

IELTS

ACADEMIC WRITING · TASK 1

LESSON 4

Grammatical Structures for Describing Diagrams

Purpose · cause & result · relative clauses



Lesson adapted from official IELTS · British Council material

Objectives

01 Describe diagrams
in IELTS Academic Task 1

02 Use purpose expressions
to + infinitive, in order to, so as to, so that

03 Use cause & result language
because, due to, results in, consequently...

04 Use relative clauses
to add extra or essential information

What have you described before?

What diagrams or processes have you described before? Discuss in pairs or in the chat box.



Pie chart



Bar chart



Column chart



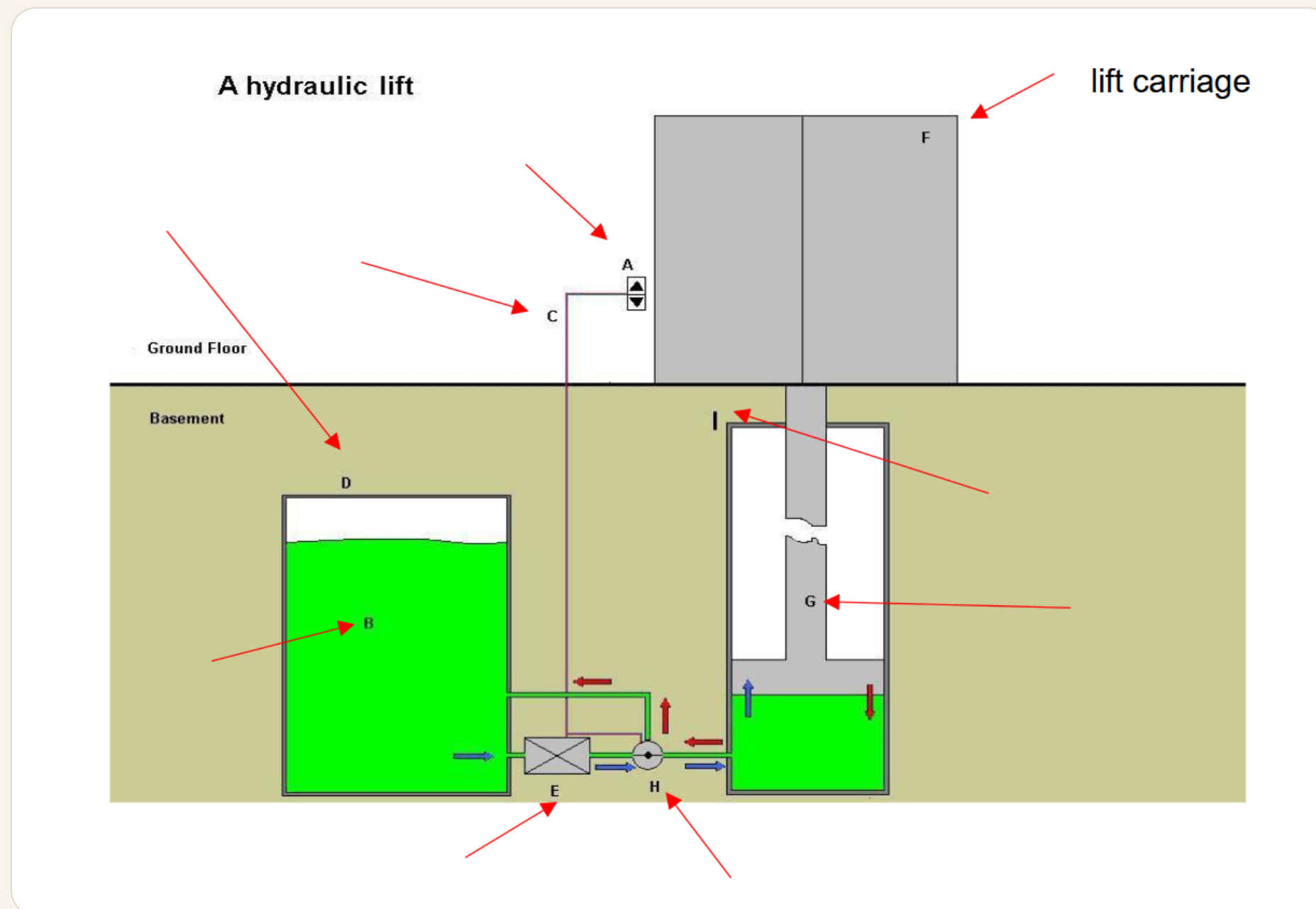
Line graph

Task 1 also covers maps, plans and process diagrams — like the one in this lesson.

ACTIVITY 1

Label the Hydraulic Lift

Read the description on the next slide, then match each part below to the correct letter on the diagram.



