



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.

[Music]

Ben: Hello there IELTS students. In this tutorial, we are looking at some recent Task 2 questions seen by students doing the exam. They've done the exam recently. They saw these questions and they sent them in and some of them we collected from around the internet as well. And what I'm going to do is just jump in and I will give you how I would answer these, okay?

And I'll probably divulge as well like the thought process which I think is incredibly valuable and not only will it help you in your approach to answering Task 2 questions, but also you're going to get lots of ideas and potential answers that you could use if you're lucky and you do see these questions in your exam as well.



So, let's jump straight into it, but before that let me just tell you who I am and where I'm from. My name is Ben Worthington. I'm from England from Yorkshire, a small village near Manchester. And I haven't lived in the UK now for over 20 years. This is why I don't sound like a typical English person.

Just actually last night I was at the theater and I'm speaking to this Hungarian guy who has been living in England for the last 15 years and he's just over visiting his girlfriend and my girlfriend said to me-- she said he sounds more English than you and I was like great. Thank you for that.

However this happens when you leave your country of origin and you're no longer hanging around or speaking with people from your own country and especially if you're teaching English because when you teach English, you have to enunciate. You have to make your voice crystal clear. And this was especially true having a Yorkshire accent previously.



Anyway, that's how I got into teaching-- well, sorry. That's not how I got into teaching. That's how I lost my accent and I got into teaching just because first of all, I enjoyed it and then second, I decided to specialize in IELTS because with IELTS and test preparation, you can get results and if you're just teaching business English, conversation English, speaking English, whatever, it's really difficult to measure results and personally, I thrive by getting results. So, I decided to specialize in the IELTS.

And how did I improve my knowledge? Well, every single week, I was interviewing and asking experts and the good interviews got recorded and published. If it was useful information, I would apply it with my students and this is how I built up my knowledge and this is how I built the online course which has a guarantee of jump to band 7 or it's free.

Every week students are on this course. Every week we're correcting essays and the whole course is just designed around feedback and improvement. We give you the structures. We give you the



techniques and it's very straight forward. You can complete the course if you're working fast in about 10 days.

And I've seen students jump from band 6 to 7.5 in 10 days just through working through the course, applying what is taught in the tutorials, and also getting the feedback and finding out those mistakes where they're losing points.

And what we're going to do today is we're going to look at some recent questions and this is an exercise we've got in the online course and it's one of the first ones you do. And this just gets you into thinking mode and helps you discover your blind spots.

For example, some students especially the medical ones-- the doctors and nurses-- they're really good usually at some of like the science questions or the health technology questions, but then we get a subject such as economics and their mind goes blank. And this is quite common. And



this is why doing exercises like we've got in the online course just helps you discover your weak spots.

And for medical students just from personal experience I know if I ask them to write an essay about marketing, about international trade, sometimes it can be a little bit difficult and for other students maybe they're engineers writing an essay about science stuff is also quite straightforward or technology, but ask an engineer to write an essay-- I keep saying degree-- write an essay about let's see about crime could be a little bit more challenging. So, it's really important to find out where your weak spots are.

Anyway, let's jump into this first question. Crime rates will fall as advances in technology make it easier to detect and prevent crimes. To what extent do you agree or disagree? Let's say I'm going to say yes, I completely agree in body paragraph one. I'll probably totally agree and then in body paragraph 2, I will disagree.



Now, I'm mapping this out in my mind and I'm going to say-- first of all, I'm just going to develop the disagree side because that's what the ideas are coming for that area right now. I disagree that advances in technology will make it easier to detect and prevent crimes because even though the advances are moving quickly, there is also usually privacy legislation and encryption legislation which catches up just as quickly. Okay?

So, for example, you could due to GDPR rules which prevent the amount of tracking or allow for or the permission of websites tracking your movements, regulations like this could prevent law enforcement getting a full copy of your internet history, for example. Okay? I mean that would need to be developed. It's just brainstorming at this stage.

Now, I'm going to go back to the agree body paragraph. By the way, the smart students among you which I imagine is a lot of you will have noticed I haven't even thought about the introduction or the conclusion. We're just looking at answers. And anyway, all that the



introduction and the organization of the body paragraphs and the conclusion that's usually taken care of with a strong essay plan.

Anyway, let's see. I agree that crime rates will fall because of the advances in technology make it easier to detect and prevent. Okay. So let's see. I agree because we are getting-- advances in technology include the cost of this technology such as cameras. Cameras are becoming cheaper. They're getting more available and they're becoming more widespread.

