



IELTS GENERAL

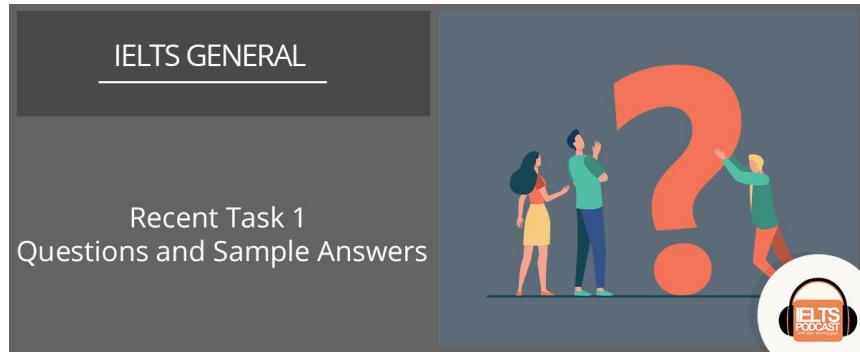
Recent Task 1
Questions and Sample Answers

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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.

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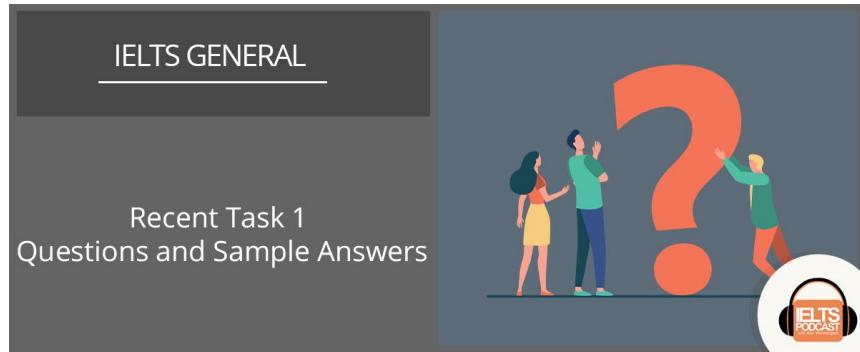
Ben: IELTS General: recent Task 1 questions and sample answers. Hello there, my name is Ben Worthington and in this tutorial, we are looking at some recent Task 1 questions and I will give you some sample answers. These questions were seen online and sent in to us from our students who are doing the IELTS tests and this tutorial will just help you get in your mind and get familiar with how to answer these IELTS General Task 1 questions. And if you're lucky, maybe you'll see the exact same question that you hear in this tutorial. Maybe you'll hear it on your exam and then you'll be laughing all the way to band 9.



All right. Before we get started, I just want to share two things with you. First, is who I am. Most of you are probably familiar with me, but just in case, as you know, my name is Ben Worthington. I'm from England near Manchester and I've been teaching English for a long time.

I started off in Spain. I left Manchester which is where I was living. I left Manchester. I started basically a new life in Spain. I did Erasmus and then after that I started teaching English. I soon specialized in IELTS, but IELTS was so tough to teach. I was having some real difficulty with it.

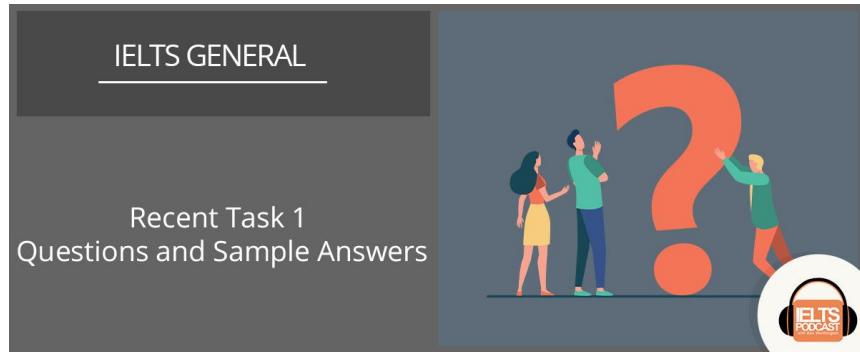
So, I started to interview language professionals, ex-IELTS examiners, current examiners, linguistics experts, anybody I could find and then I took what they told me and I tested it on my students and eventually, I figured out a way to help students pass or to almost-- well, to guarantee that they passed. And that's how I came to the Jump to Band 7 or Its Free IELTS online course which is available at ieltpodcast.com.



