



**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:** Band 9 fluency and cohesion: develops topics coherently and appropriately. Where is that from, you might be asking. Well, it's from the official marking criteria, the public version, of course, for IELTS speaking. Let me just repeat that. Band 9 fluency and cohesion; then it says, develops topics coherently and appropriately. In this tutorial, we are going to look at specifically that point.

We are going to develop the whole tutorial around how a student can develop a project coherently. We're going to give you advice and some solid examples. My name is Ben Worthington as you possibly know, as you probably know even, and what I want to say just before we jump into this is that if you know anybody who you think will benefit from listening to these tutorials, then please send them the URL. Get them on board and we can help more people pass IELTS.

If an IELTS examinee wants to get band 9 in the speaking, you need to do much more than show your wide range of vocabulary. You must have a very wide and accurate grammatical range and flawless pronunciation. Not only should you be able to do all of that, but you need to speak fluently with only some repetition or self-correction, you need to speak coherently with fully



appropriate cohesive features and, of course, you need to develop the topic fully and appropriately.

Really pay attention to what the examiner is looking for. Once we know what the examiner is looking for, we can give it to them and we can make their job easier when it comes to scoring you. What does coherent mean? Well, we also use coherent and cohesion when we're writing, for writing effectively that is.

So, it can be defined-- specifically looking at coherence, it's the connection of ideas and then cohesion is the effective grammatical linking that makes your speech or your text connected and logical. That's a very important criteria, very important definition. Coherence is the connection of ideas and the cohesion is the effective grammatical linking that leads to one's speech being connected and logical.

I hope you've inferred from there, I hope you got the idea that grammar really is supreme here because without the grammar we can't really get that smooth-- without accurate and perfect grammar we can't really get that smooth connection of ideas. The grammar could act like a sledgehammer to the smooth flow of ideas.

If you want to make your speech sound clear, organized, and connected, one way we can do this, obviously, we're going to include correct grammar, but what we can do is introduce



cohesive features and link words. This will help you structure your response and help you show a clear relationship between your ideas.

Also, in both your speaking and your writing, it helps you add ideas, compare ideas, contrast ideas, and it also helps you to add reasons or explanations. Most importantly, the use of the connective and cohesive features or link words help your ideas flow and connect seamlessly. Also, just as a side note, it helps you convey your message efficiently and, as I said, the smooth flow of ideas from sentence to sentence. The examiner can really follow what's going on in your head.

Let's have a look at a sample answer for part 3 and let's see how-- well not see, let's listen to the coherence, let's listen to discover how coherent and cohesion is built into this sample answer. Part 3 topic: events and celebration. The question the examiner has just asked: should an event be prepared in advance?

"Yes, by all means. Only few celebrations can be successfully organized on the spot without too much planning effort. It would be so easy to throw a surprise birthday party for a friend or a family member. There's such a wide range of products that one can buy at a dollar store for such purposes. All sorts of paper cups, plastic plates, and cutlery, single-use table cloths and so on.



Most events do require a good deal of planning. Family celebrations, Christmas, Thanksgiving, wedding anniversaries, wedding parties, product launches, or various receptions simply cannot be spontaneous. Their organization needs to be a good plan. There are way too many aspects to take into account: the menu, guest list, or even gifts. Good planning of large events always equals order and peace of mind.

It is not uncommon for people to overplan their events and then when something small deviates from the initial plan, it wreaks havoc on the whole event and the festive feeling associated with it. I don't think we should plan every single detail of every single event. We should leave some space for adjustments in case the circumstances change."

At first glance, this may seem a rather good answer. It is indeed developed rather appropriately and the speaker makes an introduction, maps out the answer, and concludes. It also shows some pretty decent vocabulary and some grammar. There were a few grammar errors at the beginning, which I really hope you picked up on and an additional point is that it provides personal opinion supported with examples and explanations and it ends in a conclusion.

So, that's not bad, but if we take a closer look, hopefully, you'll have picked up that some of the sentences might sound a bit abrupt, disconnected, a bit stubby. The ideas do kind of flow in a logical order. There're no random ideas popping up there and there are some examples and



reasons, explanations and opinions, but there's hardly any linking between the ideas and the sentences.

The linking would signal the transition from one idea to another. It would also help the ideas flow and without these, it's kind of difficult for the listener to follow the message. It kind of gives the impression that the whole text or the whole speech was fragmented and poorly organized. It wasn't really that poorly organized, it was quite logical, but it just felt disjointed.

The reason it felt disjointed is because we really lacked some linking words. The linking words will help you introduce what you think, they'll help you show comparison, they'll help you provide examples and give explanations. We are going to look at some samples of linking words and I'll give you the definition that goes with them. So, grab a pen.

