INT 12 - Lesson 9 (Towns and Cities)

Speaking - Taiwanese Cities

Which city in Taiwan:

- is the best place for young people (why?)

- is the best place for elderly people (why?)

- is the best place to visit as a tourist (why?)

- is the safest place to live (why?)

- has the best food? (why?)

- has the friendliest people? (why?)

- has the best quality of life? (why?)

IELTS Speaking

PART 1

- Describe your hometown.
- What do you like most about your hometown?
- Is there anything you don't like about it?
- What kind of places do you like to visit in your hometown?
- When is the best time for a tourist to visit your hometown?
- Would you like to live in a different place in the future?

Reading, Vocabulary and Writing - Towns and Cities

TASK 1

Read the descriptions below and try to guess the name of each city.

1. Surrounded by mountains, _____ hosts a dynamic blend of modern infrastructure and **traditional** culture. This **compact** city has a mix of both **run-down** buildings and towering skyscrapers, which can be visited using its efficient metro system. Visitors can also explore **bustling** night markets, where delicious street food can be enjoyed.

2. As a **touristy** hotspot, _____ wows visitors with its **vibrant** night life, beautiful Buddhist temples and **bustling** markets. These include many floating markets, located to the west of the river that divides the centre of the city. It also includes some of the best street food in Asia.

3. Situated on the west coast, _____ is a **sprawling** city known best known for its film industry and beach lifestyle. Despite being one of the biggest cities in the world, it is also at risk from devastating forest fires. It will soon be only the third country in the world to host the Olympic Games for the third time.

4. As one of the nation's largest cities, _____ has undergone a remarkable transformation from a **run-down** industrial hub to a **contemporary** urban center. As a port city, visitors can take a ferry to a nearby island or explore its **vibrant** waterfront, home to various arts venues.

5. Despite being home to some **run-down** areas, _____ is famous as being a romantic city, renowned for its **picturesque** streets and iconic landmarks. It recently became only the second city to host the Olympic Games three times.

6. _____, with its **charming** atmosphere, is a city deeply connected with **traditional** culture. Whilst a bit **touristy** in places, this city is famous for both its beautiful gardens and historical temples. Although it is no longer the country's capital city, it is still a favourite place for wearing traditional costume.

7. _____ is a **cosmopolitan** city, offering stunning views of its **picturesque** harbour that connects it to some beautiful coastline and world-famous beaches. Whilst its architecture is more **contemporary** than most, it still has one of the most famous opera houses in the world.

8. As one of the country's oldest cities and the first capital, _____ is a **picturesque** gem filled with **traditional** architecture and many old buildings. This **charming** city's rich cultural heritage can be seen in its numerous ancient temples. It is also regarded as the best city to experience some of the nation's favourite dishes.

9. _____ is a **lively** and **compact** city, situated on a number of different islands, though most of it is connected to the mainland. However, the heart of the city, including its busy financial district, is situated on an island with its many steep streets. Its rich and colourful history ensures that eastern and western-style architecture exists together side-by-side.

10. Despite its strict laws, _____ is a **modern** and **cosmopolitan** city-state, where a variety of cultures come together. These can be experienced in the variety of different cuisines available and the distinct areas that are home to these different cultures. It is also known for its efficiency and spotlessly clean streets.

TASK 2

Look at the adjectives below that were used in the descriptions above and decide whether each word is positive, negative or neutral. Try to think of synonyms for each word.

bustling	charming	run-down	compact
lively	sprawling	traditional	contemporary
touristy	vibrant	picturesque	cosmopolitan

TASK 3

Now write a short description (three of four sentences) of a city that you know well. Don't write the name of the city and do not make it too easy or too difficult to guess the city.

IELTS Speaking

PART 2

> **Describe a big city you would like to visit.**
>
> **You should say:**
> **which big city you would like to visit**
> **how you would travel there**
> **what you would do there**
>
> **and explain why you would like to visit this big city.**

PART 3

The growth of cities

Example questions:
Why have cities increased in size in recent years?
What are the challenges created by ever-growing cities?
In what ways do you think cities of the future will be different to cities today?