And yes, so that's the first thing I wanted to share and the second thing is that the \$5 essay corrections are still going. They are flying off the shelves like hotcakes as we say in the UK. So, you can just go to ieltpodcast.com and you'll see on the top of the page there's the offer still there. We don't know how long it's going to stay open. So, if you are interested in improving your grade and getting feedback, then this is the fastest way to improve.

And you can send us your General Task 1, you can send us your Academic Task 1, send us your IELTS Task 2. We can give you the question as well and you'll get your essay back pretty quick normally within 24 hours and it's just a fast, easy, effective way to boost and improve your score. And you'll also see where you're stumbling, where you're losing points.

Right then. Let's get into it. So, with General IELTS Task 1 depending on the task, you might have a formal letter, an informal letter, or a neutral one. Let's have a look at this first question. Write a letter to your landlord complaining about noise in the block of flats which he owns.

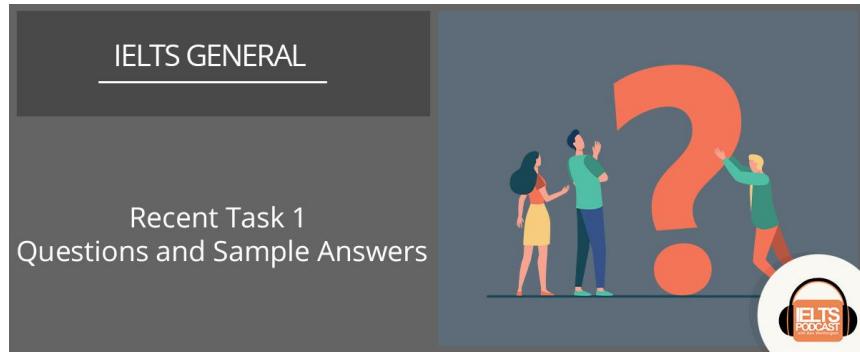


You should include where you live, the problem, and what he should do. And notice it says what he should do because it's landlord. It's not landlady, okay?

Now, first of all, hopefully, you recognized this is a letter of complaint. If you go to IELTS Podcast, we have got a full tutorial with more sample letters so you can see them, you can read them, but also a massive tutorial about all the letter of complaint vocabulary that you can use.

Now, we also have--

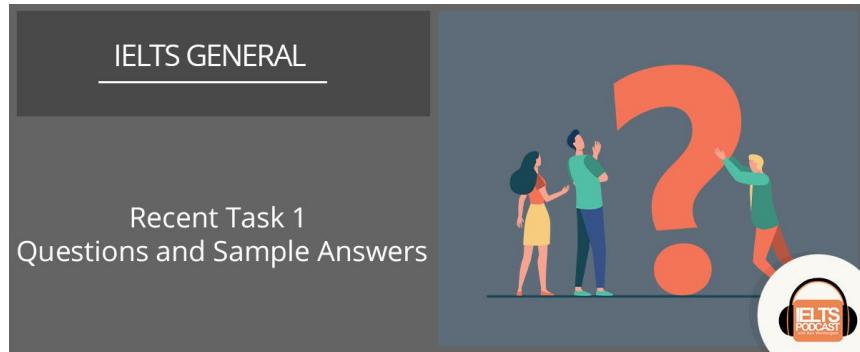
So, let's just break down this question. Write a letter to your landlord. It's going to be formal. It's not overly formal, but it's definitely not informal. I would put it at formal. It's a bit like a dress code. It's usually safer to overdress than to underdress for an event. So, if you're unsure about an event, it's better to dress smartly just in case rather than turn up with jeans and a hoodie and look a bit out of place whereas if you just dress smart, you can be sure.



Anyway, sorry we went off on a tangent there, but with your letter writing it's similar. You're better to err on the edge of formality. So, let's go. Write a letter to your landlord complaining about noise in the block of flats which he owns. You should include where you live.

In this case with my notes, I thought this was a beautiful opportunity to include all the vocabulary that you know. So, in my case, I'm going to put a block of flats in the center next to the roundabout after the turnpike, but before the library, okay? I guess we can assume in this case, that this is a very rich landlord with a lot of property.

But anyway, we could say Dear Sir, I'm writing to complain about-- actually, we've got complain in the question. So, to complain about is okay, but we could rephrase it just to be on the safe side and we could say Dear Sir, I'm writing to you regarding the-- let's see. I'm writing to you regarding the loud noises in my flat. My flat is 22b next to the roundabout after the turnpike, but before the library, okay? Or 22b Jonestown Road next to the roundabout after the turnpike, but before the library, okay? It's just an opportunity to put in the vocab.



