


PTE Academic Describe Image Test Tips



Tips for getting a high content score for Describe Image.

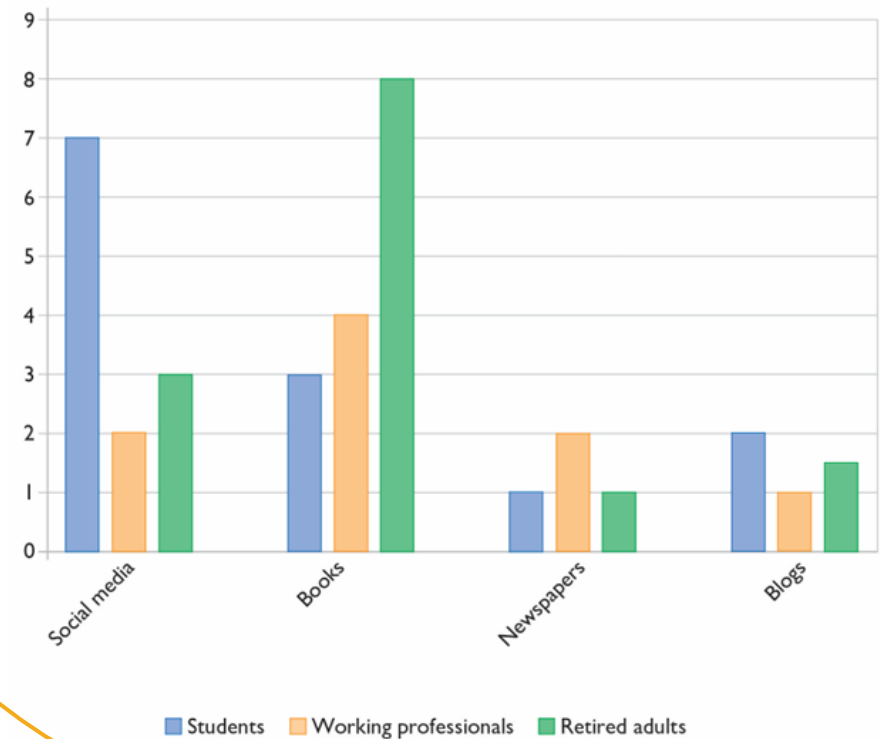
Describe Image

You will see an image

- ▶ This will most likely be a graph, table or pie chart.
- ▶ You will have 25 seconds to study the image and 40 seconds to speak.
- ▶ You will need to describe the image.

Practice image

Reading habits in the city of Winstone, by average hours per week.



Describe Image

Organize your answer – option 1

By organizing what you say, it will be easier to tell the story of the image. You should organize your answer to cover the main information, any important additional details, and any conclusions.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Your response should always be an original response created on test day. It should use your own words and only refer to information that is directly relevant to the image.

Sample response

Introduction

“The table shows the reading habits in Winstone, measured in hours per week. The data is categorized by type of reading material—social media, books, newspapers, and blogs—and divided into three groups: students, working professionals, and retired adults.”

Main points

“The data shows that books are most popular with retired adults, who read them for 8 hours per week. Students spend the most time on social media, at 7 hours per week, while working professionals have a mixed preference but spend the most time on books, at 4 hours per week.”

Other details

“Newspapers have the lowest reading time across all groups, ranging from 1 to 2 hours per week for students, working professionals, and retired adults.”

Conclusion

“Overall, books are the most popular reading format across all groups, followed by social media, while newspapers and blogs are least popular.”

Describe Image

Organize your answer – option 2

By organizing what you say, it will be easier to tell the story of the image. You should organize your answer to cover the main information, any important additional details, and any conclusions.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Your response should always be an original response created on test day. It should use your own words and only refer to information that is directly relevant to the image.

Sample response

Introduction

“The table presents the reading habits in Winstone, showing the weekly time spent on social media, books, newspapers, and blogs by students, working professionals, and retired adults.”

Key features

“Books are most popular among retired adults, with 8 hours per week, and least popular among students, with 3 hours. Social media is most read by students, at 7 hours per week, and least read by working professionals, at 2 hours. Blogs and newspapers are read for about 1-2 hours per week across all groups.”

Most significant feature and conclusion

“The most significant feature is that books are the most popular reading material across all three groups, followed by social media. Blogs and newspapers are less commonly read.”

Important Test Tips

Do

- ✔ Use your preparation time before the recording starts to identify the key trends and the most significant trend.
- ✔ Make sure you speak for 30–40 seconds. You are unlikely to mention the key features in 20 seconds or less.
- ✔ Use numbers from the image in your spoken response.

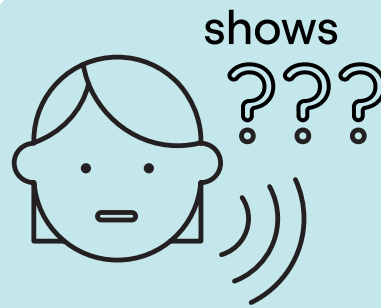
Don't

- ✘ Use memorised responses or templated sentences. E.g., *The image is of a beautiful graph and shows various information.* If you use pre-memorised content, you are likely to get a score of 0 for your content. If your content score is 0, fluency and pronunciation will not be scored, so your overall score will be 0 for the task.
- ✘ Try to mention every feature. You need to identify the key features in the image and you only have 40 seconds to speak so you can't mention every feature.
- ✘ Spend too much time describing the labels.
- ✘ Add your own opinion when speaking. You should only describe elements you can see in the image.

