

Writing a Statistical Report

Aim: To teach and practise language relevant to writing a statistical report

Level: Intermediate to Advanced

Materials: One copy of each of the following worksheets:

- “Statistical Report”
- “Statistical Report Worksheet”
- “Model Answer”
- “Text Analysis”
- “Writing Practice”

Time: One hour plus writing practice for homework

Teacher’s notes:

This is a simple text analysis lesson based on IELTS writing task one. However it is also relevant for Business English classes. Students must first transfer information from a visual chart into a gapped written report which focuses attention onto the chart. Next, ordering the jumbled sentences of that report raises their awareness of how to group the information so that it is presentable. Next a language analysis of that report covers useful verbs, number phrases, time phrases and conjunctions. Each analysis question is followed by an optional (depending on level) language extension exercise of the language feature that has just been identified in the text.

Steps:

1. Give out “Statistical Report” and get students to explain it to each other in pairs
2. Give out “Statistical report worksheet” and allow time to complete individually. Check in pairs. .
3. Give out “Model Answer” to work from in the next step.
4. Give out “Text Analysis” and work through it one question at a time. Break to check in open class before going on to the language analysis after each question.
5. Give out “Writing practice for homework”

Statistical Report

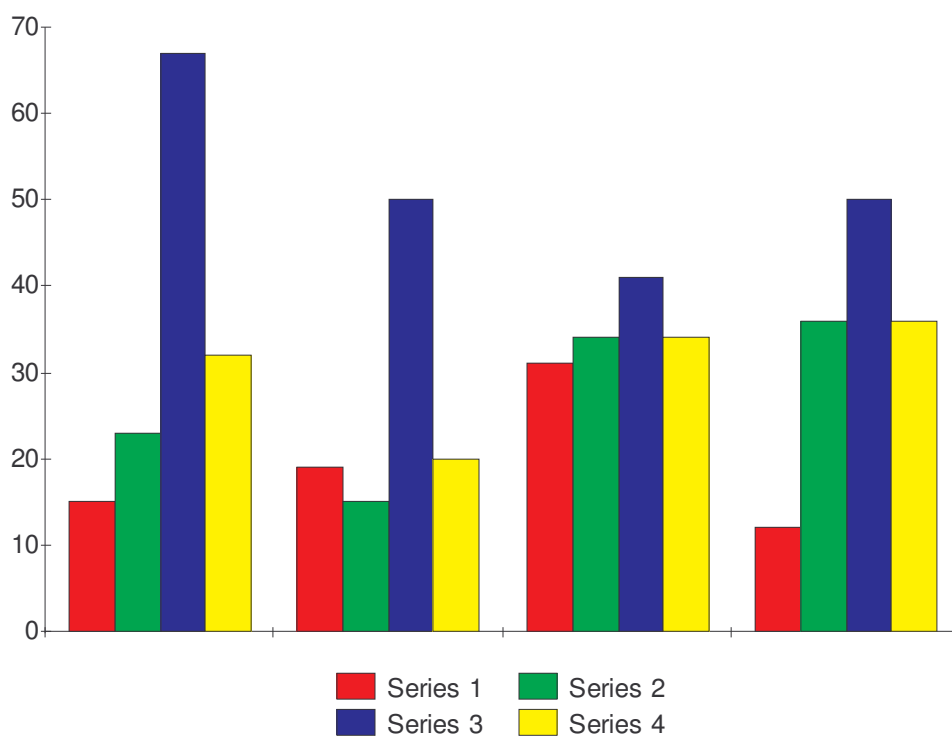
The chart below shows quarterly sales figures for the year 2001 for “Bishop Chocolate Bars Ltd”. The vertical Y-axis shows the amount of chocolate bars sold in thousands. The horizontal X-axis shows the type of chocolate bar sold.

