ΑΕΝ ΑΣΠΡΟΥΡΓΟΥ

ΣΧΟΛΗ ΜΗΧΑΝΙΚΩΝ

MARITIME ENGLISH A & B SEMESTER

Describing, analyzing and reporting a graph

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IOANNA CHARCHANDI

BA (Hons), MSc, MEd, PhD Cand., LL.B St.

Describing, analyzing and reporting a graph: Notes and Guidelines

Material composed by **IOANNA CHARCHANDI**, BA (Hons), MSc, MEd, PhD Cand., Law School St.

In a graph you

- objectively describe the information given to you
- report on a topic without the use of opinion
- use suitable language to describe the graph

You should be able to:

- ◆ Objectively describe some graphic information
- ◆ Compare and contrast
- ◆ Report on an impersonal topic without the use of opinion
- ◆ Use the language of graph description
- ◆ Communicate in a style that is easy to follow and cohesive.
- ◆ Use English accurately and appropriately

The Report

A suitable structure
- Does it have an introduction, body and conclusion?
- Does it include connective words to make the writing cohesive within sentences and paragraphs?

Suitable grammar and vocabulary
- Does it include a variety of sentence structures?
- Does it include a range of appropriate vocabulary?

It should meet the requirements of the task
- Does it meet the word limit requirements?
- Does it describe the whole graph adequately?
- Does it focus on the important trends presented in the graphic Information

- ➢ The report should be structured simply with an introduction, body and conclusion.
- ➢ Tenses should be used appropriately.

Introduction

Use two standard opening sentences to introduce your report. These opening sentences should make up the first paragraph. Sentence one should define what the graph is about; that is, the date, location, what is being described in the graph etc.

EXAMPLE: "*The graph shows the number of X in the UK between the years 1960 and 1995 …*"

Selecting information

It is important that you describe the whole graph fully. However, this does not mean that you should note every single detail. In most cases there will be too much information for you to mention each figure and for each figure. You will therefore need to summarize the graph by dividing it into its main parts. This is what we mean by describing the trends.

For example, in a chronological line graph it might seem sensible to describe the information year by year or period by period.

"The number of cases of X started at 50 in 1945 and then went up gradually to 98 in 1956 and continued up to 123 in 1965 and then went up more sharply to 209 in 1975".

Describing the overall trend

Sentence two (and most times three) might sum up the overall trend. For example:

"It can be clearly seen that X sales increased rapidly to 50 around the 1980s and then dropped to zero before 1999, while Y sales fell consistently from a high point of nearly 90 in 1960 to less than 32 in 1995".

Notice the tense used. Here we are talking about the occurrence of the sales in the past.

Describing the graph in detail

The body of the report will describe the graph or graphs in detail. You will need to decide on the most clear and logical order to present the material. Line graphs generally present information in chronological order and so the

most logical order for you to write up the information would, most probably be from earliest to latest. Bar graphs, pie charts are organised in different ways and so you need to decide on the organisation of each one.

Concluding sentences

Your report may end with one or two sentences which summarise your report to draw a relevant conclusion.

Grammar and vocabulary

Your writing should use a range of structures and vocabulary correctly rather than a limited number. You should also avoid repetition. For example, the student who writes:

"The number of X sales started at 50 in 1965 and then went up to 200 in 1970 and then went up to 500 in 1980 and then went down to zero in 1990" will lose marks for being repetitive. You should therefore practise writing reports using a wide variety of terms to describe the different movements in the graphs and different structures to vary your writing.

Describing the movement: adjectives and adverbs

Sometimes we need to give more information about a trend as follows:

> There has been a **slight** increase in the value of euro (degree of change)
> Unemployment fell **rapidly** last year (the speed of change)

Remember that we modify a noun with an adjective (a **slight** increase) and a verb with an adverb (to increase **slightly**).

Describing trends

Trends are changes or movements. These changes are normally expressed in numeric items, for example, population, production volumes or unemployment. There are three basic trends:

DIRECTION	VERBS	NOUNS
↗	Rose (to) Increased (to) Went up (to) Climbed (to) Boomed	A rise An increase Growth An upward trend A boom (a dramatic rise)
↘	Fell (to) Declined (to) Decreased (to) Dipped (to) Dropped (to) Went down (to) Slumped (to) Reduced (to)	A decrease A decline A fall A drop A slump (a dramatic fall) A reduction
→	Levelled out (at) Did not change Remained stable (at) Remained steady (at) Stayed constant (at) Maintained the same level	A levelling out No change
	Fluctuated (around) Peaked (at) Plateaued (at) Stood at (we use this phrase to focus on a particular point, before we mention the movement, for example: In the first year, unemployment stood at …)	A fluctuation Reached a peak (of) Reached at plateau (at)

As you see, for each trend there are a number of verbs and nouns to express the movement. See a change:
With a verb of change-"Sales volume fell" → a related noun-"there was a fall in the sales volume".

