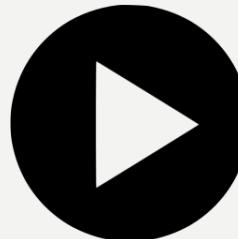


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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Subject-verb agreement

BASIC RULES

EXPLANATION

- **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** is a very important feature of IELTS Writing and IELTS Speaking.
- Candidates who frequently make errors with **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** do not usually get a **GRAMMAR** grade higher than 6.0 in IELTS Writing and IELTS Speaking.
- There are a few basic rules for **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT**.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

BASIC RULES

Singular and uncountable nouns are used with singular verbs:

- **The region needs** a great deal of investment.
- **A marine mammal** which **consumes** plastic may be unable to reproduce.
- There **is** at least one major **advantage**.
- **The weather has** a serious impact on what we can grow.
- **Water is** becoming increasingly scarce.
- **Patience is** one of the qualities which a social worker needs.
- **My best friend doesn't** always **tell** the truth.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

BASIC RULES

Plural nouns are used with plural verbs:

- If **temperatures** **rise**, many species might become extinct.
- **Environmentalists** **believe** that action must be taken immediately.
- **Tourists** often **contribute** to the problem.
- **Workers** who **live** in cities are susceptible to high levels of stress.
- The **benefits** almost certainly **outweigh** the drawbacks.
- There **are** several major **advantages**.
- **People** **don't** always **tell** the truth.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

BASIC RULES

With a long/complex subject, the verb agrees with the main noun:

- **The significance of the arguments is obvious.**
- **The causes of pollution are usually connected to industry.**
- **The main reason for the increasing number of refugees is poverty.**
- **The things which annoy me most about living in a city are the overcrowded buses and the poor-quality air.**
- **Several experts in the field of human behaviour believe that everything we do is motivated by self-interest.**
- **The reasons why individuals break the law are complicated.**
- **The discovery of several new chemical compounds has revolutionised our understanding of the subject.**

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

BASIC RULES

When the subject is a clause, we usually use a singular verb:

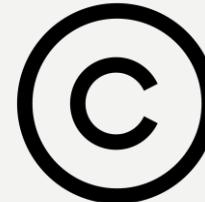
- **Living in a huge city is often quite stressful.**
- **To understand students with special educational needs takes a long time.**
- **The fact that journalists can write whatever they want is something which we should cherish.**
- **The way in which we deal with this issue is dependent upon various factors.**
- **Whatever we do next is certain to be criticised.**

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

BASIC RULES

The verb needs to agree with the subject even if the subject appears first:

- Although there are **arguments** about the effectiveness of so-called alternative energy sources, there **is** little doubt that using non-renewable resources is unsustainable.
- Not only **is** fruit good for health, it is also tasty.
- So important **is** this issue, that we should devote all of our resources to dealing with it.
- Seldom **do** companies appoint women to senior roles.
- Only in certain circumstances **do** orcas behave aggressively.

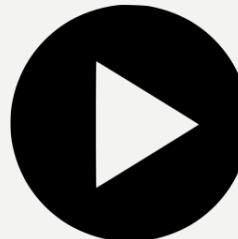


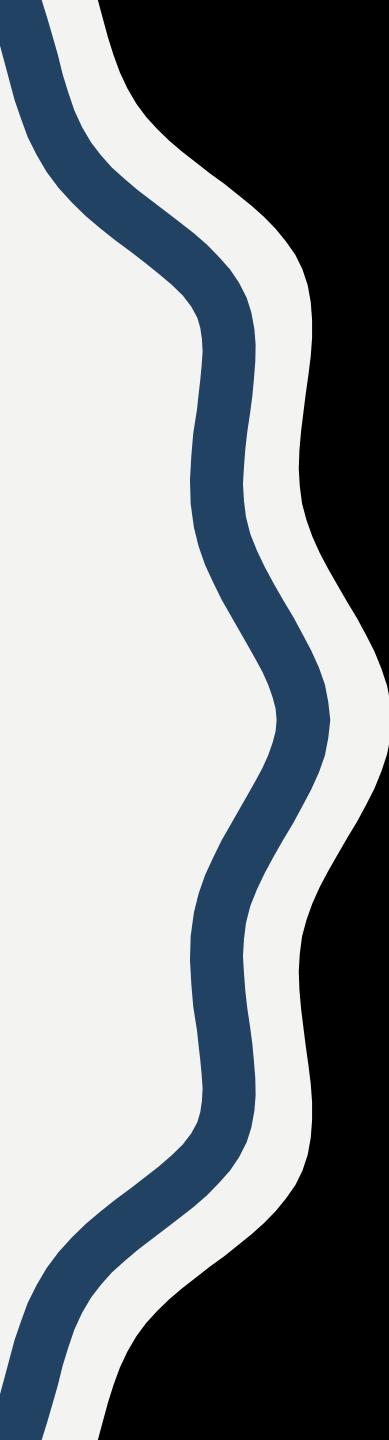
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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Subject-verb agreement

