

STUDY ENGLISH

IELTS PREPARATION

STUDY NOTES

EPISODE 20: GIVING EXAMPLES

GIVING EXAMPLES

It is important in IELTS, in both the Writing and Speaking tests to support and expand on what you write or say with reasons and arguments, and then offer some examples, as evidence.

There are several language choices, words and structures which can be used for giving examples. Some of these choices are more formal than others and involve particular punctuation formalities.

The word **like** can be used to introduce an example. This word has other meanings and usages. It can also mean **similar to**.

IELTS Tip

Support what you say or write with examples. Make sure the structure or word you choose to introduce an example is of an appropriate register, grammatically correct and followed with the correct punctuation.

Knowing some English idioms and being able to use them correctly and appropriately will help make your language more interesting.

Giving Examples

When giving examples in English, we have several language choices:

Giving Examples	
Transition Signals	for example, for instance, such as, namely
Nouns	an example, an instance, an illustration
Phrases	a case in point

Using the nouns **example** and **instance** and phrases such as **a case in point** are more formal language choices.

When writing or speaking it is possible to use various language choices for giving examples, and in fact it is advisable to use a variety to make your language more interesting.

Sample Response including examples

There are many great things to do in Sydney in summer. **For example**, if the temperatures are warm and there is a good breeze, it is always a treat to go sailing on the harbour. When the weather gets really hot, most people head for the beaches, **such as** Manly, Bondi and Cronulla. Outdoor activities are always popular. **For instance**, many people have barbecues, play cricket or a game of golf when the weather is fine. **Another example** of a popular summer outdoor activity is picnics in public parks and gardens. Sydneysiders also enjoy cycling and bush walking, especially along the new harbour walking track.



Formal Language Choices

There are other language choices for citing examples which have a more formal register. These are **namely**, **a case in point**, **an illustration** and **videlicet** (*viz*).

1. **namely** and **videlicet**

Namely and **videlicet** are used to explicitly identify and name the exact examples.

Videlicet is a Latin word sometimes used in written English. It is abbreviated to **viz**. This is a very formal language choice.

Examples:

There are two common man made fibres, **namely** nylon and rayon.

The longest river in the world, **namely** the Nile, is in Africa.

There are two key reasons for weight increase, **viz** diet and exercise.

Doctors are in short supply in regions where they are most needed, **namely** far outback Australia, in Aboriginal communities.

2. **a case in point**, **an illustration**

These two phrases can be used interchangeably – they have the same meaning and use.

Examples:

Several diseases fatal to humans have been eradicated thanks to strict global vaccination campaigns. Smallpox is **a case in point**.

A further illustration is diphtheria which has largely been eradicated in industrialized nations through widespread vaccination.

Enhanced vaccination efforts led by the World Health Organization **for example**, could result in the global eradication of further diseases. Poliomyelitis is **an excellent illustration**. The incidence of polio could be greatly reduced with the right effort from the WHO.



Spoken English and Giving Examples

The rules for language use in spoken English are usually less rigid than for written English. What is sometimes unacceptable in formal written English is permitted in the spoken, less formal version.

Look at the following sample of spoken English:

Ian says that Chris is a producer who wants the best – the best writer, musician and set designer. **He is a type of producer, for example, the Hollywood type.**

In formal written English, it would be better expressed as:

Ian says that Chris is a producer who wants the best – the best writer, musician and set designer. He is a particular type of producer. **For example, he is (very similar to) the Hollywood type of producer.**

In spoken English, it is common to hear speakers introducing examples using the word **like**.

The kind of story telling that Tim undertakes through “The Future Eaters”, **like** the big allegories of the way that humanity sort of travelled from island to island struck me (as) a huge fable.

Some further examples of the use of **like** meaning **for example** or **such as** and used in spoken English to introduce examples are:

Examples: I really enjoy water sports **like** swimming and surfing.

Some people can not tolerate spicy food **like** Thai and Chinese Sichuan cuisine.

The word **like** can also mean **similar to** or **as**.

The way he talks about the history of Australia, kind of I guess it sort of struck me almost **like** a huge fable.

Further examples of the use of **like** meaning **similar to** are:

Examples: She is very **like** her mother and he is **like** his father.



STUDY ENGLISH

IELTS PREPARATION

Idioms

English has hundreds of idioms or phrases which use **as** to compare one thing with another. Sometimes comparisons are made with the qualities of an animal, such as: **as wise as an owl** and **as slow as a snail**. Sometimes the comparison is made with the quality of something inanimate, such as: **as good as gold**, **as tough as an old boot**.

Following are some examples of idioms in English. Those marked with an * are more common:

Comparison using an animal	Comparison using inanimate object
as angry as a bear (with a sore head)	as black as the ace of spades
as blind as a bat *	as bold as brass
as brave as a lion *	as bright as a button *
as busy as a bee	as brown as a berry *
as cunning as a fox	as cold as ice *
as free as a bird	as cool as a cucumber *
as happy as a lark	as easy as ABC
as hungry as a bear *	as easy as falling off a log
as mad as a hatter	as fit as a fiddle *
as plain as the nose on your face	as fresh as a daisy *
as playful as a kitten	as good as gold
as proud as a peacock	as hard as nails
as quiet as a mouse *	as high as a kite
as sick as a dog *	as hot as Hades (or, as hot as hell)
as silly as a goose	as light as a feather *
as slippery as an eel	as nice as pie
as slow as a snail	as quick as a flash
as sober as a judge	as sweet as candy
as snug as a bug in a rug	as smooth as silk *
as strong as a horse	as sure as eggs
as stubborn as a mule *	as thick as a brick *
as thick as thieves	as tough as an old boot *
as weak as a cat	as warm as toast
as wise as an owl *	as white as snow

Note:

As thick as thieves – here **thick** means **secretive**.
 As thick as a brick – here **thick** means **stupid**.

Examples

I can't go to work today. I'm **as sick as a dog**.
 I couldn't eat that steak. It was **as tough as an old boot**.
 He won't change his mind. He's **as stubborn as a mule**.

They came back from their beach holiday in Hawaii.
 They sunbaked all day and are **as brown as berries**.

How are you?
 I feel fantastic. I'm **as fit as a fiddle**.

How do you keep your skin so smooth? It's **as smooth as silk!**