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WRITING FOR IELTS

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Introduction

Who is this book for?

Writing for IELTS will prepare you for the IELTS Writing test whether you are taking the test for the first time, or re-sitting the test. It has been written for learners with band score 5–5.5 who are trying to achieve band score 6.5 or higher.

The structured approach, comprehensive answer key and model answers have been designed so that you can use the materials to study on your own. However, the book can also be used as a supplementary writing skills course for IELTS preparation classes. The book provides enough material for approximately 50 hours of classroom time.

Content

Writing for IELTS is divided into 12 units. Each unit focuses on a topic area that you are likely to encounter in the IELTS Writing test. This helps you to build up a bank of vocabulary and ideas related to a variety of the topics.

Units 1–11 cover the key stages of the writing process: everything from analysing the task to proof-reading a completed response. Every exercise is relevant to the exam. The aims listed at the start of each unit specify the key skills, techniques and language covered in the unit. You work towards Unit 12, which provides a final practice IELTS Writing test.

Additionally, the book provides exam strategies telling you what to expect and how best to succeed in the exam. *Exam information* is presented in clear, easy-to-read boxes. *Exam tips* in each unit highlight essential exam techniques and can be rapidly reviewed at a glance.

There are also *Watch Out!* boxes that will help you avoid common errors made in the exam. Finally, the *Exam tutor* at the end of each unit gives you the opportunity to revise and consolidate the exam skills you have studied.

Unit structure

Each of the first 11 units is divided into three parts.

Part 1 Language development introduces vocabulary related to the topic as well as some of the most common academic words and expressions needed for the writing functions covered in the unit. A range of exercises gives you the opportunity to use the vocabulary in a variety of contexts. These exercises also build awareness of the patterns in words and language items. The vocabulary is presented using Collins COBUILD dictionary definitions.

Part 2 Exam skills provides step-by-step exercises and guidance on the key stages of the writing process. There are guided questions and worked examples to show you what an effective IELTS Writing response looks like. Useful expressions and grammatical forms are highlighted, and there are exercises that help you develop good range and accuracy in your writing. You are encouraged to apply what you have learnt, while at the same time writing your own responses to task questions. *Exam information* and *Exam tips* show you how to approach each task type and will help you develop successful test-taking strategies.

Part 3 Exam practice provides exam practice questions for Task 1 and Task 2 in a format that follows the actual exam. You can use this as a means of assessing your readiness for the actual exam. There is also an *Exam tutor* checklist after the exam practice that will help you revise and consolidate key points to improve your writing.

Answer key

A comprehensive answer key is provided for all sections of the book, including recommended answers and explanations for more open-ended writing tasks. There are model answers for all of the writing questions. For one of the practice exam questions in each unit, two model answers are given – one of them annotated. This shows you that a variety of approaches to each writing task can be taken.

Using the book for self-study

If you are new to IELTS, we recommend that you work systematically through the 12 units in order to benefit from its progressive structure. If you are a more experienced learner, you can use the aims listed at the start of each unit to select the most useful exercises.

Each unit contains between three to four hours of self-study material. Having access to someone who can provide informed feedback on the writing practice exercises is an advantage. However, you can still learn a lot working alone, or with a study partner willing to give and receive peer feedback.

Part 1: Language development

Ideally, you should begin each unit by working through the *Part 1: Language development* exercises. Try to answer the questions without looking at a dictionary in order to develop the skill of inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words from context.

Part 2: Exam skills

Work through the *Part 2: Exam skills* from beginning to end. It is important to study the *Exam information* and *Exam tips* about each of the question types, so that you become familiar with how to approach the different writing tasks in the exam. Doing this will also help you develop more general writing skills. The grammar points covered should be thoroughly mastered so that during the actual exam you can focus on the higher order skills of planning and effectively communicating your response.

Part 3: Exam practice

This section contains exam practice with timed questions. This gives you the opportunity to practise writing to a time limit. If you find this difficult at first, you could focus first on writing a high-quality response of the correct length. Then you could start to reduce the time allowed gradually until you are able to write an acceptable answer within the time limit. Model answers should be studied to identify the underlying approach and effect on the reader. Try not to memorise essays or reports or to attempt to fit a pre-existing response around another exam question. If you work systematically through the book, you should develop the skills and language to effectively express your own responses to unseen exam questions on the day.

Unit 12 Practice exam

This is a complete practice Writing exam. This unit should be done under exam conditions.