COLLECTIVE NOUNS

EXPLANATION

- **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** is a very important feature of IELTS Writing and IELTS Speaking.
- Candidates who frequently make errors with **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** do not usually get a **GRAMMAR** grade higher than 6.0 in IELTS Writing and IELTS Speaking.
- It is important to understand how **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** works with **collective nouns**.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT COLLECTIVE NOUNS

With collective nouns we usually use a singular verb:

- **The army is** responsible for the safety of its soldiers.
- **The audience at a concert plays** a surprisingly important role in helping the musicians to perform at their best.
- **A new class (of students) often needs** to spend time doing so-called ‘ice-breaker’ activities, so that its members can begin to bond.
- **A college does not simply need** to focus on making sure that students pass exams. Its duties extend far further.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT COLLECTIVE NOUNS

With collective nouns we usually use a singular verb:

- When a local community comes together, it can become very powerful: there have been cases in which local people have worked together to prevent businesses from building power-stations and polluting factories in the area.
- If a company/business struggles to make a profit, it very often considers making staff redundant.
- Some suggest that the electorate is actually gullible and can easily be persuaded to vote for populist politicians.
- If the crowd starts chanting racist abuse at a footballer, the match should be abandoned and played again later, behind closed doors.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT COLLECTIVE NOUNS

With collective nouns we usually use a singular verb:

- **A family** which **finds** it hard to look after its children should be supported by the state. The parents may be lazy or incompetent, but it would be wrong to punish the children for this.
- **The next generation** **has** to deal with the consequences of our selfishness, stupidity and greed.
- **The government** clearly **has** a great deal of power. If it wishes to change the law, it **has** the ability to do so.
- **It is said that the population** **is** increasingly materialistic, and that people are driven by the desire to own possessions.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT COLLECTIVE NOUNS

With collective nouns we usually use a singular verb:

- **The press is** still an important part of society. Many adults still read newspapers, although they are more likely to do this online these days.
- **The public seems** interested in celebrity gossip. I find this state of affairs extremely worrying.
- **The university needs** to ensure that students do not submit plagiarised work.
- Some argue that **The United Nations now plays** a far less significant role than it used to.
- **The United States remains** one of the world's most powerful nations.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COLLECTIVE NOUNS

We can sometimes use these collective nouns with plural verbs when we want to focus on all of the individual members:

- **The family are** furious about the way in which they have been treated. (= all the members of the family)
- **The next generation are** going to blame us for the state of the planet. (= each person in the next generation)
- At the end of a concert, **the audience stand** up and **applaud**. (= each individual member of the audience)
- When a goal is scored, **the crowd usually go** wild. (= each individual person in the crowd)



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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Subject-verb agreement

COMPLEX RULES (PART 1)

EXPLANATION

- **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** is a very important feature of IELTS Writing and IELTS Speaking.
- Candidates who frequently make errors with **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** do not usually get a **GRAMMAR** grade higher than 6.0 in IELTS Writing and IELTS Speaking.
- Understanding and using **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** can be extremely tricky. We need to be careful with words based on **every-, any-, some-** and **no-**, as well as phrases connected by other words such as **conjunctions**, and **confusing singular/plural nouns**.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

With words based on every- any- some- no- we use a singular verb:

- I suppose that **everyone has** broken the law at one time or another.
- Almost **everyone surveyed believes** that that the role of social media tends to be negative.
- **Everybody has** both positive and negative character traits.
- It is worth remembering that **everything is** temporary and that **nothing is** permanent.
- **Something needs** to be done about the dreadful situation.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

With words based on **every**- **any**- **some**- **no**- we use a singular verb:

- **Somebody** **has** to take control of the situation.
- **Anybody** who **lives** in a large city will be extremely familiar with the problems associated with overcrowding.
- One thing is sure and **nothing** **is** surer: the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.
- **Nobody** **wants** to take responsibility for the situation.