Facilities in cities

Example questions:
Which facilities are most important to people living in cities?
How does shopping in small local shops differ from shopping in large city centre shops?
Do you think that children should always go to the school nearest to where they live?
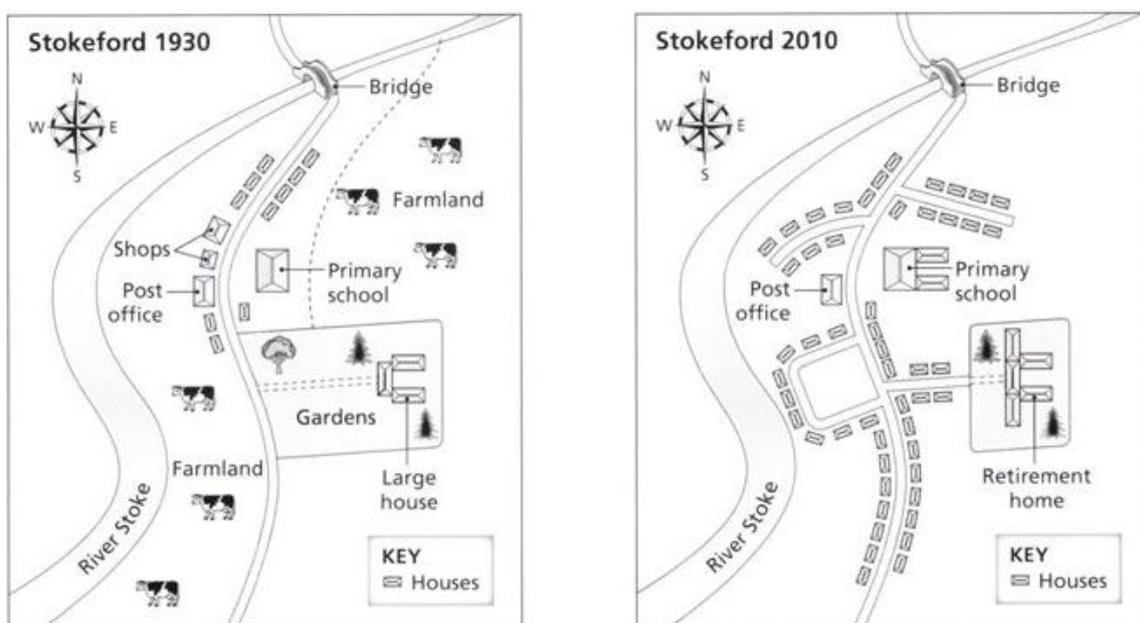
IELTS Writing (Part 1) – Maps

TASK 1

Look at the following part 1 writing task. What information do you need to include in your answer for this task? How will you organise your answer into paragraphs?

The maps below show the village of Stokeford in 1930 and in 2010.

Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 150 words.

TASK 2

How could you summarise the changes between the two maps above?

TASK 3

Write an introduction for the part 1 task above:

- introduce the map (*paraphrase from the question/don't copy from the question*)
- give an overview (*summarise the main changes between the two maps*)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

TASK 4

What kind of language do you think you will need to complete this task successfully?

-
-
-
-

TASK 5

Read the sample answer and answer the following questions:

- What information is given in the overview?

- Which part of the map is described in each paragraph?

- How many changes are described in each paragraph?

The maps show the changes in the village of Stokeford between 1930 and 2010. The village developed with the addition of more houses and roads but with less farmland.

In the north of the map, additional roads were built both to the east and west of the main road on an area that was once used as farmland. Along these roads, extra housing was constructed on each side. To the south of the westerly road, two shops were demolished but the post office remained unaltered. However, on the opposite side of the main road, the primary school building was extended.

Farmland also disappeared in the south of the map, where more houses were built along the main road. In the centre of the map, a new road, which loops back around to the main road, was added to the west of the main road. More houses were built along this new road. To the east of the main road, the existing path was turned into a road and the gardens surrounding the road disappeared. At the end of the road, the large house expanded and was converted into a retirement home.

TASK 6

Look at the following sample answer and identify any of the language below.

- vocabulary to show change
- vocabulary to show locations
- passive verb forms

What verb tense has been used? Why?