A control buttons

B hydraulic fluid

C wires

D tank

E pump

F lift carriage

G piston

H valve

I piston housing

How a Hydraulic Lift Works



The diagram shows how a hydraulic lift works. The system consists of the **lift carriage**, where passengers stand, connected to a **piston** which raises and lowers the carriage, and a **tank** that holds **hydraulic fluid**.

RAISING THE LIFT

When the passenger presses the ‘up’ **button**, an electric signal is sent via **electrical wires** to a **pump**. This moves fluid from the tank into the bottom of the **piston housing** so as to force the piston up. As the housing fills, the piston — and the lift carriage attached to its top — is raised higher.

LOWERING THE LIFT

When the passenger presses ‘down’, another signal switches the pump off and a signal is sent to a **valve** in order to shut off the flow of fluid. The valve’s new position lets hydraulic fluid flow back into the tank, and the piston and carriage are brought back down due to gravity.

THE TASK

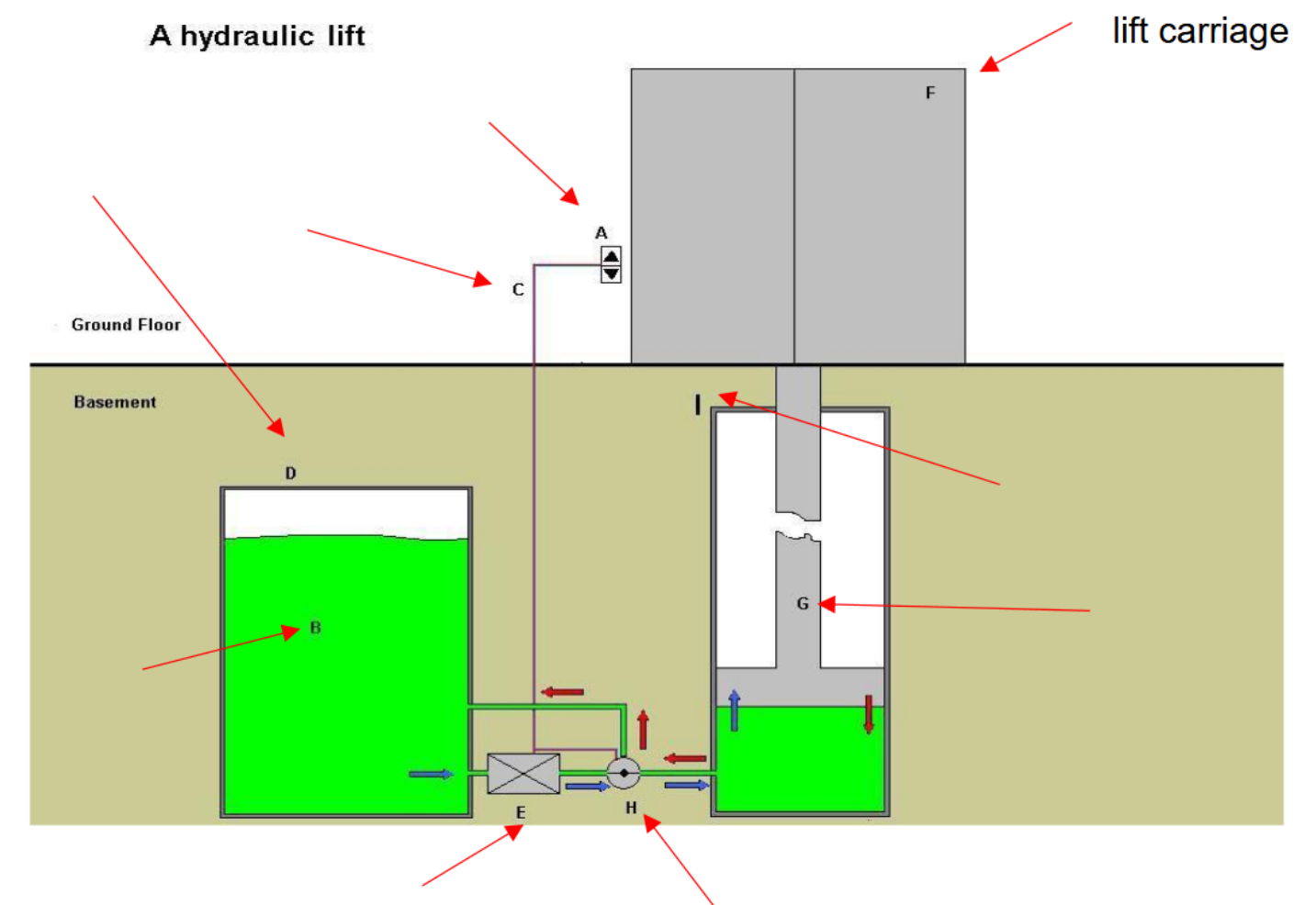
IELTS Writing Task 1

⌚ SPEND ABOUT 20 MINUTES

The diagram below shows the basic operation of a hydraulic lift.