But be careful!

- **Some people** **believe** that anything is possible, but I am afraid that I cannot entirely share this optimistic outlook.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

With **every** and **each** and a singular noun we usually use a singular verb:

- **Every citizen needs to be given the opportunity to vote.**
- **Every exam I do seems really hard.**
- **Each athlete has to take a blood test before the competition begins.**
- **Each member of a family has responsibilities.**
- **Each and every person has to take action.**
- **Every single person I know is a vegetarian.**

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

Phrases connected by and can sometimes use a singular verb:

- **As far as I am concerned, bread and water is all that prisoners should be given.**
- **The buying and selling of drugs is illegal, but it is incredibly widespread.**
- **The ice and snow causes problems for drivers.**
- **Borrowing and copying another student's work is considered inappropriate in many universities.**
- **Reading salacious articles and gossiping about celebrities actually causes more problems.**

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

With either...or... and neither...nor... the verb agrees with the second item:

- Either ordinary people or The President has to act.
- Either the teacher or the students are to blame.
- Neither the government nor individuals have the power to change the situation.
- Neither members of parliament nor the Prime Minister is able to resolve the crisis.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

Some nouns are usually plural (it is very unusual to see them as singular nouns), and they therefore have a plural verb:

- My **personal belongings** **have** great sentimental value for me.
- **Clothes** are very personal, and I generally wouldn't buy them as a present.
- **Congratulations** **are** in order.
- **Earnings** **tend** to be higher in the city than in the countryside.
- As a result of globalisation, **goods** **are** now transported all around the world.
- The **outskirts** of the city **are** pleasant.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

Some nouns are usually plural (it is very unusual to see them as singular nouns) and they therefore have a plural verb:

- A company's **premises** reflect the ethos of the organisation.
- Peaceful **surroundings** are vital for some people. They cannot concentrate in a busy office or noisy house.
- **Savings** give you a degree of security.
- The **police** are often accused of having a poor attitude towards members of ethnic minorities.
- **Staff** often **work** harder when they have received a pay rise.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

Some nouns take a singular verb even though they end in **-s**:

- The **news** generally **makes** people feel worried or sad. Seeing stories about death, destruction, poverty and misery is incredibly depressing.
- **Gymnastics** **is** often televised.
- **Athletics** **tends** to be popular in the summer.
- **Diabetes** **leads** to the deaths of millions each year.
- **Measles** **was** thought to have been almost eradicated in the country, but has become more widespread again of late.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

Some nouns take a singular verb even though they end in -s:

- **Physics is** studied by far more boys than girls.
- **Statistics requires** a certain type of intelligence.
- **Linguistics has** a strong social element.
- **Economics is** often, quite wrongly, regarded as a science these days.
- **Mathematics is** one of the hardest subjects for young people to grasp.

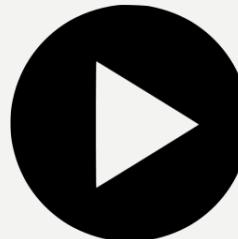


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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Subject-verb agreement

COMPLEX RULES (PART 2)

EXPLANATION

- **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** is a **very important** feature of IELTS Writing and IELTS Speaking.
- Candidates who frequently make errors with **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** do not usually get a **GRAMMAR** grade higher than 6.0 in IELTS Writing and IELTS Speaking.
- Understanding and using **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT** can be extremely tricky. We need to be careful with phrases including of.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

With some phrases with **of** we usually use a singular verb with a plural noun. (Using a plural verb is not incorrect but it is less correct):

- **Hardly/Scarcely/Barely any of the politicians knows what it is like to be hungry.**
- **Each of the possible solutions has some merit.**
- **Either of the options being considered is feasible.**
- **Neither of the proposals is likely to benefit local residents.**
- **None of those questioned has ever studied a foreign language.**

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

With some phrases with **of** we usually use a singular verb with an uncountable noun:

- **Hardly/Scarcely/Barely any of the water is drinkable.**
- **All of the information which you read online has to be treated with a great deal of scepticism.**
- **Most of the news online seems to be quite negative.**
- **A great deal of the behaviour of young children is aimed at getting the attention of adults.**
- **A lot of the air which we breathe is quite badly contaminated.**
- **Some of the evidence that global warming has been caused by human activity is contested.**