Furthermore, because they're getting more widespread, the AI is getting more data and is becoming more sophisticated. And this is a very strong reason why it's easier for technology to detect and prevent crimes, okay? Now, I could talk a little bit more about AI and positive feedback loops and all of this, but for now, I think I've got two reasonably good solid groups of ideas that I can develop in both of my body paragraphs.



Moving on. Some people think employers should not care about the way their employees dress, but the quality of their work. Again, to what extent do you agree or disagree? Now, I could argue both sides of this and I think I will do actually.

So, I'm going to say I completely agree that how employees dress is important because it sets standards. 2) It can avoid conflicts if somebody wears a t-shirt that the other person finds offensive and thirdly, when you're working, you represent the image of your company, for example.

Again, these are not my personal thoughts. This is not what I believe. They are my personal thoughts, but it's not my beliefs. These are not my beliefs. These are just ideas to put down on the exam paper to pass the test. The idea is to put down on the paper that I can communicate quite effectively. They might not be the smartest ideas, but they're believable, they're logical, they're rational and I can communicate them easily.



So, that's why I will go with these ideas. Not because they're the smartest in the world, not because they're the most relevant, but because they're the easiest and the most logical for me and I can explain them quite effectively, okay?

So, we've got a few reasons there and I can develop that and I could easily develop one or two of those into examples. Developing your ideas into examples, by the way, is quite a valuable skill and we've got a whole module about this. It's quite straightforward. We've done previous tutorials about it before.

And once you do it, it's quite funny actually because you boost your confidence because you're like okay, actually I can think of anything. I can think of any idea as long as it's rational and now I've got the ability to transform it into an example which translates as basically the ability to develop your arguments which is a key factor in the IELTS band 7 criteria.



Okay. Let's get back to it. Some people think employers should not care about the way their employees dress, but the quality of work. To what extent do you agree or disagree? We've done agree in body paragraph one. Let's go to disagree. So, I disagree.

This is quite tricky actually because we've got a negative in the question. So, it said employers should not care about their dress, but the quality of the work. And I said I agree with that firstly, but my arguments were that they should care because when they're wearing their uniform, they are representing the company.

So, I would probably in my notes move this now-- my first set of arguments-- to this second body paragraph because they fit that I disagree that employers should not care and that's my body paragraph. And now I agree which is going to be my first body paragraph that employers should not care. Be careful with these tricks with the negatives and the agree and the disagree. They're quite subtle.



So, let's just get this straight. I am going to agree that employers should not care about the way their employees dress because 1) a lot of people work remotely, so it's irrelevant what they wear. Another reason is that 2) this is an old-fashioned approach and in most modern companies nowadays dress codes are relics of the past. What a beautiful collocation there; are relics of the past.

Thirdly-- and I'm going to circle back to the original question-- when an employer is not focusing on dress code, this allows them to focus on other areas more important such as the quality of work. And in a recent study, employers who measured the quality of work before even considering dress code outperformed those who didn't by three to one. Something like that, okay?

So, we've got our two body paragraphs there. Now probably what we could do is drop them into a framework and we've got some strong coherent body paragraphs. Even before that, we could



probably drop them into an introduction framework and a conclusion framework, but basically, once you've got the ideas, it's relatively straightforward if you've got the framework.

Okay. Next question: Some people think children should have the freedom to make mistakes. Now, my brain is automatically saying body paragraph one because that's a strong position, okay? That's a strong position and I could easily build a whole body paragraph around that. Also, I've seen while. So, I've got a contrast around the corner. ...while other people believe that adults should prevent children from making mistakes. Discuss both sides and give your opinion.

Again, quite straight forward. When you're playing poker, there's this concept called tells and you watch a person and a tell might be that their eyebrow flinches or that they move in their chair when they are bluffing or when they are lying and that's called a tell, okay? And from there you can basically guess what's going on.



And when I read this question the first sentence, I was like this is a tell. This is obviously going to be body paragraph one. I saw the while and I was like yes, there's going to be a contrasting point of view. This is obviously going to be discuss both sides and give your opinion. So, let's do exactly that.

Some people think children should have the freedom to make mistakes. I agree with this because if they're given the freedom to make mistakes, they are more likely to face the consequences or they're more likely to see the consequences of their actions and this probably speeds up learning.

Second, having the freedom to make mistakes will also probably improve their confidence, for example, if they are constantly being told that they cannot do this, they cannot do that because they'll make a mistake if they do it. Then they won't have that much confidence when it comes to operating in the real world. Okay?



