn.

If you're just watching tutorials, you're getting the information, but only when you take action can you get the transformation in the band score that you want. When you get that transformation, you get the feedback, you're implementing and the knowledge that you've just got from the tutor, then it just makes it easier and faster to improve. This is why we integrated it into the online course.

In the online course, you watch a tutorial. You write an essay. While you're writing the essay, you implement what you just learned. Then you send your essay to the essay corrector. She will give you feedback. She'll look at it. She'll tell you the errors that you didn't know you were making. Send it back to you really fast. You look at it and you're like, "Wow! Wow! Thank you. Wow! I never knew I did that."

Then you watch new videos, new tutorials, get some new advice, you implement that as well as the advice you've learned previously. You write your new essay. Hopefully, you go through and you look for opportunities to upgrade it like we've just been talking about and you send it to the examiner. You get feedback-- not the examiner. Send it to the essay corrector. You get your feedback, discover your errors and you watch a new tutorial and so on and so forth.

This is how we manage to get students passing IELTS at a band 7 or even higher. It's quite fast and it's quite effective. So, have a look at the online course there. It'd be fantastic if we're working together and one final thing.

The next step to do now, if you know somebody you think will benefit, please send them this tutorial. If you're interested and you're in a bit of a rush and you're tired of taking test after test, then go over to ieltpodcast.com, join the online course. I'd love to see you there making some fantastic results.

My name is Ben Worthington. Good luck with your IELTS preparation. Take care and keep studying.

Female Voice: Thanks for listening to ieltspodcast.com