Okay. The problem. Okay. The main issue-- we can start a new paragraph here. The main issue is one of the elderly residents-- in my notes I've put old lady, but I reckon that old could be a little bit rude. Elderly is a safe and polite way to say old, okay? So, the issue regards an elderly lady who is constantly shooing the pigeons away from the guttering-- away from the roof of the building.

Now, I could just expand on this issue. What is shooing by the way? This is actually a truthful story, but in my block of flats where I live, there's a balcony like on the inside and there's a neighbor and she is outside on the balcony day and night waving a broom and then going shoo shoo shoo to the pigeons in our building, okay? And she's making more noise than the pigeons. So, I'm going to complain to the landlord about her, okay?

And now the next task is what he should do. So, in my letter, I'm going to suggest-- and I will suggest it in a polite way-- I'm going to suggest that they put metal guttering on top of the pipes to discourage and prevent the pigeons from landing and staying near the roof. This way,



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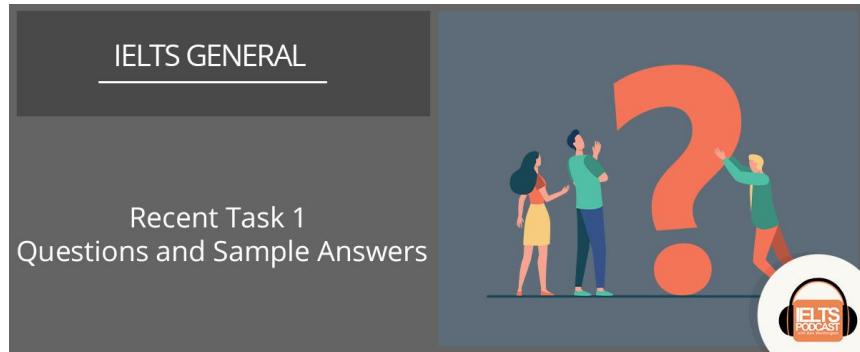
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the old lady gets peace of mind, the pigeons stop disturbing us, and the lady stops disturbing us as well, okay?

So, there-- I mean those were just my notes and they gave you some tips regarding the vocabulary and the structure, but with Task 1 ideally, you're just following the bullet points and make sure you include all the bullet points. I've read and corrected so many Task 1 sample letters where there's bullet points missed off or the student has gone off on a different path.

So, it's very clear in this one. Where you live: you put down the address maybe the directions. The problem: it's very graphic in my case. The old lady shooing away the pigeons. What he should do: the metal guttering or even pest control. So, there if I want to expand my answer, I can give two suggestions to the landlord.

And then of course, we're going to use the typical General Task 1 letter writing vocabulary which is if you have any further questions or please don't hesitate to contact me, kind regards; all of this typical vocabulary that we need to score points.



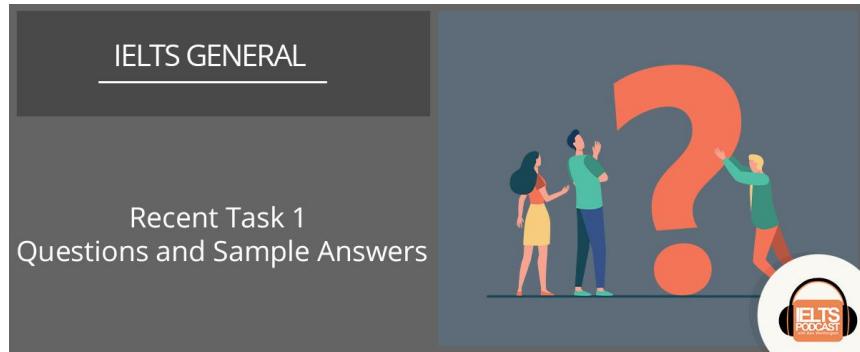
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Moving on to question 2. You want to arrange a conference for your company and you need to ask one of your colleagues to give a presentation in this conference. Write a letter to your colleague. In your letter include details about the conference, why you want your colleague to give the presentation, what arrangement you will do for this conference.

Is this formal, informal, or neutral? Well, I wouldn't say it's formal because this is your colleague who you see on a day-to-day basis and you're probably calling them James, Dave-- you're probably on a first name basis I imagine as we all are with our colleagues unless it's our manager in which case we may say Mr. Smith.

However, it's not as informal as your friends because this is your company. There is a bit of professionalism here. So, therefore we're probably going to go for neutral. And it might be something like Hello David, Notice it's not Dear Mr. David. This is our colleague. We speak to them on a day-to-day basis.