So, two hypothetical ideas there and either of those ideas could be developed more maybe with a study, maybe with an example. That's body paragraph 1 taken care of. Body paragraph 2: while other people believe that adults should prevent children from making mistakes. I completely agree with that as well.

Adults should definitely prevent children from making mistakes because 1) the child is going to live longer. No, I'm just joking. Adults should prevent their children from making mistakes because the mistakes could be dangerous and severe and therefore obviously it could have serious long-term consequences.

2) It's not only the safety of the child making the mistake, but it could endanger the safety of other children in the vicinity. Vicinity is another word for area, but it just sounds a little bit more sophisticated than the standard phrase area.



And thirdly-- let's see-- it could boost children's confidence because they know that they can push it to the boundaries, they can push it to the limit without suffering all of the consequences. Now, that is a little bit of a contradiction of what I said in the previous paragraph, but both are right, okay?

Like a child can easily explore all their options and make mistakes within a given framework, within a certain room, for example, but that doesn't mean that the child is allowed to open the door, go outside on the road and continue making mistakes. So, I'd probably have to just say in the conclusion I'd say the framework has to be established by the parent and within that framework, a child is allowed to make mistakes, okay?

So, I would say both are correct-- both views are correct. Context would dictate the conditions and the frameworks. Something like that. So, if you get to discuss both sides and give your opinion, I think you would be in luck. I find them relatively straightforward.



Next question: Today many people do not know their neighbors in large cities. What problems does this cause? What could be done about this? Easy peasy lemon squeezy as we say in England. Today many people do not know their neighbors in large cities. What problems does this cause?

Well, it causes problems such as possible increased crime rate because nobody knows who did what. There's no recognition so this could embolden-- that's a nice phrase-- could embolden criminals to commit crimes in their own neighborhood. That's an idea. It could be developed. I could give you another idea. Let's see.

People do not know their neighbors in large cities. What problems does this cause? It causes a lack of community which could make it difficult to face disasters when they hit. For example, when a small Italian village in 2018 was flooded, the whole community pulled together and they managed to rescue the local zoo.



I don't know. That may sound fake. It probably is fake, but it sounded-- it was okay. It was realistic. The examiner is not going to jump onto Google and just check, but it was believable. There are small villages in Italy. There are rivers that get flooded in Italy. It's completely believable.

I'm not talking about a village in Morocco that got flooded which is a bit more difficult to believe because it's so dry, so arid there even though they've got the mountains, but generally speaking, we don't think of Morocco as having small villages that could be flooded. Okay? So, it's believable and it's a solid example and I've just developed my idea.

Next part of the question: what can be done about this? This is so open and it's so easy I think. Also, when you get these questions here's a tip. I always think about the government and we can make sure the government does everything.



So, we can say the government could produce a community engagement program. The government could organize local sports events to pull people together. The government could organize free adult education to bring the adults together who want to learn. This could create a sense of community and help to avoid issues mentioned previously. Something like that, okay? It's just so much easier if we just blame-- not blame, but just put solutions on the government.

Global warming: the government should be sorting this out. Crime in a neighborhood: the government should be sorting this out. The education of graduates: the government should be sorting this out. Just put the blame on the government and you're good. It's believable, it's realistic and you can be quite creative with this.

Well, let's go back. Today many people do not know their neighbors in large cities. This is the government's fault, obviously. What problems does this cause? We've mentioned possibly an



increase in crime, possibly more difficult to respond to natural disasters, so on and so forth. What can be done about this? The government could xyz, xyz, for example. Quite straightforward.

Now, we're coming to the end of this tutorial. If you found this advice practical and helpful and valuable, we have an entire course filled with tutorials like this that are just straightforward and just give you the knowledge that you need to get past this exam. And that's all we are here for is to get you through the exam.

I've seen other services online where you pay monthly and that just confuses me. Why would somebody want to pay a monthly subscription? That's just not in their interest to help you pass as fast as possible. Likewise, I've seen computer-graded essays and it's okay, but still it's not going to get you all the way past IELTS. It's not going to get you that band 7.

And you've heard on this show we've interviewed students who took the test 5, 6, 7. In all honesty, the highest amount of times was 21 by one student Mega, but it's up to you, okay? If



you just want fast action, want to be done with this and move forward, then have a look at our online course and make sure you sign up to the email list before because then you get special offers and discounts and coupon codes, but above all, just take action. You don't have to be one of those students who is taking IELTS after IELTS after IELTS after IELTS.

That's it from me. Have a great day and I wish you all the best and good luck with your IELTS exam.

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