Describing the degree of change

Adjectives	Adverbs
Dramatic	dramatically
sharp	sharply
Huge	
enormous	enormously
Steep	Steeply
substantial	substantially
considerable	considerably
significant	significantly
marked	markedly
moderate	moderately
Slight	slightly
Small	
minimal	minimally

Describing the speed of change

Adjectives	Adverbs
Rapid	Rapidly
Quick	Quickly
Swift	swiftly
sudden	suddenly
steady	Steadily
gradual	Gradually
Slow	slowly

Describing a trend

We can describe a trend by looking at:
♦ the difference between two levels
♦ the end point of the trend

Describing the difference between two levels

➢ This year sales have increased **by** 20,000 cases (the difference between this year and last year is 20,000 cases).
➢ This year there has been an increase in sales **of** 5%.

Notice the prepositions. We use to increase **by** (with the verb) and an increase **of** (with the noun).

Describing the end point

➢ This year sales have risen to 10% (the end result is that Sales are up to 10%).
➢ This year there has been a rise in sales to 10%.

Notice the prepositions. We use to rise **to** (with the verb) and a rise **to** (with the noun).

Expressing approximation

We use words to express approximation when the point we are trying to describe is between milestones on the graph.

just under	**just over**
well under	**well over**
roughly	**nearly**
approximately	**around**
about	

Describing one part of the chart

Starting with the adjective:

The highest The greatest The lowest The most A significant The smallest The largest	percentage of proportion of number of	women cars sold holiday makers	are employed in the X category are red come from Spain

Starting with the subject:

Red is the Professional is the Spain is the	most second/third most least	popular prevalent common	car colour employment category holiday destination

Describing two parts of the chart
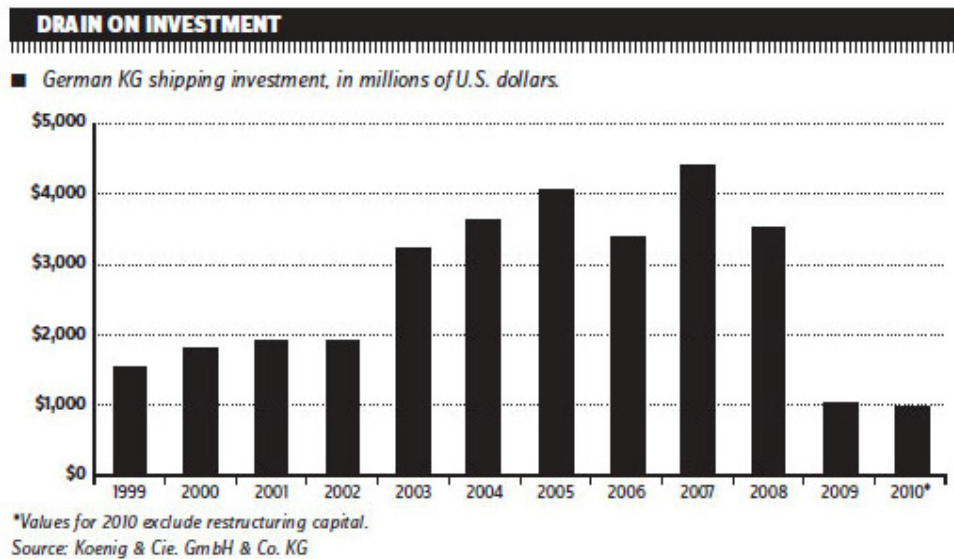
Starting with the adjective:

As many Twice as many Three times as many Not as many	red cars women holiday makers	are sold are employed in X come from X	as …
More Far more Much more Many more A lot more Substantially more Considerably more Significantly more Slightly more Fractionally more			than

Starting with the subject:

Blue cars are Women are Spain is	as quite as just as nearly as almost as not as	common popular prevalent	as …
	more much more far more substantially more considerably more slightly more fractionally more less much less far less considerably less fractionally less		than …

Sample task

DRAIN ON INVESTMENT

■ *German KG shipping investment, in millions of U.S. dollars.*

*Values for 2010 exclude restructuring capital.
Source: Koenig & Cie. GmbH & Co. KG

Selecting information

Look at the illustration (flow chart, diagram etc) and try to work out what the important stages are, the order they occur and any obvious reasons for the order.

In completing this task it is important that you describe the whole graph fully. However, this does not mean that you should note every detail. In most cases there will be too much information for you to mention for each figure. You will therefore need to summarise the graph in meaningful segments.