Using the book in the classroom

If you are a teacher, you can use *Writing for IELTS* either as your main IELTS coursebook or as a supplementary course. Detailed teacher's notes for each unit are available at: www.rahnama.com/rahnama

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test

IELTS is jointly managed by the British Council, Cambridge ESOL Examinations and IDP Education, Australia. There are two versions of the test:

- Academic
- General Training

Academic is for students wishing to study at undergraduate or postgraduate levels in an English-medium environment.

General Training is for people who wish to migrate to an English-speaking country. This book is primarily for students taking the Academic version.

The test

There are four modules:

Listening	30 minutes, plus 10 minutes for transferring answers to the answer sheet. NB: the audio is heard <i>only once</i> . Approx. 10 questions per section Section 1: two speakers discuss a social situation Section 2: one speaker talks about a non-academic topic Section 3: up to four speakers discuss an educational project Section 4: one speaker gives a talk of general academic interest
Reading	60 minutes 3 texts, taken from authentic sources, on general, academic topics. They may contain diagrams, charts, etc. 40 questions: may include multiple choice, sentence completion, completing a diagram, graph or chart, choosing headings, yes/no, true/false questions, classification and matching exercises.
Writing	Task 1: 20 minutes: description of a table, chart, graph or diagram (150 words minimum) Task 2: 40 minutes: an essay in response to an argument or problem (250 words minimum)
Speaking	11–14 minutes A three-part face-to-face oral interview with an examiner. The interview is recorded. Part 1: introductions and general questions (4–5 mins) Part 2: individual long turn (3–4 mins) – the candidate is given a task, has one minute to prepare, then talks for 1–2 minutes, with some questions from the examiner. Part 3: two-way discussion (4–5 mins): the examiner asks further questions on the topic from Part 2, and gives the candidate the opportunity to discuss more abstract issues or ideas.
Timetabling	Listening, Reading and Writing must be taken on the same day, and in the order listed above. Speaking can be taken up to 7 days before or after the other modules.
Scoring	Each section is given a band score. The average of the four scores produces the Overall Band Score. You do not pass or fail IELTS; you receive a score.

IELTS and the Common European Framework of Reference

The CEFR shows the level of the learner and is used for many English as a Foreign Language examinations. The table below shows the approximate CEFR level and the equivalent IELTS Overall Band Score:

CEFR description	CEFR level	IELTS Band Score
Proficient user (Advanced)	C2 C1	9 7–8
Independent user (Intermediate – Upper Intermediate)	B2 B1	5–6.5 4–5

This table contains the general descriptors for the band scores 1–9:

IELTS Band Scores		
9	Expert user	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
8	Very good user	Has fully operational command of the language, with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
7	Good user	Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
6	Competent user	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
5	Modest user	Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
4	Limited user	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
3	Extremely limited user	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
2	Intermittent user	No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
1	Non user	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
0	Did not attempt the test	No assessable information provided.

Marking

The Listening and Reading papers have 40 items, each worth one mark if correctly answered. Here are some examples of how marks are translated into band scores:

Listening:	16 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 5
	23 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 6
	30 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 7
Reading:	15 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 5
	23 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 6
	30 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 7

Writing and Speaking are marked according to performance descriptors.

Writing: examiners award a band score for each of four areas with equal weighting:

- Task achievement (Task 1)
- Task response (Task 2)
- Coherence and cohesion
- Lexical resource and grammatical range and accuracy

Speaking: examiners award a band score for each of four areas with equal weighting:

- Fluency and coherence
- Lexical resource
- Grammatical range
- Accuracy and pronunciation

For full details of how the examination is scored and marked, go to: www.pearson.com

1 Gender roles

Language development | Describing character traits; Describing figures and tables

Exam skills | Task 1: Understanding the task; Overview of task

Task 2: Understanding the task; Overview of task; Analysing the questions

Exam practice | Task 1: Describe a bar chart; Task 2: Write an essay evaluating a belief

Part 1: Language development

Describing character traits

Women are more suitable for caring professions like nursing.

My brothers are typical boys – always arguing about who's the boss.



Boys like to fight, but girls almost always do as they're told.

You have to be nice to girls because they get upset so easily.

- 1 Read the comments above and decide which words a-h the speakers associate with males or with females. Write M for males and F for females.

a aggressive ____	d compliant ____	g vulnerable ____
b authoritative ____	e gentle ____	h confident ____
c competitive ____	f strong ____	

- 2 Complete sentences 1–6 with the noun form (singular or plural) of the adjectives in brackets.