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

Write at least 150 words



Purpose Language

We use purpose language to explain *why* something is done.

to

+ infinitive

...presses the 'up'
button **to raise** the lift.

in order to

+ infinitive

...sent to a valve **in
order to shut off**
the flow.

so as to

+ infinitive

...moves fluid **so as to
force** the piston up.

so that

+ clause

...a signal is sent **so
that** the pump
switches off.

Purpose in Context

How each structure is used in the hydraulic-lift description.

to + infinitive

When the passenger presses the 'up' control button **to raise** the lift...

so that + clause

...an electrical signal is sent **so that** the pump is switched off.

in order to + infinitive

...a signal is sent to a valve **in order to** shut off the flow of fluid.

so as to + infinitive

...move fluid into the bottom of the piston housing **so as to** force the piston up.

ACTIVITY 2

Choose the Best Purpose Word

Complete sentences 1–6. Choose A, B or C.

1 The water is boiled ___ kill harmful germs.

A in order

B so as

C to

2 Scales are used ___ the ingredients are weighed accurately.

A so as

B so that

C in order to

3 There is a battery ___ provide electrical power.

A so as

B to

C in order

4 ___ grow straight, the plant needs supporting with a stick.

A In order to

B So as

C So that

5 The leaves are left in the sun ___ dry thoroughly.

A in order

B so that

C so as to

6 The frame is aluminium ___ the structure is light but strong.

A in order to

B so that

C to

QUICK PRACTICE

Complete the Sentences

Fill each gap with a purpose expression. (Possible answers shown.)

1 The water is boiled to kill harmful germs.

2 Scales are used so that the ingredients are weighed accurately.

3 There is a battery in order to provide electrical power.

ANSWER KEY

Activity 2 — Answers

1 → **C**

2 → **B**

3 → **B**

4 → **A**

5 → **C**

6 → **B**

GRAMMAR FOCUS 2

Cause & Result Language

We use this language to link a cause with its effect.

because

because of

due to

results in

as a result

consequently

give rise to

CAUSE FIRST

The straw gets blocked, **so** deposits build up outside it.

RESULT FIRST

Deposits build up **because** the straw gets blocked.

How a Stalactite Forms

Complete the text with cause & result expressions from the word bank.

because

because of

due to

results in

as a result

consequently

on account of

causes

give rise to

Water leaks slowly into the cave (1) there are thousands of tiny cracks in the limestone rock. On its way down, the water absorbs calcium carbonate and this (2) a mineral solution. The process is repeated many times and (3) a thin calcite tube is formed — sometimes called a soda straw (4) its shape. Occasionally the straw gets blocked (5) a piece of stone or soil. This (6) the solution to pour down the outside of the straw (7) calcite deposits build up, and these (8) the typical cone shape of a stalactite.

ANSWER KEY

Worksheet 2 — Answers



1 because

2 results in

3 as a result

4 on account of

5 due to

6 causes

7 consequently

8 give rise to

Relative Clauses

Relative clauses add information about the subject of a sentence.

NON-DEFINING

Extra information

Not essential — the sentence works without it. Use commas, and **which/who**.

DEFINING

Essential information

Needed for meaning — no commas. You can use **that**.

EXAMPLE

The lift carriage, **which** is attached to the piston, is forced up.

NON-DEFINING

Extra Information, in Commas

Non-defining clauses give extra detail. The sentence still makes full sense without them.

Separated by commas (,)

Use which / who

Never use that

The lift carriage, which is attached to the top of the piston, is also forced up.

Remove the clause and the sentence still works: "The lift carriage is also forced up."

DEFINING

No Commas — Essential Detail

Defining clauses give essential information. Without them, the sentence loses its meaning.

No commas

Use that / which / who

Essential to meaning

Only the straws **that** get blocked will eventually become stalactites.

Remove the clause and the meaning changes completely.

WORKSHEET 3

Combine the Sentences

Join each set using a relative clause (defining or non-defining).

1 A container. It's made of steel. It catches the rain water.

2 Chlorine is added to the tank. It kills any dangerous bacteria.

3 The pages pass through a machine. It cuts off the edges.

4 The programming takes six months. It is done in India.

Worksheet 3 — Sample Answers

1 A container, which is made of steel, catches the rain water.

2 Chlorine, which kills dangerous bacteria, is added to the tank.

3 The pages pass through a machine **that** cuts off the edges.

4 The programming, which is done in India, takes six months.

HOMework

Describe the Process Diagram

Write a 150-word description of the process diagram (on slide 6). Include all three structures:

01

Purpose language

to · in order to · so as to · so that

02

Cause & result

because · due to · results in ·
consequently

03

Relative clauses

defining & non-defining

Minimum 150 words · ~20 minutes

IELTS TIP

Use a mix of **simple and complex** structures.

It's the fastest way to lift your **Grammatical Range & Accuracy** score in Task 1.