Use two standard opening sentences to introduce the graph and your report. These opening sentences should make up the first paragraph. Sentence one should define what the graph is about, that is the date, location, what is being described in the graph etc.

The body of the report will describe the graph or graphs in detail. You will need to decide on the most clear and logical order to present the material. Line graphs generally present information in chronological order and so the most logical order for you to write up the information would also, most probably, be from earliest to latest.

Your report should end with one or two sentences which summarise your report or draw a relevant conclusion

Comparing and contrasting

One syllable
Adjectives with one syllable form their comparatives and superlatives like this:

cheap	**cheaper**	**the cheapest**
large	**larger**	**the largest**
bright	**brighter**	**the brightest**

Exceptions:

good	**better**	**the best**
bad	**worse**	**the worst**

Two syllables
Some adjectives with two syllables form their comparatives and superlatives like this:

pretty	**prettier**	**the prettiest**
happy	**happier**	**the happiest**

But many form their comparatives and superlatives like this:

striking	**more striking**	**the most striking**

Although some can form their comparatives and superlatives like this:
Common   more common   the most common
Clever   more clever / cleverer   the most clever /cleverest

Three or more syllables
All adjectives with three or more syllables form their comparatives and superlatives like this:

attractive	**more attractive**	**the most attractive**
profitable	**more profitable**	**the most profitable**
expensive	**more expensive**	**the most expensive**

Linking Words

- They *add*: and, also, in addition, moreover, then, first, second, third, etc.
- They *compare*: both…and, equally important, in the same way, similarly, as, compared to, likewise, on one hand, in this instance.
- They *concede*: after all, although / even though / though, of course, nevertheless / nonetheless, yet, however
- They *contrast*: instead, in contrast, on the one hand, on the other hand, unlike, whereas, however, conversely, nevertheless, nonetheless
- They *emphasize*: above all, certainly, indeed, most important, surely.
- They *explain*: furthermore, in addition, in fact, in this case, now.
- They *illustrate*: for example / for instance , next , thus / so, such
- They *qualify*: although, but, except for, however, yet.
- They state *consequences*: as a result, accordingly, consequently, otherwise, therefore.
- They *conclude*: at last, finally, in conclusion, in summary, to sum up.

Sequence	Cause	Emphasis
First, firstly, second, secondly, third, Thirdly, next, last, finally, in addition, moreover, furthermore, also	For because since as because of to cause	Undoubtedly Indeed Obviously Generally Admittedly In theory/fact

Connecting sentences

Use connectives such as the following with verb phrases. For movements in the same direction use 'then' and 'and' and 'then continued its upward/downward trend more … '.

Disconnected sentences

After that it rose gradually to 5,000 by 1952. And then it went up to 15,000 by 1954.

Connected sentence

After that it rose gradually to 5,000 by 1952, then more steeply to 15,000 by 1954

Connected sentence

After that it rose gradually to 5,000 then continued its upward trend more steeply to 15,000.

Exercise

Connect these sentences using 'then', 'and' and 'then continued its upward/downward trend more … '.

It dropped swiftly to 1,000 in 1998. Then it went down slowly to 900 in '99

It slowly decreased to 100. Then it quickly dropped to 15.

It increased substantially at the beginning of the year. It increased gradually at the end of the year.

For contrasting movements use ' but'

Disconnected sentences

It rose to 35,000 by 1960. After that it fell to 12,000 by 1962.

Connected sentence

It rose to 35,000 by 1960 but later fell to 12,000 by 1962

Exercise

Connect these sentences using' which was followed by', 'which led to', 'which preceded'.

- ❖ There was a sharp rise to 900 in 1991. Then there was a gradual decline to 800 in 1992.
- ❖ There was a slight drop to 90. Then there was a more marked decline to 50.
- ❖ It reached a peak at Christmas. Then it dropped back to the November levels of 500.