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

With the number of / the proportion of / the percentage of / the quantity of we use a singular verb:

- The number of tourists visiting the country has risen.
- There was a sharp fall in the number of applications/applicants for university places last year.
- According to the statistics provided, the number of cases of measles has remained relatively constant over the past decade.
- The number of car crashes is slightly lower than it was a decade ago.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

With the number of / the proportion of / the percentage of / the quantity of we use a singular verb:

- The proportion/percentage of people living in the countryside has fallen substantially.
- The percentage of people who own a car has risen.
- The proportion of respondents who said that they supported the government was extremely low.
- The quantity of people who do their shopping online has gone up sharply.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

After one of and a plural noun we usually use a singular verb:

- **One of the biggest/major causes of death amongst professionals is heart disease.**
- **One of the reasons why many people move to the countryside is to reduce stress.**
- **One of the things which really bothers me about school is the amount of homework.**
- **One of the campaigners who has inspired me most is Lilian Bilocca.**

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

When we use some phrases which indicate quantity with a plural noun, we use a plural verb. This is because the subject of the sentence is the noun which follows of:

- **A number of students have complained about the poor quality of food in the college canteen.**
- **A lot of us find work quite boring.**
- **A multitude of problems have been caused by the recent changes in weather patterns.**
- **The majority of companies are struggling to make a profit in these difficult trading conditions.**

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

COMPLEX RULES

When we use some phrases which indicate quantity with a plural noun, we use a plural verb. This is because the subject of the sentence is the noun which follows of:

- Some of my colleagues are considering early retirement.
- All of the reasons given are valid.
- Plenty of people prefer not to go abroad for their holidays.
- A range of explanations have been given.
- A variety of factors lead undergraduates to drop out of their university courses.



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PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following sentences. Try to complete each sentence with a verb which agrees with the subject:

1. People **d**_____ not always tell the truth.
2. Those who **l**_____ in cities often **h**_____ to deal with a huge amount of stress.
3. The causes of pollution **a**_____ numerous.
4. The benefits certainly **ou**_____ the drawbacks.
5. The things which **ann**_____ me most about living in a city **a**_____ the noise and the poor air.
6. The way in which we **d**_____ with disappointment is often connected to the way we **h**_____ been brought up.
7. Although there **a**_____ arguments about the effectiveness of so-called alternative energy sources, there is little doubt that using non-renewable resources **i**_____ unsustainable.
8. Seldom **d**_____ companies **appo**_____ women to senior positions.

ANSWERS

1. People **do** not always tell the truth.
2. Those who **live** in cities often **have** to deal with a huge amount of stress.
3. The causes of pollution **are** numerous.
4. The benefits certainly **outweigh** the drawbacks.
5. The things which **annoy** me most about living in a city **are** the noise and the poor air.
6. The way in which we **deal** with disappointment is often connected to the way we **have** been brought up.
7. Although there **are** arguments about the effectiveness of so-called alternative energy sources, there is little doubt that using non-renewable resources **is** unsustainable.
8. Seldom **do** companies **appoint** women to senior positions.

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following list of collective nouns:

- the population
- the audience
- the army
- The United Nations
- the press
- the electorate

Put a collective noun from the list in each of the following sentences:

1. _____ is responsible for the safety of its soldiers.
2. _____ at a concert plays a surprisingly important role in helping the musicians to perform at their best.
3. Some suggest that _____ is actually gullible and can easily be persuaded to vote for populist politicians.
4. It is said that _____ is increasingly materialistic, and that people are driven by the desire to own possessions.
5. _____ is still an important part of society. Many adults still read newspapers, although they are more likely to do this online these days.
6. Some argue that _____ now plays a far less significant role than it used to.

ANSWERS

1. **The army** is responsible for the safety of its soldiers.
2. **The audience** at a concert plays a surprisingly important role in helping the musicians to perform at their best.
3. Some suggest that **the electorate** is actually gullible and can easily be persuaded to vote for populist politicians.
4. It is said that **the population** is increasingly materialistic, and that people are driven by the desire to own possessions.
5. **The press** is still an important part of society. Many adults still read newspapers, although they are more likely to do this online these days.
6. Some argue that **The United Nations** now plays a far less significant role than it used to.