Boys are not usually encouraged to show vulnerability. (vulnerable)

- Many people believe that men and women have different _____. (strong)
- _____ is not an exclusively feminine characteristic. (gentle)
- It is sometimes argued that women do not achieve their goals because they lack _____. (confident)
- Some people have difficulty working with female _____ figures. (authoritative)



Exam tip

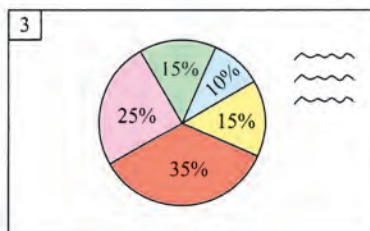
In Task 2, you often have to write about ideas and issues rather than about individual people. A knowledge of abstract nouns will help you write in an academic way, e.g. *Aggression is commonly considered a masculine trait.*

- ! Watch out**

Make sure you use the correct word class (verb, noun, adjective or adverb).

Exam information: Summarising information

- a column
b features
c axis
d row
e stage
f segment



A **pie chart** shows how a whole is composed of parts. Each (4) _____ indicates a percentage of the whole.



A **map** illustrates the (8) _____ of a location, such as roads, bridges and railway lines.

Part 2: Exam skills

Task 1: Understanding the task

i Exam information: Form completion (1)

In Writing Task 1, you have to identify and describe the key information presented in one or more graphs, charts, or diagrams. You should include a short introduction, one to three body paragraphs and a brief concluding paragraph (optional).

1 Read the Task 1 instructions below and answer questions 1–4.

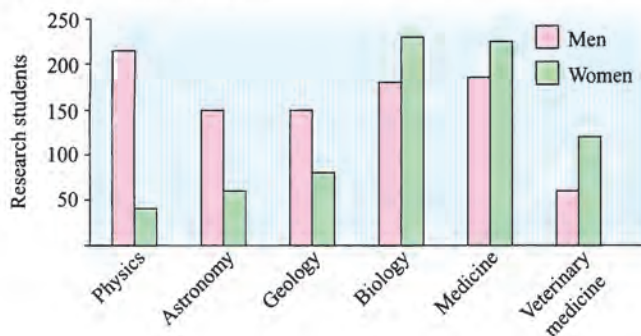
WRITING TASK 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The chart below shows the numbers of male and female research students studying six science-related subjects at a UK university in 2019.

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

Write at least 150 words.



Exam tip

You will be assessed and marked on 'task achievement'. This means you must understand and follow the instructions carefully.

- 1 How long should you spend on this task?
- 2 How many words do you need to write?
- 3 Will you score higher marks if you include all the information in the chart?
- 4 Are you expected to give your opinion about the information?

Exam tip

There is no one correct answer to a writing task. However, there are some common ways of organising your response and the type of information included.

Overview of task

2 Read the sample answer below and answer questions 1–6.

1 What information does the introduction contain?

2 What is the main focus of the first body paragraph?

3 What is the main focus of the second body paragraph?

4 What is the purpose of the first sentence in each of the body paragraphs?

5 What is the purpose of the second and third sentences in each body paragraph?

6 What is the purpose of the conclusion?

The chart shows the gender distribution of students doing scientific research across a range of disciplines at a UK university in 2019.

Male students made up a large proportion of the student group in subjects related to the study of objects and materials: physics, astronomy, and geology. The gender gap was particularly large in the field of physics, where there were five times as many male students as female students.

Women students outnumbered male students in subjects related to the study of living things: biology, medicine, and veterinary medicine. In biology, there were significantly more women (approximately 230) than men (approximately 180). This was also true of medicine, and especially veterinary medicine, where there were twice as many female research students as male research students.

Overall, the chart shows that at this university there were differences in the type of scientific research undertaken by male and female students.



Exam tip

Do not describe all of the information in the figure. The purpose of Task 1 is to test your ability to summarise the key information and to select appropriate examples to support your key observations.

Task 2: Understanding the task



Exam information: Writing solutions to problems

In Writing Task 2, you have to write an essay of four to six paragraphs in answer to a question. The question will ask you to evaluate or present an idea or solution to a problem. Your aim should be to present a strong argument, supported by evidence.

3 Read the Task 2 instructions below and complete statements 1–4 by circling a or b.

WRITING TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

In spite of the many advances, women have made in education and employment, they continue to be at a disadvantage when it comes to pay and promotion. In your view, what should be done to promote equality of opportunity for men and women in the workplace?

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

Write at least 250 words.

- 1 You should spend:
 - a more time on Task 2 than on Task 1.
 - b the same amount of time on Task 2 and Task 1.
- 2 In your response you should mainly:
 - a explain why women are at a disadvantage.
 - b suggest solutions to the problem of inequality in the workplace.
- 3 To support your opinion, you should:
 - a give reasons and examples.
 - b give reasons or examples.
- 4 You have to write:
 - a more than 250 words.
 - b fewer than 250 words.