Series one is called “Razzle”

Series two is called “Gremlin”

Series three is called “Banjo”

Series four is called “Yahoo”



Statistical Report - Worksheet

- The following sentences describe the main features of the chart. They are not in any specific order. Fill in the blanks with the correct chocolate bar name, **Razzle**, **Gremlin**, **Banjo** or **Yahoo**, in order to accurately describe the graph.
1. _____ sales continued to rise slowly and finished the year at 35,000 bars sold in the last quarter.
 2. _____ bars and _____ followed the same sales trend throughout the year, although more _____ bars were eaten overall.
 3. _____ proved to be the most popular chocolate bar in the year 2001, selling a total of 206,000 bars.
 4. _____ and _____ worst quarter was the second, when they sold only 16,000 and 12,000 bars respectively.
 5. Sales of _____ bars dramatically increased in the third quarter, with sales doubling from 15,000 to over 30,000.
 6. _____ sales figures began the year higher than those of _____ at 66,000 bars sold in the first quarter.
 7. However, by the end of the year _____ was selling less than at the start at only 50,000 bars in the last quarter
 8. _____ sales were consistently the lowest, except in the second quarter when they outsold _____ bars by 3,000 sales, whereas _____ remained the best-selling bar.
 9. _____ grew in popularity for the first three quarters of the year, but sales plunged dramatically in the last quarter to an all time low of 11,000 bars.
- Reorder the above sentences 1-9 in order to create a coherent report which describes the above chart.

Model Answer

Banjo proved to be the most popular chocolate bar in the year 2001, selling a total of 206,000 bars. Banjo's sales figures began the year higher than those of Razzle, Gremlin and Yahoo at 66,000 bars sold in the first quarter. However, by the end of the year Banjo was selling less than at the start at only 50,000 in the last quarter.

Gremlin and Yahoo bars followed the same sales trend, throughout the year, although more Yahoo bars were eaten overall. Yahoo and Gremlin's worst quarter was the second, when they sold only 16,000 and 12,000 respectively. Sales of Gremlin bars dramatically increased in the third quarter, with sales doubling from 15,000 to over 30,000. Gremlin sales continued to rise slowly and finished the year at 35,000 bars sold in the last quarter.

Razzle grew in popularity for the first three quarters of the year, but sales plunged dramatically in the last quarter to an all time low of 11,000 bars.

Razzle sales were consistently the lowest, except in the second quarter when they outsold Gremlin by 3,000 sales, whereas Banjo remained the best-selling bar.

Text Analysis

1. Which words/phrases describe upward movement of sales figures?
2. Which words/phrases describe downward movement of sales figures?

Language Extension

The following verbs are also used to describe upward, downward or horizontal changes in figures. For each verb say which movement is described

Decline	drop	Rocket	Fall
Rise	Fluctuate	Stabilize	Decrease
Improve	Jump	Plummet	Increase
Level off	Recover	Gain	Lose

These verbs of movement are often used with adverbs which give more information about the type of change expressed, e.g. *slowly grew* or *dramatically plummeted*

For the following adverb/verb combinations describe what type of change is expressed by using the following words:

small, large, fast or slow (or any combination of these)

- . E.g. *Slowly grew* = slow and small upward change
- Dramatically plummeted* = large and fast downward change

Significantly declined	Dropped sharply	Quickly rocketed	Fell sharply
Rose rapidly	Fluctuated dramatically	Rapidly stabilized	Decreased slightly
Improved slightly	Jumped enormously	Plummeted dramatically	Increased considerably
Gradually leveled off	Considerably recovered	Substantially gained	Lost significantly

3. Which words/phrases from the report introduce numbers?

Language Extension

Fill in the gaps in the sentences below with the correct prepositions.

up ---- to	at	to ---- around	at ---- over
below	of	from ----- to	of

1. The interest rate stabilized ---- 32%.
2. Viewing figures rose ----- 20,000 ---- 30,000 in the first week.
3. Bidding finished ----- \$300.
4. Repairs will cost ---- ---- \$100
5. Profits fell ----- \$230.
6. House prices have increased ---- ----- 1 million.
7. Sales reached a high point ---- \$2,000
8. Sales hit a low point ----- \$400

4. Which words/phrases from the report describe periods of time?

Language Extension

Order the following time phrases into chronological order over the period of a year

- a. By the end of the year
- b. At the beginning of the year
- c. Halfway through the year
- d. In February
- e. At the end of April
- f. In the last two months of 2002.
- g. In the first quarter
- h. After June
- i. Before August