TASK 7

Add the words you found to show changes in the sample answer to the table below:

Make sth bigger/smaller	Move/Remove sth	Add sth	Change into sth else	No change

TASK 8

Now add these words to show change to the table above.

to enlarge	to plant (trees)	unchanged	unaltered	to clear (land)
to pull down	to cut down (trees)	undisturbed	to relocate	to make into
untouched	to knock down	to widen	to replace	undeveloped
to transform	to reduce (in size)	to renovate	to remove	to redevelop

Many of the verbs in the table above can also be used as nouns:

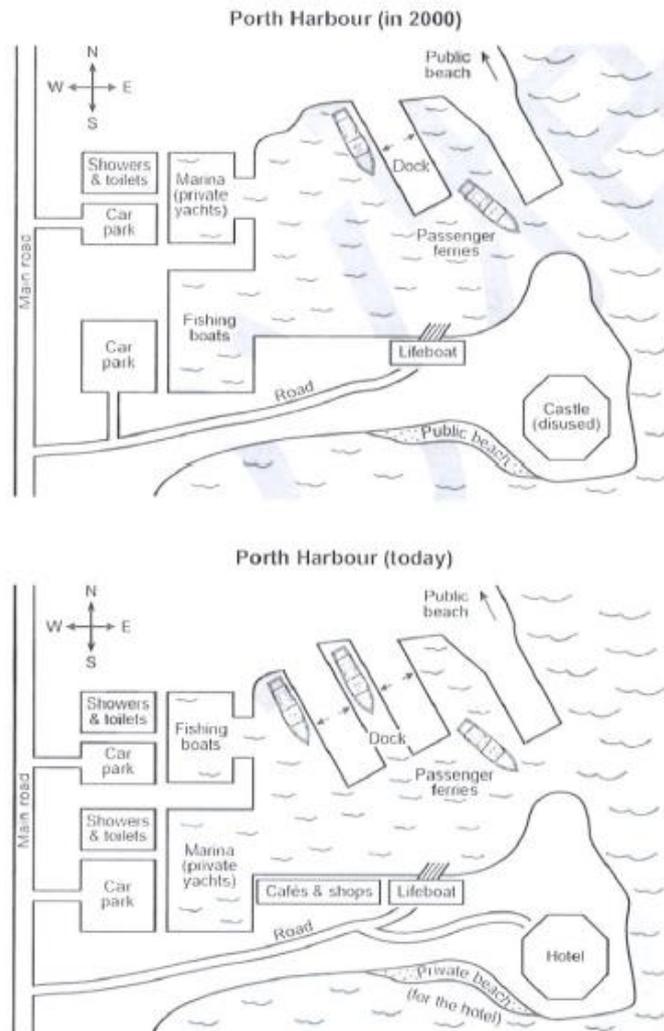|			
extension	disappearance	construction	development
expansion	cutting down (trees)	building	conversion
enlargement	clearing (land)	planting (trees)	redevelopment
reduction (in size)	demolition	removal	relocation
widening			renovation
			replacement
			transformation

TASK 9

Look at the part 1 map task below.

- What changes occurred? What stayed the same?

- What information would you include in an overview?

- How would you organise your answer into paragraphs?

- What verb tense would you use?

> *The plans below show a harbour in 2000 and how it looks today.*
>
> *Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.*

Write at least 150 words.

Porth Harbour (in 2000)

Porth Harbour (today)

TASK 10

Write a body paragraph to describe some of the changes between the two maps on the previous page.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