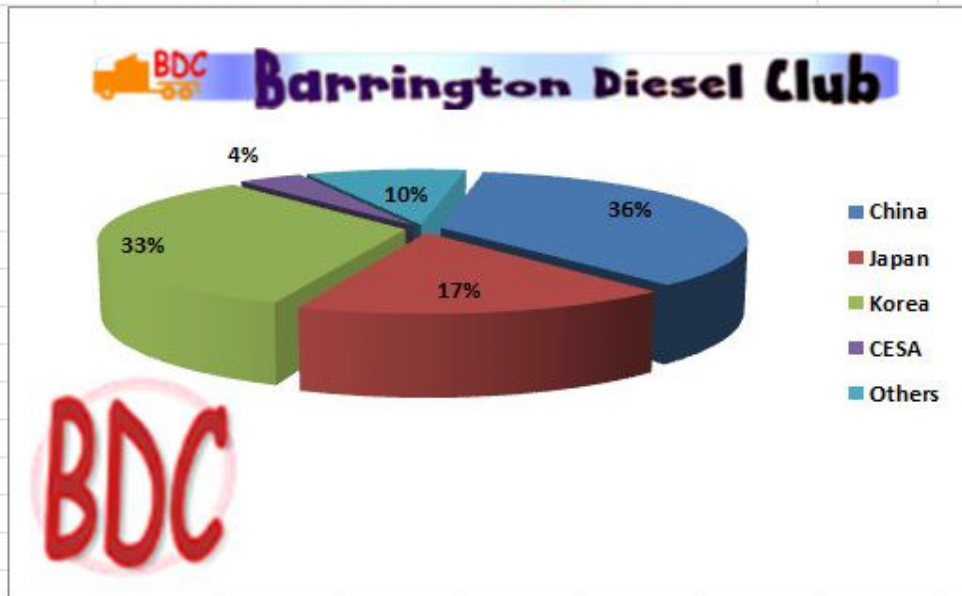|		
In conclusion, to summarise The first … The/a second…. One….. Another ….. An additional…. Addition In addition Furthermore Also and as well as	Effect So as a result as a consequence therefore thus consequently hence to result from due to as a result/consequence of to result in to affect	Particularly Especially Clearly
Comparison Similarly Likewise Also Too as just as and like just like similar to be similar to/ the same as be alike not only…but also to compare to/with	Contrast However Nevertheless Nonetheless Still Although, Even though, though yet Despite , In spite of In contrast, In comparison While, whereas On the other hand On the contrary But	Example For example For instance That is Such as Including Namely

It is important that you are confident using linking devices such as relative clauses, connectives and transition signals.

PRACTICE

Old Town Canoe Shipments by Month
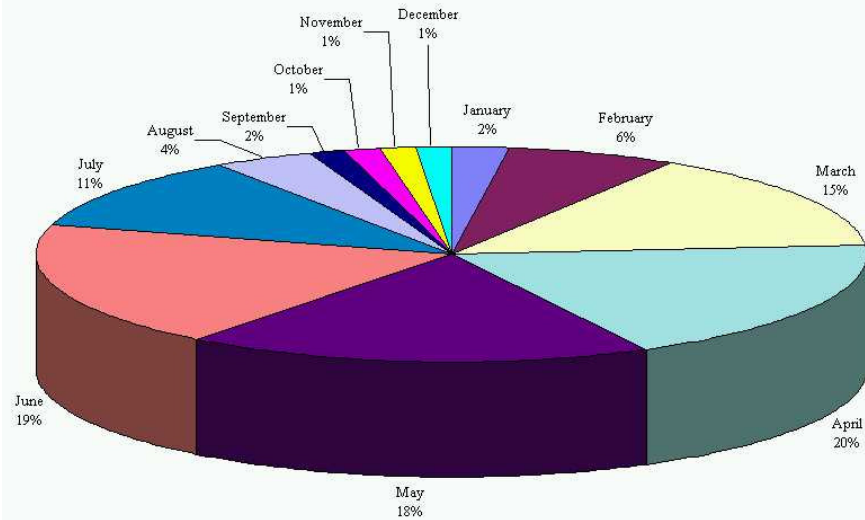
World Shipbuilding Stats

Number of vessels (dashed line) and gross tonnage of vessels (continuous line) in the world's shipping fleet. Data from Lloyd's register of shipping for self-propelled, merchant fleet vessels of 100 gross tons or more. (Reprinted from Hildebrand, J.A. 2009. Anthropogenic and natural sources of ambient noise in the ocean. Marine Ecology Progress Series. 395, 5-20)
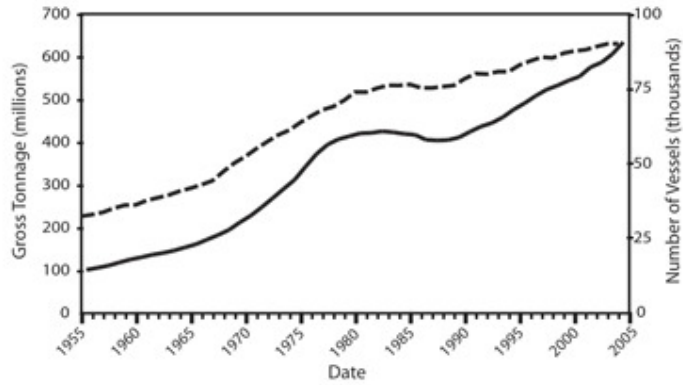
Maersk Line, Hamburg Süd and Hanjin Shipping remained the most reliable Top 20 carriers in July