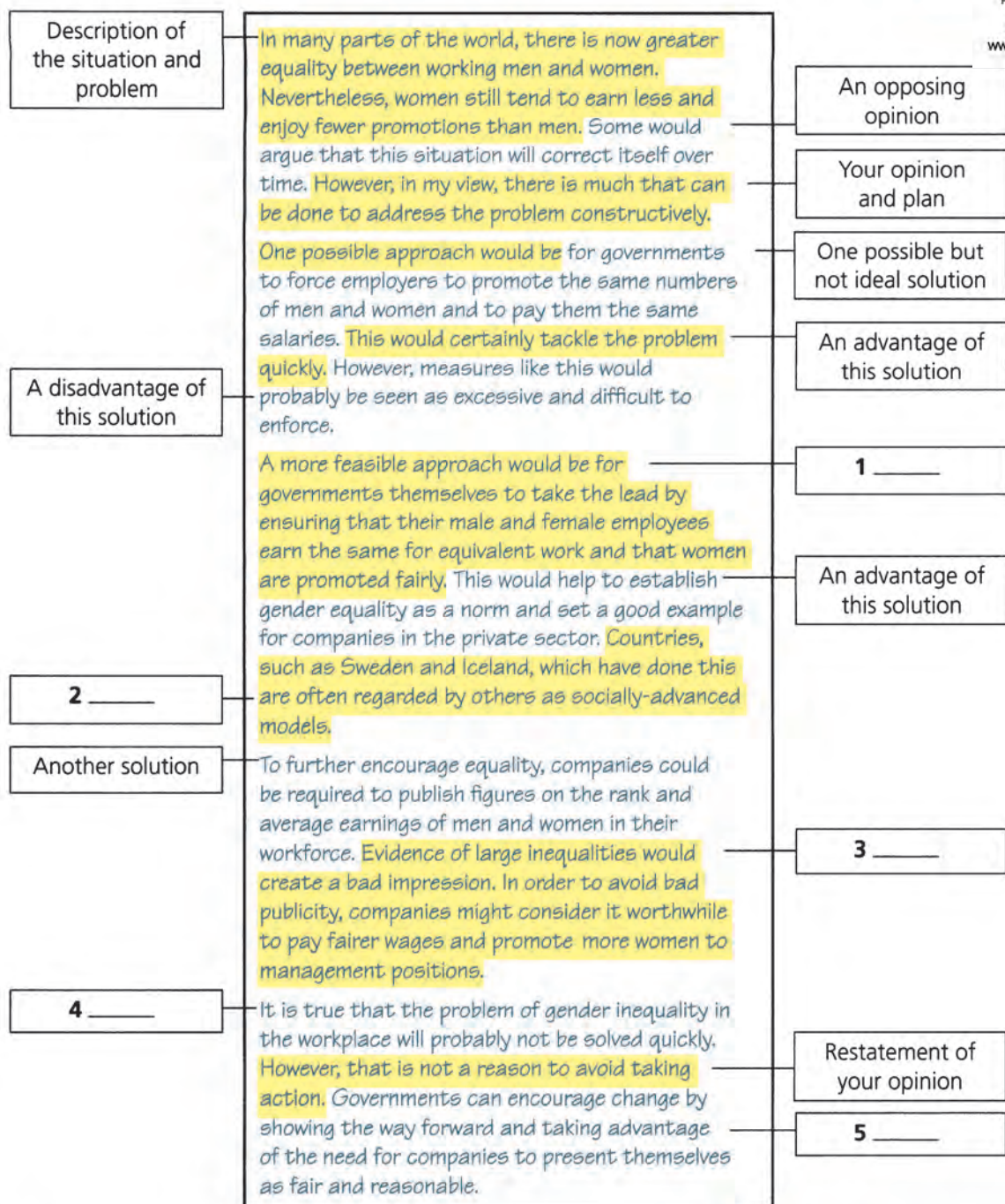


Exam tip

Task 2 counts for more of your final mark than Task 1. You should spend more time writing your Task 2 response.

Overview of task

- 4 Read the sample answer on page 13 and the explanatory comments in the boxes. Complete the boxes 1–5 by adding the comments a–e.
 - a an example
 - b summary of your main points
 - c a better solution
 - d an acknowledgement that there are difficulties
 - e advantage of this solution



5 Read the text again and answer questions 1–5.

- How long is the introduction?
- How many body paragraphs are there?
- How many main points are there?
- In what order are solutions discussed?
- What is the main purpose of the conclusion?