5. Which words/phrases from the report are used to contrast or add information?

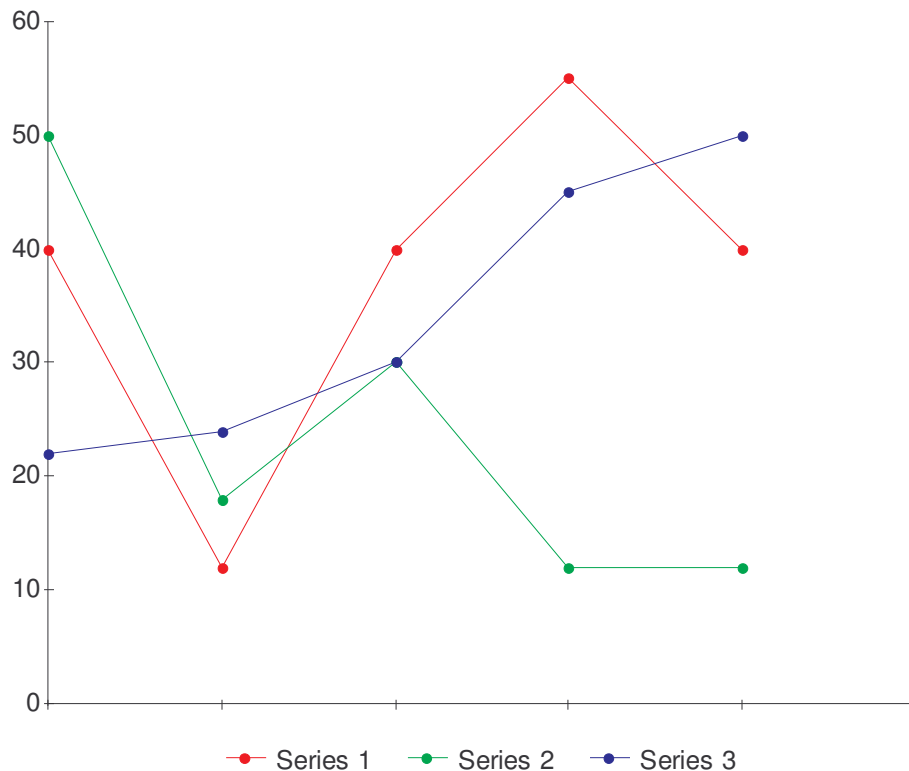
Language Extension

Complete the sentences below so that they make sense

1. I missed the first Harry Potter film. However-----
2. I like most beers except-----
3. I don't know much, but-----
4. I've never been in love, although-----
5. I think Manchester United's goalkeeper is rubbish. Whereas-----
6. She's a good sport. Moreover-----
7. It's dark and-----

Writing Practice

The following chart shows the quarterly profit figures of three different football clubs in the year 2002. Greenwich F.C., Rovers F.C., Blackpool F.C. The vertical Y-axis shows profit in thousands. The horizontal X-axis shows the four quarters of the year 2002.



Write a report to circulate to share holders describing the chart above, in no less than 150 words.

- Start by noting down 8 to 10 main features of the chart
- Write an introductory sentence, which describes the purpose of the chart
- Write out your report using the following language:

1. A variety of verbs which describe upward and downward movement.
2. A variety of phrases which introduce numbers.
3. A variety of time phrases.
4. A variety of words which contrast or add information.

Answer Key

Colour key to questions 1,2,3,4,5.

Phrases which show upward /downward movement (questions 1,2)

Prepositional phrases before numbers (question 3)

Time phrases (question 4)

Words which show contrast or add information (question 5)

Banjo proved to be the most popular chocolate bar in the year 2001, selling a total of 206,000 bars. Banjo's sales figures began the year higher than those of Razzle, Gremlin and Yahoo at 66,000 bars sold in the first quarter. However, by the end of the year Banjo was selling less than at the start at only 50,000 in the last quarter.

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Key to language extension exercises

Question 1 language extension

Downward

Decline
Drop
Fall
Decrease
Plummet
Lose

Upward

Improve
Rise
Jump
Increase
Rocket
Gain

Down and Up or Horizontal

Fluctuate
Level off
Recover
Stabilise

Question 3 language extension

1. at
2. from ----- to
3. at over
4. up ----- to
5. Below
6. to around
7. of
8. of

Question 4 language extension

At the beginning of the year / In February / in the first quarter / At the end of April /
After June / Halfway through the year / Before August / In the last two months of
2002. / By the end of the year