



STUDY NOTES

EPISODE 4: SENTENCE TYPES

SENTENCE TYPES

In your writing you will be giving reasons, stating the results of a situation, linking statements which contrast with one another and showing other relationships between statements in a sentence. Using different structures and sentence types to express these kinds of ideas adds variety to your writing and also demonstrates the **grammatical range** of your language, a criterion by which your writing is assessed.

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

There are four types of sentence structures in English:

- simple
- compound
- complex
- compound-complex

IELTS Tip

Use a variety of sentence types and structures in your writing.

Include a range of simple, compound and complex sentences as well as concession, modals, cause and effect and other grammatical structures.

These features make your writing effective, formal and more interesting.

A **simple sentence** is also called an independent clause.

Simple sentence	
Pollution is a serious problem in cosmopolitan areas.	
subject	verb
pollution	is

A **compound sentence** consists of 2 or more simple sentences and a conjunction.

Compound sentence	
2 simple sentences	Pollution is a serious problem in cosmopolitan areas. The government is addressing the issue.
compound sentence	Pollution is a serious problem in cosmopolitan areas <u>but</u> the government is addressing the issue.
but – coordinating conjunction expressing contrast	

A **complex sentence** consists of an independent and a subordinate clause.

Complex sentence	
<u>Although</u> the government is addressing the issue of pollution, it is still a serious problem in cosmopolitan areas.	
Although – subordinating conjunction expressing concession	



A **compound-complex sentence** consists of 2 or more independent clauses and 1 or more subordinate clauses.

Compound-complex sentence		
<u>Although</u> the government is addressing the issue of pollution, it <u>is</u> still a serious problem in cosmopolitan areas <u>and</u> <u>affects</u> people's health.		
although – subordinating conjunction expressing concession		
and – conjunction which joins two independent clauses		
it <u>is</u> still a serious problem in cosmopolitan areas	<u>and</u>	it <u>affects</u> people's health.

Connecting your ideas within sentences shows how the meanings of the clauses are related. For example, they may be contrasting ideas, providing a reason, adding another example or cause.

Using a variety of sentence structures to express these kinds of meanings provides an indication of the **grammatical range** of your language skills and is a criterion by which your writing is assessed.

Here is a Writing Task 2 question and a sample body paragraph which respond in part to the question.

Write about the following topic.

Society's responsibility towards the environment today is reflected in the measures taken in disposing of waste through recycling.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your knowledge or experience.

The body paragraph below presents opposing arguments to the topic that **society's responsibility towards the environment is reflected in the measures taken in disposing of waste through recycling.**

Body Paragraph

(1) On the other hand, some manufacturers continue to ignore the impact that the tonnes of waste generated by their goods has on the environment. (2) Two of the most obvious sources are discarded computers and electronic devices. (3) The component parts of these kinds of products cannot be reused nor recycled and do not breakdown in landfill tips where they are dumped. (4) Another major waste problem is packaging. (5) The shelves of supermarkets are full of items which are excessively packaged. (6) Though the contents of these products need to be preserved, protected and secured, triple wrapping is unjustifiable and wasteful.



There are 6 sentences in the above paragraph. There is also a range of structures which are used to express and connect ideas. Each of these sentences is considered separately.

Sentence 1	topic sentence of the paragraph (TS)		
On the other hand, some manufacturers continue to ignore the impact that the tonnes of waste generated by their goods has on the environment.			
complex sentence	independent clause + subordinate clause		
independent clause	subject	verb + to-infinitive	object
	some manufacturers	continue to ignore	the impact
subordinate clause	providing additional information using the relative pronoun that		
	that the tonnes of waste generated by their goods has on the environment		
relative pronoun that	connects further information to the noun in the main (independent) clause, namely the impact to which it is referring		

Sentence 2	first supporting sentence (SS ₁) – providing the sources of the goods		
Two of the most obvious sources are discarded computers and electronic devices.			
simple sentence	complement	verb (one verb)	subject
	Two of the most obvious sources	are	discarded computers and electronic devices.
Explanation	The complement, <u>two of the most obvious sources</u> , is in front position because it relates directly to the information in the previous sentence, namely garbage generated by their <u>goods</u> ; discarded computers and electronic devices are the sources and the goods. Discarded computers and electronic devices is new information and new information, which is the subject, comes after the verb in this type of structure. The old information, which is <u>two of the most obvious sources</u> , comes first.		

Sentence 3		developing sentence (DS)	
The component parts of these kinds of products cannot be reused nor recycled and do not breakdown in landfill tips where they are dumped.			
compound-complex sentence			
compound sentence		one subject	two verbs
		The <u>component parts</u> of these kinds of products	cannot be reused nor recycled <u>and</u> do not breakdown ...
coordinating conjunction and		joins two pieces of information which relate to the same subject, namely component parts	
verbs			
cannot be reused nor recycled		passive structure (+ be + participle) using a negative modal to express 'impossibility' cannot	
do not breakdown		negative auxiliary verb do not + phrasal verb breakdown	
Passive structures are used for a more formal and more impersonal style of writing.			
complex part of the sentence – subordinate clause			
... where they are dumped.			
subordinating clause		The subordinating clause is expressed using a relative adverb where to indicate 'place'. It refers to landfill.	



Sentence 4	second supporting sentence (SS ₂) – providing another source		
Another major waste problem is packaging.			
simple sentence	complement	verb (one verb)	subject
	Another major waste problem	is	packaging.
Explanation	The use of this structure is the same as in sentence 2. The complement, Another major waste problem, is in front position because it refers back to information in the topic sentence, namely waste generated by their goods. So, the problem is stated first and then identified in the sentence, i.e. ordering the information; packaging is the subject – it is new information which comes after the verb in this type of structure.		

Sentence 5	first developing sentence (DS _{2.1})		
The shelves of supermarkets are full of items which are excessively packaged.			
complex sentence	independent clause	+	subordinate clause
independent clause	subject	verb	object
	The shelves of supermarkets	are	full of items
subordinate clause	relative pronoun which refers back to the noun (object) items		
	... which are excessively packaged.		

Sentence 6	second developing sentence (DS _{2.2})		
Though the contents of these products need to be preserved, protected and secured, triple wrapping is unjustifiable and wasteful.			
complex sentence	subordinate clause + independent clause		
subordinate clause	subordinating conjunction though used to express a concession		
	Though the contents of these products need to be preserved, protected and secured ...		
independent clause	subject	verb	object
	triple wrapping	is	unjustifiable and wasteful.

The **grammatical range** of sentence types and structures used in this body paragraph is varied. Short simple sentences were used to emphasise the main ideas, while the complex and compound sentences incorporated more information allowing the writer to expand and develop the ideas more fully. Together this made the writing effective, formal and interesting.

In addition to grammatical range, the number of errors in grammar and punctuation is also measured. This provides an indication of your proficiency or **grammatical accuracy**. It is also a criterion by which your writing is assessed.

Use a variety of sentence types to make your writing more interesting. The same idea can be expressed in different sentences. For example:

simple sentence	Happiness is difficult to define.
Compound sentence	Happiness is difficult to define but it's not impossible.
Complex sentence	Happiness is difficult to define because it can mean different things.
Complex sentence	Happiness is difficult to define because it means different things to different people.
Complex sentence	Though difficult to define, I think happiness lies in personal success.
Complex sentence	Because happiness can be interpreted in different ways, it is difficult to give a definition.