

ISE I Reading and writing exam

Task 4 video transcript

00.06 Hello, I'm Tom Ottway and I offer academic support for Trinity. I'm going to help you prepare for the ISE I exams.

00.16 Right now we're going to look at task 4 for the ISE I reading and writing exam. This is the extended writing.

00.29 Let's look at a question here. It says write an article, 100-130 words, for the school website about the best ways to learn English.

00.46 You should: give examples of how you like to practice English and explain why these ways help you to improve your English.

01.00 It also says you should plan your article before you start writing. Think about what you want to say and make some notes to help you in this box.

01.14 We are going to look at Candidate A, a real student's answer here. You will see that there are no notes here, we do not include them here because no marks are given. However, let's read Candidate A's essay.

01.41 'Do you want to improve your English skills? I will show you my favourite ways to do it and why they help me.'

01.53 'I like practising my English skills looking for the lyrics of my favourite songs. This is the best way for me of learning vocabulary because I love singing and it helps me to remember new words. Also, I usually watch films with the language and subtitles turned to English. These are good ways of practising your pronunciation and listening skills.'

02.25 'Nevertheless, I think that travelling to an English spoken country is the best way to practice. There if you are looking for a job or you want to eat out, you will have to deal with English, You cannot use your mother tongue. I usually go to London once a year and my English level always improves a lot. I would recommend that everybody try it.'

02.58 So do you think this was a good response? Yes, it was. What we're going to do now is have a look at the scores.

03.10 For task fulfilment (did you actually answer the question, giving examples of how you like to practice English and explaining why these ways help you improve you English) this candidate scored four out of four. It was very clear

03.34 For organisation and structure, so the paragraphs and the order, also four out of four. So this was very, very good

03.47 And finally the language control – the grammar, the punctuation, the vocabulary – also four out of four.

03.57 Let's have a look now at what the examiner said and I'm going to explain to you in simple English what this means.

04.10 So task fulfilment, the examiner says there is an 'excellent achievement of the communicative aim'. So the aim here was to write an article and talk to the reader. The candidate 'gives three clear examples of how he or she likes to practice English and supports these ideas with detailed reasons'.

04.44 So there were very clear reasons regarding how these ways of learning help him or her to improve.

04.54 And there is an 'excellent awareness of the writer/reader relationships'. That means that when the candidate is writing they're thinking about who is reading. It's an article so it needs to be quite informal. The examiner says you can see this in the opening sentence which is 'Do you want to improve your English skills?'. It's a question. 'I'll show you my favourite ways to do it and why they help me'. So it's talking directly to the reader and the last sentence 'I usually go to London once a year and my English level always improves...I would recommend that everybody try it'. So a strong opening and closing sentence.

05.50 Now, what about the organisation and structure? The text is really well organised, 'very effectively with the ideas sequenced'. So that means that they are one, then the next one, then the next one in a very clear fashion.

06.09 The ideas are clearly presented in helpful paragraphs. So the paragraphs were really easy to read and they develop after saying one thing they go further and say another thing.

06.26 Good cohesive devices, such as 'also' and 'nevertheless'. 'Also' gives another example and 'nevertheless' is a very good way of saying however.

06.46 The referencing is very effective so it is very well organised and it makes it easy for the reader to follow the text.

07.08 Remember the examiners will be thinking about your text exactly in this way.

07.14 And finally language control. 'There is a good range of grammar and lexis' – so that means that there are lots of different examples of grammar not just one phrase repeated again and again. And they use this effectively for this task.

07.35 So 'the level of accuracy is very high', so there are not many mistakes and there are some small errors, minor errors for example 'looking for' it should be 'looking at' however 'these errors do not impede', they do not stop, understanding at all. It's very easy to understand

08.03 Also the spelling and punctuation the capital letters, the commas are excellent throughout in all the text.

08.13 So this will give you a really good idea of what you can also do and maybe you can take some of the ideas here like starting with a question, and finishing with a strong sentence as well and in between having good paragraphs and changing the direction so saying 'this is also true however this is something a bit different'.

08.41 So you should now have some really good ideas for when you need to write an article in task 4. Good luck!