Phrases we can use: also, as well as; we can use that to add ideas. Similarly-- I can never say that word right. Similarly, as, in the same way; we can use those to compare. Even though, despite, yet; we use those to contrast. So that, so, for this reason; we can use those to express a result or purpose. For example, for instance, to illustrate this; to give examples, obviously. Because, since, thus, and that is why; we use those to give an explanation or a reason. Actually or I have to say; we can use these ones to preface what we really think and I'll give you an example about that later, in a few minutes.



I must admit: we use this one when we want to commit that something-- to confess that something is true. I must admit I do love ABBA songs, for example. It's true; my guilty pleasure songs. Let's move back quickly. On the other hand: to introduce another point of view. Well: to give yourself some time to think.

There are plenty more linking and connective devices that we can use. It's just an introduction and just to get you started. As a side note, what I always recommend is just take three from this list or even less, just take two and master those three or two. Master them, get complete control of them and then move on and learn the next three.

Don't memorize the whole list and then just try and force it into the speaking because it sounds unnatural. Learn a few, get used to them, use them in a natural environment, use them naturally and you will sound much more fluent, much more like a native speaker. Once you've dominated those three, move on.

Let's have a look at the improved answer regarding the original text and now we've added these connective devices. Should an event be prepared in advance? "Well, I have to say yes, by all means. I must admit that only a few celebrations can be successfully organized on the spot without too much planning. For instance, it would be so easy to throw a surprise birthday for a friend or family member since there's such a wide range of products that one can buy at a



dollar store for such purposes. All sorts of paper cups, plastic plates, cutlery, single-use table cloth and so on.

Yet, most events do require a good deal of planning. Family celebrations like Christmas, Thanksgiving, wedding anniversaries as well as wedding parties, product launches, or various receptions simply can't be spontaneous. Their organization needs a good plan because there are way too many aspects to take into account: the menu, the guest list, or even gifts. So, good planning of large events always equals order and peace of mind.

On the other hand, it is not uncommon for people to over plan their events and then when something small deviates from the original plan, it wreaks havoc on the whole event and the festive feeling associated with it. That is why I don't think we should plan every single detail of every single event so that we leave some space for adjustment in case the circumstances change."

Hopefully, from listening to that, you could tell that I was adding all the connective devices that I just mentioned and as I said right at the beginning, now they help with the logical progression of ideas. It's kind of like the glue just putting it all together except this glue is attractive and it's making it sound better.

It's making it look better and it's stronger, it's more cohesive and most of all sounds natural. There's a natural progression there showing contrast. Also, some of these words like yet, the



conjunction, it helps with the grammatical range and accuracy score as well, of course, if they are used accurately and correctly will help you.

To sum up what you've probably discovered there is that we can use these to improve our speaking, to improve the cohesiveness, the cohesion which will help us get band 9, but also you should make sure that we have to be using impressive vocabulary, we have to be using very strong and accurate grammar, we need to be providing detail and of course, we should be responding to the question and staying on topic.

That's everything from me today. I really hope you enjoyed this tutorial. If you know anybody who you think would benefit from these tutorials, please send them the URL, tell them about us and what we are doing. If you want to improve your speaking or improve your writing, then head over to [ieltspodcast.com](http://ieltspodcast.com). We're getting some fantastic results, really, some impressive results with students that are passing extremely quickly especially using the online course.

Regarding the online course, there are lots of tutorials and there's a little bit more brief than this which is-- I think is more valuable because you need to learn this, this, this, this, and this. You've got to learn so much. So, I give the overviews but it's like a sufficient overview for this section. It's a sufficient overview for this section and most importantly, we give you exercises to put this advice into practice.





So, it's not only the information; we're also focused on the transformation in your writing. This will help you because once you've implemented it, you can send it to our team, our team will review it, this is included in the online course. Our team will review it and give you feedback. It's just a very fast and effective way to improve.

Now, you can do this on your own. You can, for example, figure out how to construct a perfect essay plan that helps you score high. You can do this or you can discover your own speaking confidence techniques, but it can take you a long time. Why not just go to chapter 3 in the Speaking Confidence course? Why not just check out chapter 5 about the Essay Plans?

It just speeds everything up rather than going through exam after exam after exam. If that sounds like something that would benefit you and if you could see yourself passing and you want to pass pretty soon, then have a look at the [ieltspodcast.com](http://ieltspodcast.com) online course and Essay Correction Service and we'd love to work with you and help you improve.

If you're not at that stage yet, then you can still leave your email at [ieltspodcast.com](http://ieltspodcast.com) and we'll send you a big jumbo e-book full of helpful sample essays and techniques for the speaking exam and so on and so forth.

My name is Ben Worthington. Thank you very much for being with us today. Hope you have a fantastic day and good luck with your IELTS preparation. Take care.



**Female Voice:** Thanks for listening to [ieltspodcast.com](http://ieltspodcast.com)