TASK 11

Look at your map and describe it to the teacher. Listen to him describe his map and circle any changes on your map that you can identify.
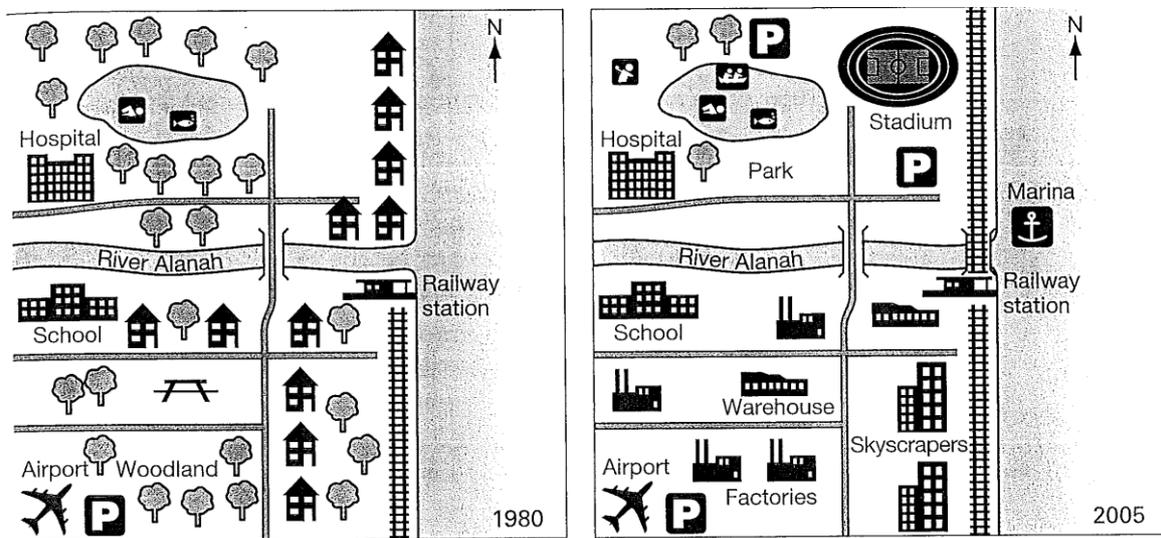
TASK 12

Now write two sentences to describe the changes:

SENTENCE 1: _____

_____

_____

_____

SENTENCE 2: _____

_____

_____

_____

TASK 13

Read the sample answer and see if your sentences were written accurately.

The map shows the developments which took place in the coastal town of Youngsville between 1980 and 2005. In 1980, the town was much greener residential area with a large number of trees and individual houses, but during the next 25 years the town experienced a number of dramatic changes to become more industrialised,

The most noticeable is that all of the trees south of the river Alanah were cut down, with all the houses along the railway line being knocked down and replaced by skyscrapers. Moreover, a new industrial estate with factories and warehouses sprang up around the airport and school. Only a few trees north of the river remained. The woodland was cleared to make way for a park, a golf course, and car parking facilities. Further developments were the construction of a stadium near the north-east corner of the lake, a new stretch of railway from the river running directly north and a marina built at the mouth of the river.

Language to Describe Locations

- in the north-east of …
- to the south of …
- in the northern part of …
- next to
- beside
- opposite
- alongside
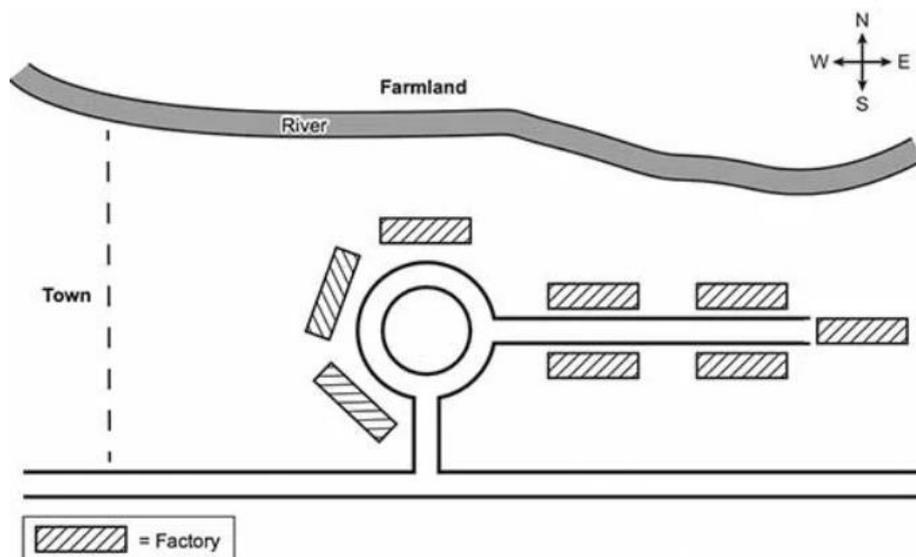- located by/near
- surrounded by

TASK 14 (Homework)

Look at the homework task below and decide:

- what information you could include in the overview

- what language you will use to describe the changes

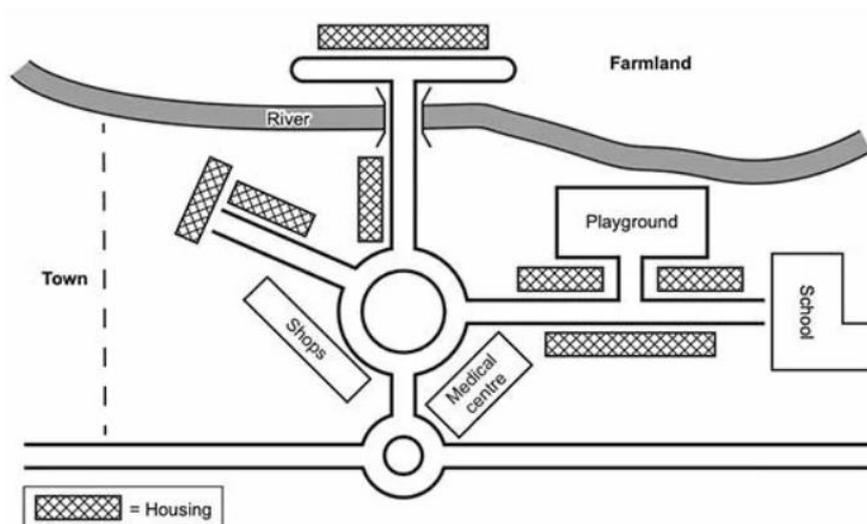- what verb tense you will use when describing the changes

The maps below show an industrial area in the town of Norbiton, and planned future development of the site.

Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Norbiton industrial area now

Planned future development

TEST 2, WRITING TASK 1

This is an answer written by a candidate who achieved a **Band 6.5** score.

The maps give the information about the improvement of the Porth Harbour from 2000 to today. The first impression is that the Harbour today made use of more areas than in the past.

It can be seen that there are several areas that still stay the same today as in 2000. These include the Carpark and the Showers and Toilets which are located in the north west of the map. However, one more Showers and Toilets are built between the two Carpark today. Besides, the Porth Harbour today also has one more Passenger ferries which right next to the left of the existing one from 2000. Moreover, an area for Cafés and shops is added next to the Lifeboat one. Another significant difference is the relocation of the Marina (private yachts) and the fishing boats areas. Today, the Marina is moved down to the place of the old Fishing boats area to have more space and vice-versa, the Fishing boats area is relocated at the old Marina area. The last noticeable change in this Harbour is the Construction in the South East. The disused old Castle was destroyed and a new Hotel was built there today and another Hotel Is also added in the Private beach area.

Overall, even that the harbour still keeps some areas unchanged, there are many reconstructions and improvements for the Porth Harbour today.

Here is the examiner's comment:

> Overall, this is a strong response. The candidate has covered the main features of the changes and has included an overview to summarise the changes, in the first and the last paragraph. The main details are accurate, apart from the addition of [*another Hotel*] in the private beach area.

> The reader can follow the ideas as they are logically organised. This is due to the linking words [*However | Besides | also | Another | Overall*] and cohesive features [*existing one | vice-versa*], but there are some errors.

> Vocabulary demonstrates some flexibility [*first impression | relocated | noticeable change*], but there is also some inaccuracy and repetition. The weakest area, though, is the use of grammatical structures. There is a mix of sentence forms, with some good complex use [*made use of | can be seen that | These include . . . which are*] but some errors, such as inaccurate use of the plural [*one more Showers | boats areas*] (because the candidate has copied the plural form from the question) and incorrect verb form [*is moved down | has been moved down*].

