

Line Graph: How to Write the Essay

Introduction

Here is the test question again:

The line graph below shows changes in the amount and type of fast food consumed by Australian teenagers from 1975 to 2000.

Here is an example of the first sentence paraphrased:

The line graph illustrates changes in the volume and type of fast food consumed by teenagers in Australia over a period of 25 years, between 1975 and 2000.

You can see that this restates the question in a different way but maintains the same meaning.

Here is an example of the second sentence overview:

Overall, the consumption of fish and chips declined over the period, whereas the number of times that pizza and hamburgers were eaten both increased.

Main Body Paragraphs I and II

When looking at the graph, it is clear that pizza and hamburgers were following a similar pattern, but fish and chips were different. Therefore, these are two trends that can be compared. Write and focus one paragraph on fish and chips and the other one on pizza and hamburgers. This is also where we now introduce and refer to the data, most importantly describing the main features and giving supporting details where helpful.

When writing the main body paragraphs, it's important not to give opinions; simply describe the trends, differences, or patterns that you see.

Here is an example of the first body paragraph:

In 1975, the fast food most eaten by Australian teenagers was fish and chips, which were consumed 100 times per year. However, except for a short rise from 1980 to 1985, the consumption of fish and chips gradually declined over the 25 years, ending at less than 40 times per year.

The second body paragraph now focuses on the other food group:

In contrast to this, pizza consumption increased gradually until it overtook fish and chips around 1990. It then levelled-off from 1995 to 2000. The most substantial rise was seen in hamburgers, which increased sharply throughout the 1970s and 1980s, exceeding fish and chips consumption shortly after 1985. They then continued to increase, but at a much slower, gradual rate. Hamburgers finished at the same level that fish and chips began, being eaten 100 times per year.

The final essay combined reads as follows:

The line graph illustrates changes in the volume and type of fast food consumed by teenagers in Australia over a period of 25 years, between 1975 and 2000. Overall, the consumption of fish and chips declined over the period, whereas the number of times that pizza and hamburgers were eaten both increased.

In 1975, the fast food most eaten by Australian teenagers was fish and chips, which were consumed 100 times per year. However, except for a short rise from 1980 to 1985, the consumption of fish and chips gradually declined over the 25 years, ending at less than 40 times per year.

In contrast to this, pizza consumption increased gradually until it overtook fish and chips around 1990. It then levelled-off from 1995 to 2000. The most substantial rise was seen in hamburgers, which increased sharply throughout the 1970s and 1980s, exceeding fish and chips consumption shortly after 1985. They then continued to increase, but at a much slower, gradual rate. Hamburgers finished at the same level that fish and chips began, being eaten 100 times per year.

(Word count: 180)

If the word count has not made it past the 150-word requirement, you will need to write a conclusion. Here is an example:

In conclusion, the trends displayed in the line graph clearly demonstrate that there has been a distinct change in fast food preferences amongst Australian teenagers for the given period.

29 words