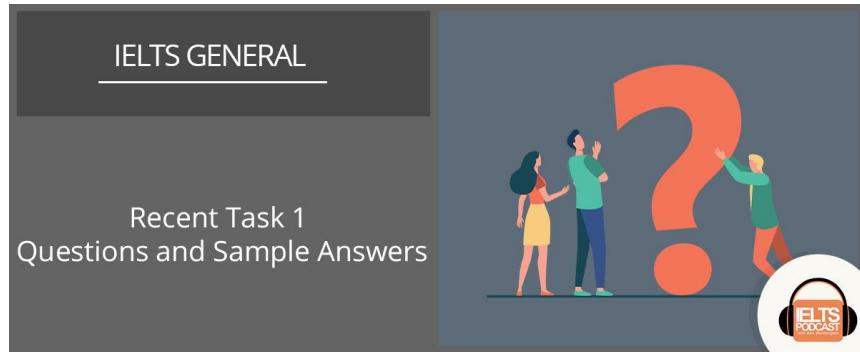


So, Hello David, new line. I'm writing to you regarding the-- you need to ask one of your colleagues to give a presentation in this conference. Okay. Hello David, or even Dear David, I'm writing to you regarding a conference which I would love for you to present-- maybe love is a bit too strong-- which I would like you to present.

Details about the conference. Let's just say you might laugh now, but let's say it's a dodge coin conference or a bitcoin conference. Let's make it a little bit more serious. Details about the conference. It's a bitcoin conference and--

Write a letter to your colleague. In the letter, include details about the conference. So, in my notes, I've put bitcoin conference, the advantages, the new exciting technology in crypto, okay? So, as you know, when we're planning our Task 1, we just write our bullet points.

Why you want your colleague to give the presentation. I want them to give this presentation to introduce new people to crypto and make some sales and spread awareness and educate. So,

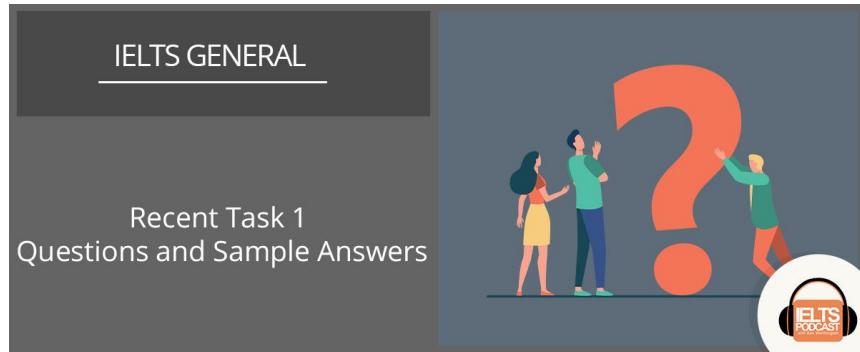


there's like four reasons there. That's a brilliant way just to bulk up the content of the letter and it's also a brilliant way to boost your vocabulary.

What arrangement you will do for this conference; another vocabulary opportunity. The arrangements I will do are I'm going to book a room in the Hilton-- sorry, not a room. I'm going to book a conference space in the Hilton. I will promote the event online. I will invite my network of crypto professionals.

And in each bullet point, look for an opportunity for you to expand. Also, orientate it around a topic that you can really go deep on. In this case, I chose crypto because it's what I'm kind of like immersed in at the moment. I wouldn't say day and night, but it's like a new hobby like everybody else. I'm piling in, right?

But maybe you are a doctor. So, in your case, you could say you're going to do a medical conference and now you could use all the vocabulary from your world. Maybe there is a social network for doctors or maybe there is a LinkedIn for doctors, for example and you can mention

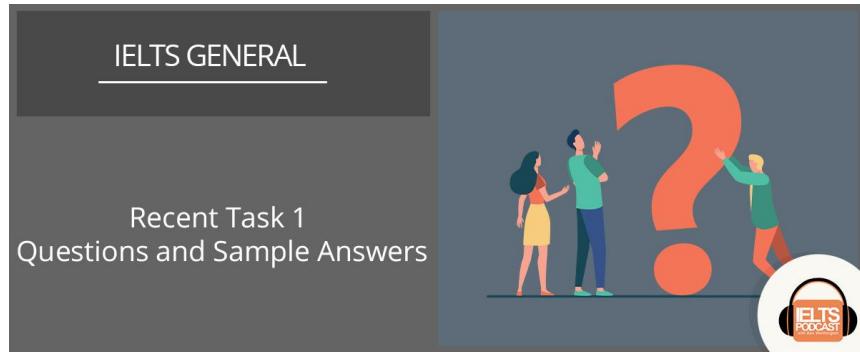


this. I've posted the event on mediweb and I've contacted the Associations of Pediatricians of the United States.

