

## Assessing Writing in IELTS: Teaching Focus by Criterion

Criterion	Areas to Teach (What to Focus On)	Activity Ideas (How to Teach It)
<b>1. Task Response (TR)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the question and identifying all parts.</li> <li>• Writing clear thesis statements and topic sentences.</li> <li>• Developing ideas with explanations and examples.</li> <li>• Planning before writing (outlines).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Band Detective</b> – compare two essays (Band 6 vs Band 7) and identify which fully answers all parts of the task.</li> <li>• <b>Outline Race</b> – students quickly plan essays in pairs before writing.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Coherence &amp; Cohesion (CC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organising ideas logically within and between paragraphs.</li> <li>• Maintaining one central idea per paragraph.</li> <li>• Using a range of cohesive devices (linkers, referencing, substitution).</li> <li>• Avoiding overuse or mechanical linking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jumbled Paragraphs</b> – reorder sentences to build logical flow.</li> <li>• <b>Cohesive Chains</b> – highlight reference words and trace what they refer to.</li> <li>• <b>Linking Word Challenge</b> – replace basic connectors with more natural ones.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Lexical Resource (LR)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using topic-specific and academic vocabulary accurately.</li> <li>• Building awareness of collocations and word patterns.</li> <li>• Practising paraphrasing and synonym reformulation.</li> <li>• Prioritising precision over memorised “fancy” words.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Collocation Sort</b> – match or group natural collocations by topic.</li> <li>• <b>Synonym Reformulation</b> – rewrite sentences using more natural paraphrases.</li> <li>• <b>Vocabulary Recycling</b> – use reading/speaking texts to extract and reuse topic words in writing.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Grammatical Range &amp; Accuracy (GRA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producing clear simple sentences before introducing complexity.</li> <li>• Expanding grammatical range: passives, modals, conditionals, relative clauses, noun phrases, comparisons, inversion.</li> <li>• Improving punctuation and sentence boundaries.</li> <li>• Developing error awareness and editing skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sentence Surgery</b> – expand short sentences into complex ones using given structures.</li> <li>• <b>Peer Editing with Codes</b> – correct grammar using agreed symbols (e.g. <i>art.</i> = article, <i>sv</i> = subject–verb).</li> <li>• <b>Grammar Transformation</b> – rewrite sentences in passive/conditional/relative clause forms.</li> </ul>