Exam tip

Spend six to seven minutes on analysing the question, thinking of ideas, and making a plan. Spend about 30 minutes writing your essay, and three to four minutes checking your essay for mistakes.

i Exam information: Analysing the questions

There are often four categories of Task 2 questions (a–d below). The question type will help you decide on how you and write your essay. Each type requires you to do something different.

Task 2 question types	Examples
a Propose one or more solutions to a problem	<i>How can the problem of inequality in the workplace best be addressed?</i>
b Evaluate a solution to a problem	<i>Many people believe that boys and girls learn better when they are educated separately. What is your view on this practice?</i>
c Provide an explanation or prediction	<i>What do you see as the main reasons for gender inequality in the workplace?</i>
d Evaluate an idea or belief	<i>Many people maintain that boys are naturally more aggressive than girls. To what extent do you agree with this view?</i>

6 Read the essay questions 1–4 below and indicate the type of essay (a–d) you need to write. (See the Exam Information box above.) Underline the words in the essay question that helped you decide.

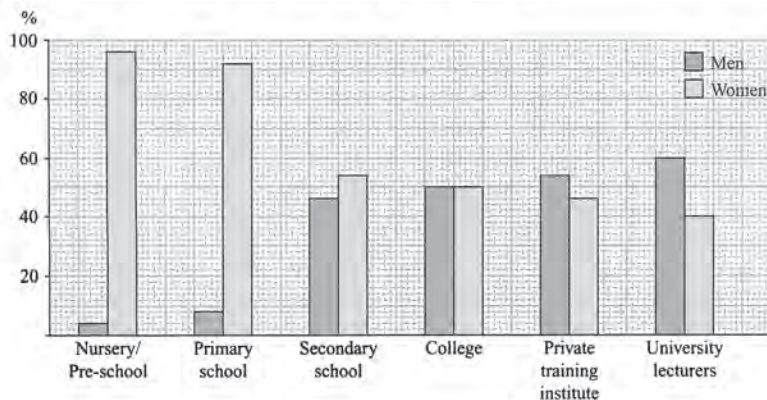
- Why do you think women generally hold fewer positions of power?
- In many parts of the world, unemployment among men is rising whilst the number of positions in jobs traditionally held by women is increasing. Do you think that women will overtake men as the main wage earners?
- To what extent should governments intervene in the labour market to ensure that men and women are paid the same amount for equivalent work?
- Although there has been a large increase in the numbers of women who go out to work, women continue to do a disproportionate amount of housework and childcare. What can be done to promote greater equality between men and women within the home?

Part 3: Exam practice

WRITING TASK 1: Describe a bar chart

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task. Write at least 150 words.

The chart shows the percentage of male and female teachers in six different types of educational setting in the UK in 2019. Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.



WRITING TASK 2: Write an essay evaluating a belief

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task. Write about the following topic:

Women and men are commonly seen as having different strengths and weaknesses. Is it right to exclude males or females from certain professions because of their gender?

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

Write at least 250 words.



Exam tutor

- 1 How many words should you write for each Writing task?
- 2 When writing a Task 1 summary, should you include as much detailed information as possible?
- 3 When writing a Task 2 essay, should you focus on your personal opinions and experiences?
- 4 Which task should you spend more time writing?
- 5 What are the four main types of Task 2 questions?

SECOND EDITION

If your writing skills are preventing you from getting the score you need, *Collins Writing for IELTS* can help. Don't let one skill hold you back.

Develop your writing skills with strategies on how to approach each question type

Exam tips and realistic test practice in every unit, plus a full practice paper in the final unit

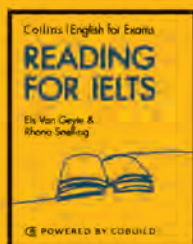
Watch Out boxes help you avoid common errors and model answers show you examples of good IELTS answers

Build your vocabulary with the topic-based vocabulary exercises at the start of every unit

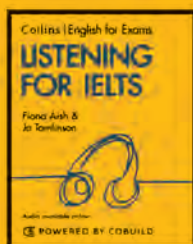
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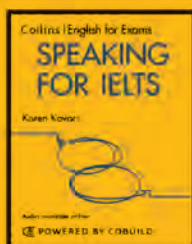
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All of our explanations and features are based on our constantly updated 4.5-billion-word database of today's English language, the Collins Corpus. It is updated every month and has been at the heart of Collins COBUILD for more than 30 years.

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