Just little details like this they help you boost your score and they make it easier to write because it's your subject and finally, it just seems more realistic. And you've probably written a letter or something similar especially if you're using the examples from your own world. So, it's a case of instead of having to invent, it's more closer to translate which again is easier.

So, as I said before, this would be neutral. We're not going to have exclamations. We may have contractions. We are going to have solid paragraphing. Probably wouldn't have so many direct questions and we're definitely not going to use nicknames or personal questions like PS say hi to the kids. We're not going to do that. This is a colleague, okay? It's going to have a level of professionalism.

Likewise, we're not writing a letter like the last one to somebody that we might not know so well or a letter of complaint to a company for a faulty product, for example. No. This is a

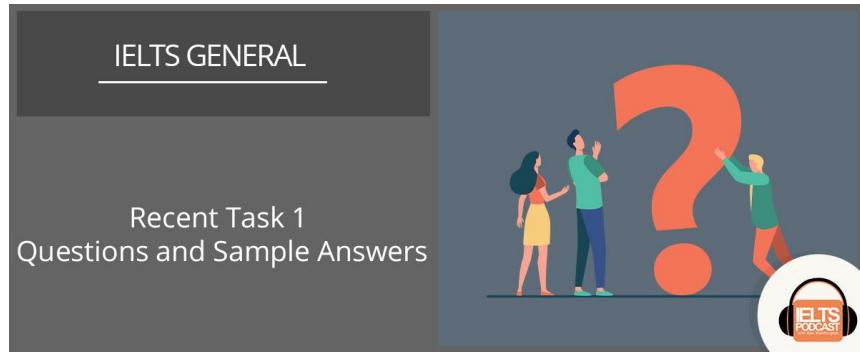


colleague we see at work and first name basis, but still a level of professionalism. Neutral is the style we are going for.

Final letter. You own an old item that you think is valuable and would like to sell. Write a letter to the owner of an antiques shop. In your letter, explain how you found the shop, describe the item that you would like to sell, say how much you would like to sell the item for.

Now, I do this pretty much every week. I'm writing letters to antique shops telling them about things I found. Now, obviously I'm joking. It just seems so antiquated, doesn't it? How many times have we ever done this? I've never done this and if I-- yeah. I'd just send an email if I did ever incur this situation.

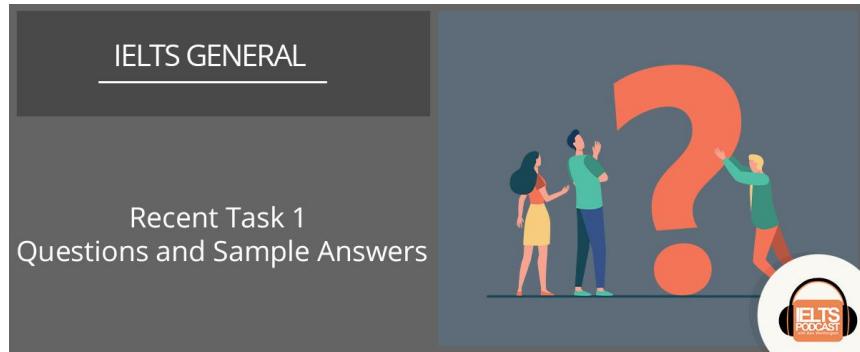
Anyway, IELTS is asking me for a letter. I'm going to stop complaining and just write this letter. I'm going to write this letter, get this bad 9 and I'm off to university and I'm off to Australia, Canada, or the UK, wherever. Let's get going.



Now, when we're making the notes, let's just quickly map this out. I'm going to say I want to sell a zippo. I used to collect these. This is quite straightforward, actually. So, let's see. I've got the item. How I found the shop: I'm going to invent a story because it's incoherent if I said I found the shop online and then decided to write a pen and paper snail mail letter. It's completely incoherent .Why wouldn't you just shoot off an email? So, be careful. I'm going to just tell them that my brother told me about this shop.

Describe the item you would like to sell. Now, here probably want to be-- I'm going to use an item that I personally own. It's probably an antique, but I'm using an item I personally own because I can visualize it and it's going to be another opportunity for vocabulary.

