



Identifying the Topic

IELTS Essay – Identify the Topic

If you incorrectly identify the topic of the IELTS essay question, you are in danger of getting a very low score.

You could come down to a band 5 for Task Response. So identifying the topic is one of the first things you need to do.

Here we will learn and practice doing this.

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How do I identify the topic?

Remember, in IELTS writing, you are usually presented with some issue or problem that is currently affecting society and you need to discuss it.

So you need to read the question carefully and identify what the issue is. You will normally only be looking for one or two key words.

Have a look at the following question. What is the issue?

The crime rate among teenagers has increased dramatically in many countries.

Discuss some possible reasons for this increase and suggest solutions.

You should have identified *teenage crime* as the topic.



The crime rate among teenagers has increased dramatically in many countries.

What if I identified 'crime' as the topic?

Your essay would be wrong if you wrote about crime generally. When you have a topic, it may require you to talk about a particular area, group of people or place.

In this case, the question specifically wants you to address the issue of TEENAGE crime.

When you identify the topic, always look carefully to see if it is being narrowed down to a particular area that you need to focus on.

Identify the Topic – Practice

Have a look at the following essay questions and choose the best answer to identify the topic. Remember, this is not a full analysis of the question – you are just looking for the broad topic area.

Sometimes more than one answer may be possible. In this case, when you identify the topic, choose the most precise.