> To achieve a higher score, the candidate should present an overview to summarise the main stages, for example: *The changes to the harbour between 2000 and now focus on improvements that are targeted towards attracting visitors or tourists to the harbour, and include a new hotel, with private beach, more capacity for the passenger ferries and expanded facilities.*
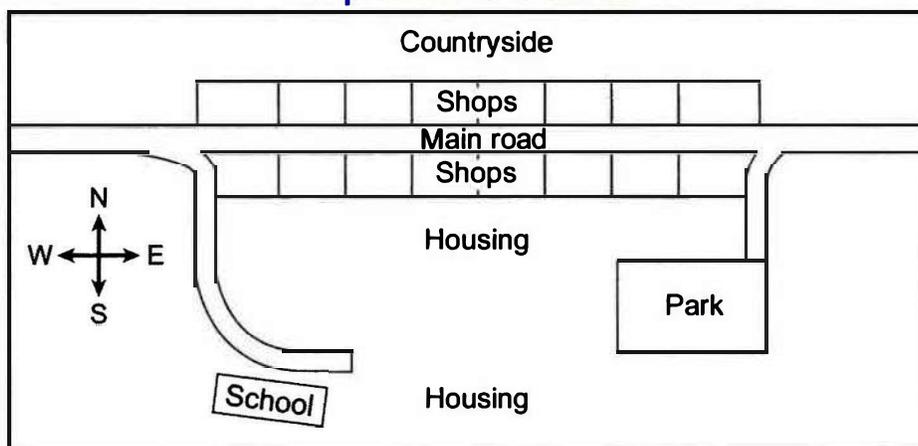
WRITING TASK 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The maps below show the centre of a small town called Islip as it is now, and plans for its development.
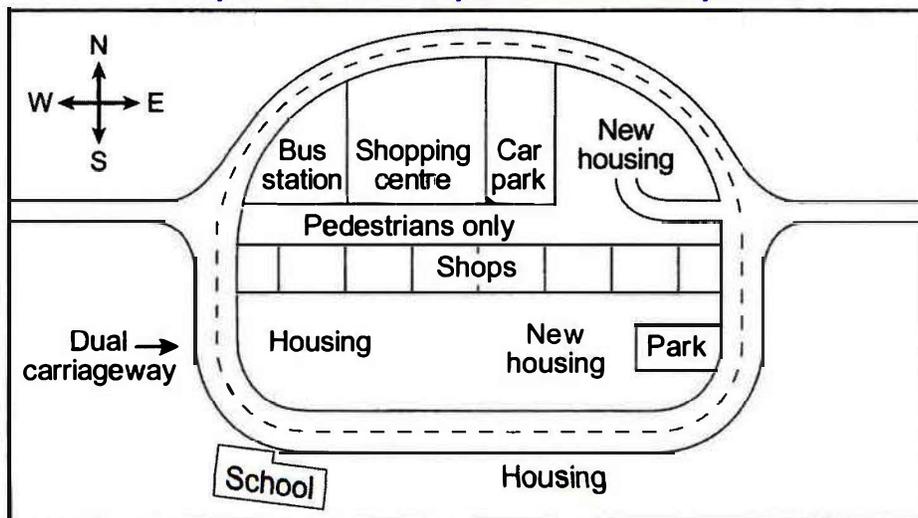
Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 150 words.

Islip town centre now

Islip town centre: planned development

TEST 6, WRITING TASK 1

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SAMPLE ANSWER

This is an answer written by a candidate who achieved a **Band 7.0** score. Here is the examiner's comment:

> The candidate covers all the key features and presents a clear overview of the developments planned. Information and ideas are logically organised and there is a clear progression throughout the response. A range of cohesive devices is used flexibly [*currently* | *Overall* | *First of all* | *therefore* | *Moreover* | *The next point* | *To sum up*]. Lexical choice shows flexibility and precision, and includes less common items [*modifications* | *predicting* | *grouped in a shopping mall*], though there is some inappropriate word choice [*deserves*]. A range of grammatical structures is used flexibly and accurately and error-free sentences are frequent.

The two maps of the centre of the towns of Islip give information about the city currently and in the future. Overall, a lot of modifications can be observed during the forecast development.

First of all, according to the current map the centre is close to a countryside. A main road deserves houses, a school, several shops and a park.

Looking more closely at the map predicting the future development of the city, a lot of modifications can be observed. The size of the centre will increase in an oval shape; therefore the countryside will disappear. Moreover, the single road will be replaced by a bigger dual carriageway. A pedestrian way will deserve the central area. New houses will be built with new facilities such as a bus station and a parking. The shops will be grouped in a shopping mall. The next point is the garden area which will be smaller. As the city will have more people the school will be bigger.

To sum up, between the actual map of Islip town centre and the future planned development, a lot of modifications are predicted. On the one hand the city will be bigger with more facilities. On the other hand the park will be reduced and the countryside will disappear. The city will have changed a great deal.

