

Pie Charts

WRITING

WRITING TASK 1
You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The pie charts below show the online shopping sales for retail sectors in New Zealand in 2003 and 2013.
Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 150 words.

Online sales for retail sectors in New Zealand

2003

Retail Sector	Percentage
travel	36%
film/music	21%
books	19%
clothes	24%

2013

Retail Sector	Percentage
travel	29%
film/music	33%
books	22%
clothes	16%

Retail Sector	2003	2013
travel	36%	29%
film/music	21%	33%
books	19%	22%
clothes	24%	16%

Writing about Percentages

When you deal with pie charts you nearly always have to write about percentages. Here are some useful sentence structures/ phrases for describing percentages:

The largest proportion was for __noun__, accounting for __% of the total.

The smallest proportion was for __noun__, accounting for __% of the total.

The amounts of __noun__ and __noun__ were similar, making up __% and __% respectively.

__Noun__ had the lowest amount of sales at __%.

__Noun__ had the highest amount of sales at __%.

Regarding __noun__, little change could be seen with a difference of just __%.

As regards __noun__, there has been a huge change over the years.

Structure of Answer

Here you have two pie charts, so use four paragraphs:

Introduction – rephrase the question in your own words and also the titles of the pie charts.

IELTS WRITING TASK 1: PIE CHARTS – NEW ZEALAND

Pie Chart 1 – describe the percentages of the items the chart is referring to. You might only choose to talk about the lowest and the highest – whatever you think it most important.

Pie Chart 2 – because you have dates here and the question asks you to ‘make comparisons where relevant’ you could choose to compare this chart to the first pie chart and describe how the proportions/ amounts have changed. You could also simply compare between the items in pie chart 2 by using ‘more than/ less than/ the most/ the least’. It is your choice. Here, I have described how the proportions have changed in comparison to 2003 but I have also compared between the items in pie chart 2 alone.

Overall statement – write what the overall/ general pattern or observation is and if you have not done in the main body, maybe try to compare between the two charts.

Test Yourself

Try to put the missing phrases back into the gaps. Each space _____ is for one phrase. Look at the question as well as the example sentences above to help you. The answer is on the final page so do not look!

the largest proportion

not drastically

little change

24%, 21% and 19% respectively

accounting for

with a difference of just

the lowest amount

show the differences

This report will summarise the information presented on two pie charts, which _____ in sales made online in the retail sector of New Zealand for the years 2003 and 2013. The categories of items sold include travel, film/ music, books and clothes.

In 2003 _____ of sales was for travel, _____ 36% of the total. The amounts of the other three items sold were similar with clothes, film/ music and books making up _____.

By 2013 the proportions had changed, although _____. Film/ music became the biggest seller with 33% of the total whilst clothes had _____ of sales at 16%. Regarding books, in a decade little change could be seen _____ 3% whereas the sales of film/ music increased from 21% to 33%.

Overall, it can be seen that in general there has been _____ over the years as regards the characteristics of the online retail sector in New Zealand.

Example Answer

This report will summarise the information presented on two pie charts, which show the differences in sales made online in the retail sector of New Zealand for the years 2003 and 2013. The categories of items sold include travel, film/ music, books and clothes.

In 2003 the largest proportion of sales was for travel, accounting for 36% of the total. The amounts of the other three items sold were similar with clothes, film/ music and books making up 24%, 21% and 19% respectively.

By 2013 the proportions had changed, although not drastically. Film/ music became the biggest seller with 33% of the total whilst clothes had the lowest amount of sales at 16%. Regarding books, in a decade little change could be seen with a difference of just 3% whereas the sales of film/ music increased from 21% to 33%.

Overall, it can be seen that in general there has been little change over the years as regards the characteristics of the online retail sector in New Zealand.

(168 words)