So, in this case, it's an old mechanical brass zippo. A zippo is a type of lighter from the U.S., but because I can visualize it. I know it's brass. I know it's mechanical. I know it's old. I can say it's a bit battered on the corner. I can certify-- I'm pretty confident it's an original because it's

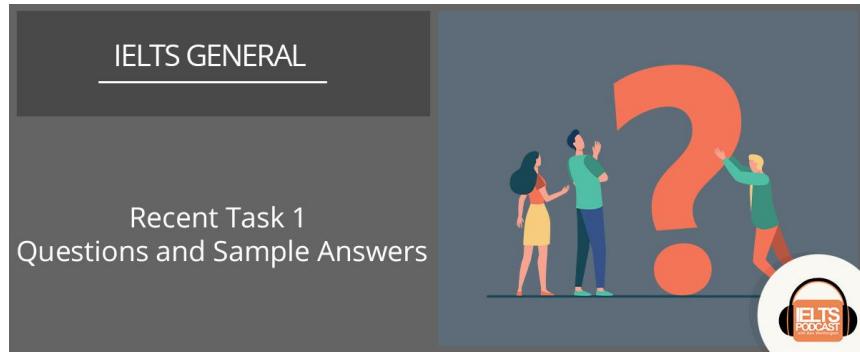


got the stamp on the base. You see all these opportunities for extra vocabulary. So, try and think of an old item if you were doing this question.

And how much you would like to sell the item for. Again, because I have this item, I've got a rough idea how much I could sell it for. So, it's going to add that little bit of realisticness to the letter. So, let's see. Here, I do not know the antiques shop owner. I can't say Dear Barry, for example. Dear David. No. I'm going to say Dear Sir or Madam just in case.

Dear Sir or Madam, I'm writing with regards to an antique item that I would like to sell or that I would like to offer you for purchase. Instead of saying I would like to sell which comes directly from the question, I'm going to rephrase it. I'm going to paraphrase it. And then as I said before, I will explain how I discovered the shop.

My brother recently sold some Charles Dickens books to your establishment and was very encouraging of the process and the professionalism of your staff. Again, look for opportunities to include your vocabulary, okay? And then I could just go on and say how he recommended



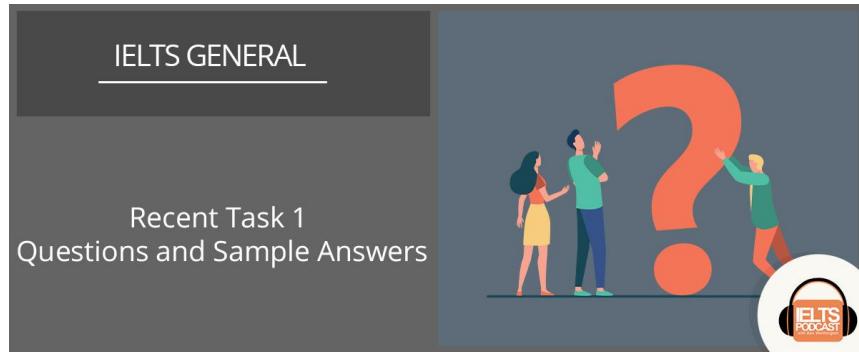
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your services and then I would describe the zippo like I said before and then obviously, I'm going to go to point three which is I'm looking for a sale price of around U.S. \$30 to U.S. \$40, okay? However, I would be prepared to accept less depending on your evaluation or your valuation-- sorry, depending on your valuation of the product. Kind regards, Benjamin Worthington.

Also, I guess in this case you would probably want to put a fake address of the letter owner in the left and then your address top right, but sometimes addresses are not required because officially if you're writing a letter, you will put both of your addresses there; the sender and the receiver.

Okay. So, if you are still struggling with IELTS Academic-- sorry, IELTS General Task 1, then we do have a course. This course is included in the Sentence Guide Jump to Band 7 or It's Free online writing course and in that course, we've got lists of vocabulary. We've got a methodology on how to memorize them. We've got a ton of sample letters for you to use. And



perhaps the most valuable part is the opportunity for you to write more General Task 1 letters and send them in and get that feedback.

That's it from me today. Remember the \$5 essay correction. We don't know how much longer that is going to be available, but if you are struggling, please get in contact. Remember you can sign up to our email newsletter and we can give you more advice there and you can get more special offers. So, thank you very much for listening. All the best with your IELTS preparation and good luck.

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