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following sentences. Choose the correct verb:

1. I suppose that everyone **has/have** broken the law at least once.
2. It is worth remembering that everything **is/are** temporary and that nothing **is/are** permanent.
3. Each and every member of the company **has/have** responsibilities.
4. Each athlete **has/have** to take blood tests on a regular basis.
5. The buying and selling of drugs **is/are** illegal, but it is incredibly widespread.
6. Borrowing and copying another student's work **is/are** considered inappropriate in many universities.
7. My personal belongings **has/have** great sentimental value for me.
8. The outskirts of the city **is/are** pleasant.
9. Gymnastics **is/are** a wonderful sport.
10. Measles **is/are** an incredibly serious illness.

ANSWERS

1. I suppose that everyone **has** broken the law at least once.
2. It is worth remembering that everything **is** temporary and that nothing **is** permanent.
3. Each and every member of the company **has** responsibilities.
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8. The outskirts of the city **are** pleasant.
9. Gymnastics **is** a wonderful sport.
10. Measles **is** an incredibly serious illness.

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following sentences. Choose the correct verb:

1. One of the major causes of death amongst the elderly **is/are** pneumonia.
2. The majority of companies **struggles/struggle** to make a profit.
3. A variety of factors **cause/causes** unemployment.
4. Some of my colleagues **is/are** incredibly lazy.
5. The percentage of people living in the countryside **has/have** risen markedly of late.
6. The quantity of people who shop online **has/have** gone up recently.

ANSWERS

1. One of the major causes of death amongst the elderly **is** pneumonia.
2. The majority of companies **struggle** to make a profit.
3. A variety of factors **cause** unemployment.
4. Some of my colleagues **are** incredibly lazy.
5. The percentage of people living in the countryside **has** risen markedly of late.
6. The quantity of people who shop online **has** gone up recently.

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following IELTS essay. Choose the verbs which agree with their subjects:

Many people say that government funding for artists is a waste of money. They believe that good artists will be able to sell their work to earn money and that bad artists should not be given any financial support. What do you think about this approach?

Over the past few centuries, attitudes towards those who create art **has/have** undergone a major change. Nowadays, dance, music, painting and sculpture **is/are** considered to be an important element in many lives. A significant number of art-lovers **believe/believes** that internationally-renowned, world-class artists **is/are** able to make a living through the sale of their work and that less well-established painters, sculptors and musicians **does/do** not deserve financial aid. I personally **believe/believes** that the state **has/have** a role in encouraging the production of as much art as possible through funding and subsidy.

Firstly, there **is/are** no doubt that art **has/have** a positive effect on its audience. Exhibition-goers, tourists who **visit/visits** museums and those who **attend/attends** theatres and operas often **leave/leaves** feeling uplifted and mentally and spiritually nourished. Their outlook on life has been broadened and they have often become more rounded and mature. Therefore, the authorities **improves/improve** the quality of life of their citizens if they **promote/promotes** art widely.

Another point which we **have/has** to bear in mind **relate/relates** to international standing, prestige and reputation. A nation which **is/are** widely-known for its art **increase/increases** its international visibility. It **gain/gains** a strong worldwide reputation as a nation of quality and taste. As a result, inhabitants of that country **feel/feels** a great sense of national pride. This positive feeling **relate/relates** to happiness. Italy **provide/provides** a wonderful example; its inhabitants **is/are** rightly proud of the nation's cultural heritage.

Furthermore, there **is/are** major economic benefits to encouraging and supporting artists. When a country **produce/produces** a lot of famous works of art, tourists **want/wants** to visit. They **go/goes** to the art galleries and **is/are** interested in seeing the famous sights. Consequently, this **lead/leads** to increased visitor numbers and **enable/enables** the economy to develop. As a result, jobs **is/are** created and the whole nation **experience/experiences** growth.

Opponents of this view **believe/believes** that art **is/are** a waste of time and that the government should spend taxpayers' money on more important things such as hospitals, schools and housing. However, I **believe/believes** that although these things **is/are** vital, it **is/are** also very important to support the creation of art. Indeed, as art **educate/educates** and **nourish/nourishes**, having more beautiful landscape paintings, opera performances or classical concerts actually **reduce/reduces** the need for healthcare and schooling.

In conclusion, I strongly **support/supports** the notion that governments **have/has** an important role in nurturing and paying for a nation's art. This support **have/has** advantages in areas such as education and the economy. I **hope/hopes** that in the future,

more and more individuals will realise that art **is/are** fundamental to human life. When those in power **understand/understands** this, everyone's life **become/becomes** richer.