Guide to Writing Part 1 - Maps

1. UNDERSTAND THE MAP

Look at the map and check that you understand what it is showing you. Read the question and the title to help you understand. Look at the dates to help you understand if it involves changes in the past or planned changes for the future.

2. IDENTIFY THE MAIN FEATURES

Look at the map again and think about how to summarise it, e.g. can you divide the map into different locations? If not, is there a way to give a general summary of the changes without being too specific, e.g. general changes in building usage, access, number of new facilities, etc.?

3. SELECT DETAILS TO REPORT

For most map tasks, this should be quite easy as you will probably need to describe all the changes between the two maps. In order to make sure you write over 150 words, you need to think about how you can give as much detail as possible. Make sure you also give locations of the different changes.

4. DECIDE HOW TO ORGANISE ANSWER

You will also need to decide how many paragraphs you want to write for the details. In some cases, one might be enough, but for longer answers, you may need to think about how to separate the details into two paragraphs. You might use what you have written in your overview to help you decide how to organise your answer. You also probably want to write in an order that shows the relationship between different locations, e.g. clockwise, north to south, etc.

5. WRITE YOUR ANSWER

Use the information from 1) and 2) to write an introduction. You should:

- introduce the map (*paraphrase from the question – don't copy*)
- give an overview (summary) of the map (*but don't be too specific*)

Once you have finished your introduction, you will then use the information from 3) and 4) to write two or three paragraphs of detailed information.

6. CHECK YOUR ANSWER

Don't forget to leave a few minutes at the end to check your answer in case of any mistakes.

DO …	DON'T …
- think carefully about how to write an overview so that you summarise all the changes of the whole map without giving specific details. - give lots of details to make sure you write over 150 words. - use a range of language to describe changes and locations. - use passive voice (to be + 3rd form) where appropriate. - use verb forms appropriate to the time shown in the two maps. - report the changes accurately.	- change too many words when paraphrasing from the question for your first sentence. - take too long writing the first sentence. - change too many words in the maps (often there are no good synonyms). - try to add any extra information not already shown in the maps. - include a conclusion. You only need to summarise the main features once in your answer (in your overview in your introduction is the best place).

Speaking – My Neighbourhood

You are going to show me a map to talk about your neighbourhood. Tell me about:

- what facilities are in your local area
- which places you regularly visit
- what you like most about your area
- what you like least about your area

IELTS Speaking – Neighbourhoods

PART 1

Neighbours

- How well do you know the people who live next door to you?
- How often do you see them? [Why/Why not?]
- What kinds of problem do people sometimes have with their neighbours?
- How do you think neighbours can help each other?

Neighbours

- How often do you see your neighbours? [Why/Why not?]
- Do you invite your neighbours to your home? [Why/Why not?]
- Do you think you are a good neighbour? [Why/Why not?]
- Has a neighbour ever helped you? [Why/Why not?]

PART 2

> Describe the neighbourhood you lived in when you were a child.
>
> You should say:
> where in your town/city the neighbourhood was
> what kind of people lived there
> what it was like to live in this neighbourhood
>
> and explain whether you would like to live in this neighbourhood in the future.

IELTS Speaking Strategies – Part 3

In part 3 of the exam, you will be asked to give your opinion on a variety of questions. One way to extend your answers is by giving a general opinion followed by your own opinion:

General statement	Your opinion
For the most part, ...	but in fact ...
In general, ...	but I (don't) think ...
It's widely acknowledged that ...	but in my experience ...
Most people recognise that ...	but in my country ...
That depends.	and I agree that ...
That can vary according to the situation.	and because of that ...
In some circumstances, ...	For instance, I have noticed that ...
For some people ...	However, I believe ...

PART 3

Neighbours

Example questions:
What sort of things can neighbours do to help each other?
How well do people generally know their neighbours in your country?
How important do you think it is to have good neighbours?

> **Social interaction with neighbours**
>
> How much time do people spend interacting socially with their neighbours in your country? Do you think this is the same worldwide?
> How important do you think social interaction in local neighbourhoods is for building happy communities? Why?
> Has the development of blocks of flats had a positive or negative social effect in local communities? Why do you think that is?