ANSWERS

Many people say that government funding for artists is a waste of money. They believe that good artists will be able to sell their work to earn money and that bad artists should not be given any financial support. What do you think about this approach?

Over the past few centuries, attitudes towards those who create art **have** undergone a major change. Nowadays, dance, music, painting and sculpture **are** considered to be an important element in many lives. A significant number of art-lovers **believe** that internationally-renowned, world-class artists **are** able to make a living through the sale of their work and that less well-established painters, sculptors and musicians **do not** deserve financial aid. I personally **believe** that the state **has** a role in encouraging the production of as much art as possible through funding and subsidy.

Firstly, there is no doubt that art **has** a positive effect on its audience. Exhibition-goers, tourists who **visit** museums and those who **attend** theatres and operas often **leave** feeling uplifted and mentally and spiritually nourished. Their outlook on life has been broadened and they have often become more rounded and mature. Therefore, the authorities **improve** the quality of life of their citizens if they **promote** art widely

Another point which we **have** to bear in mind **relates** to international standing, prestige and reputation. A nation which **is** widely-known for its art **increases** its international visibility. It **gains** a strong worldwide reputation as a nation of quality and taste. As a result, inhabitants of that country **feel** a great sense of national pride. This positive feeling **relates** to happiness. Italy **provides** a wonderful example; its inhabitants **are** rightly proud of the nation's cultural heritage.

Furthermore, there **are** major economic benefits to encouraging and supporting artists. When a country **produces** a lot of famous works of art, tourists **want** to visit. They **go to** the art galleries and **are** interested in seeing the famous sights. Consequently, this **leads** to increased visitor numbers and **enables** the economy to develop. As a result, jobs **are** created and the whole nation **experiences** growth.

Opponents of this view **believe** that art **is** a waste of time and that the government should spend taxpayers' money on more important things such as hospitals, schools and housing. However, I **believe** that although these things **are** vital, it **is** also very important to support the creation of art. Indeed, as art **educates** and **nourishes**, having more beautiful landscape paintings, opera performances or classical concerts actually **reduces** the need for healthcare and schooling.

In conclusion, I strongly **support** the notion that governments **have** an important role in nurturing and paying for a nation's art. This support **has** advantages in areas such as education and the economy. I **hope** that in the future, more and more individuals will

realise that art **is** fundamental to human life. When those in power **understand** this, everyone's life **becomes** richer.

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following sentences. They are all taken from Academic IELTS Writing Task 1. Try to replace the missing verbs:

1. The statistical information provided **re_____** to steel production during a ten-year period which began in 2003.
2. The data provided **rel_____** to the number of houses built in several European countries during the latter half of the twentieth century.
3. The chart under discussion **ill_____** the relationship between domestic energy use and time of day.
4. The pie chart and graph **in_____** that there is a general correlation between a country's level of economic development and life expectancy.
5. The figures under discussion **re_____** to the consumption of various foodstuffs in a range of European countries over a twenty-year period beginning in 1885.

ANSWERS

1. The statistical information **provided** refers to steel production during a ten-year period which began in 2003.
EXPLANATION: We could write: **The statistical information which has been provided/which has been given...** However, if we take out **which has been** we get a more formal style. The verb **to provide** is more formal than the verb **to give**.
2. The data provided **relate/relates** to the number of houses built in several European countries during the latter half of the twentieth century.
EXPLANATION: The verb **to relate** means **to be connected to**. It is a useful verb for Academic Writing Task 1. It is more complex than using **to show** or **to demonstrate**.
3. The chart under discussion **illustrates** the relationship between domestic energy use and time of day.
EXPLANATION: The verb **to illustrate** means **to show the truth of something clearly, by giving examples or explanation**. You can use this verb when you want the reader to understand that the statistical information does not just describe something. It also explains something such as a relationship between two things.
4. The pie chart and graph **indicate** that there is a general correlation between a country's level of economic development and life expectancy.
EXPLANATION: The verb **to indicate** means **to make something clear; to show that something is probably true**. It is similar to the verb **to illustrate**. You can use it when the figures provided give evidence that something is true.
5. The figures under discussion **refer** to the consumption of various foodstuffs in a range of European countries over a twenty-year period beginning in 1885.
EXPLANATION: The verb **to refer** means **to give details about; to have the subject of**. It can be used in a very similar way to **to relate**.