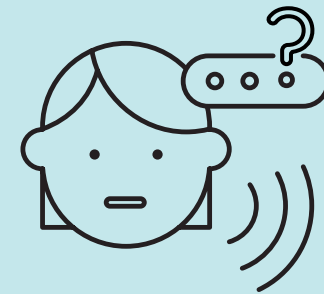
Common mistakes



Test takers often mention only one or two key points when more details are needed, leading to an incomplete response. Short responses, particularly those under 20 seconds, do not effectively describe the key points and draw meaningful conclusions.



Test takers describe the image in a mechanical way, such as “2017 shows..., 2018 shows..., 2019 shows...,” and this fails to demonstrate an understanding of the key elements and their relationships.



Test takers may have slow fluency, which affects their ability to cover the main points of the image, or they may speak too quickly with poor pronunciation, both of which negatively impact their score.

Describe Image - Excellent sample answers

Answer A

“So this graph shows us the sightings of dolphins and whales in the bay.

So in for example, 2017, 522 whales were seen whereas in 2018, 253 whales were seen.

However, in 2019 it was the opposite, there were more sightings of dolphins.

And then in 2020 we can see that there were more sightings of whales again, with around 700 whales being seen and only 500 dolphins being seen.

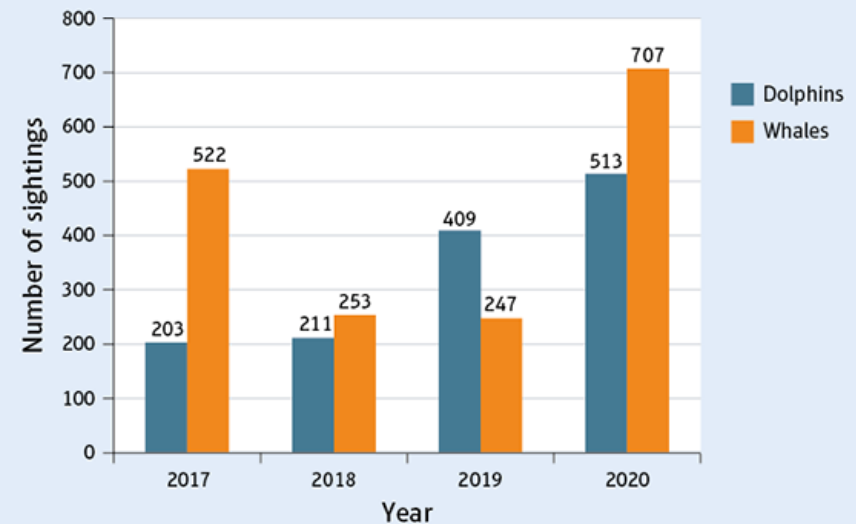
More whales were sighted than dolphins in 3 of the 4 years.”

ANSWER EXPLANATION:

This is an excellent answer for content. It mentions all the elements of the image and it also draws a conclusion and looks at the relationship between the data (e.g., more whales than dolphins were sighted in 3 of the 4 years).

Practice image

Sightings of dolphins and whales in the bay



Describe Image - Excellent sample answers

Answer B

“The chart shows the sightings of dolphins and whales, in a bay, across the years 2017-2020. So 4 years.

We can see straightaway that the sightings of dolphins is actually increasing – from around 200 to 513 across the four years. Whereas the sightings for whales has sort of fluctuated, so it was 522 in 2017, then went down to around 250 and then to 250 again in 2019 and then up to 707 whales in 2020.

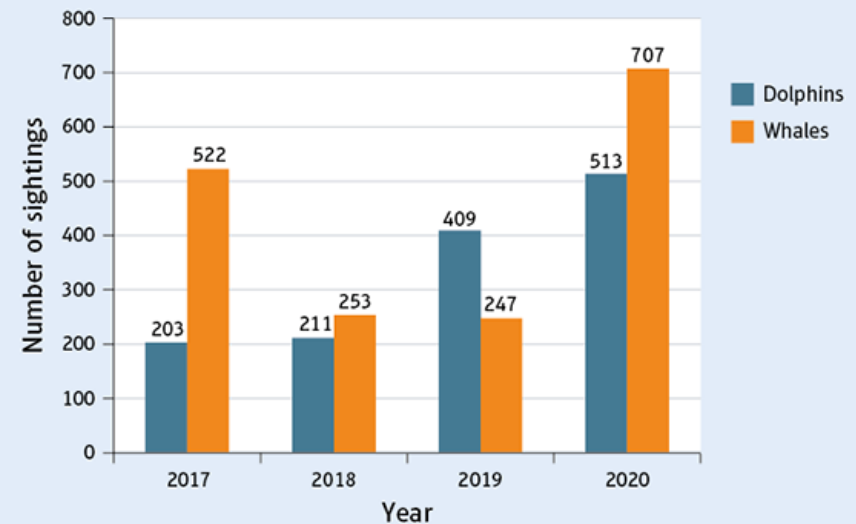
It seems that the sightings of these animals has increased or is increasing over the period with 2020 being the year where there were the most sightings.”

ANSWER EXPLANATION:

This is an excellent answer for content. It mentions all the elements and draws a conclusion and considers the relationship between the data (e.g., the sightings of dolphins is actually increasing from 200 to 513).

Practice image

Sightings of dolphins and whales in the bay



Describe Image - Average sample answers

Answer C

“So this graph describes sightings of dolphins and whales on the first year.

On 2017 had a lot more whales, almost twice the amount 2018 less less whale, same amount of dolphins. On the year after that we saw an increase in the number of dolphins.

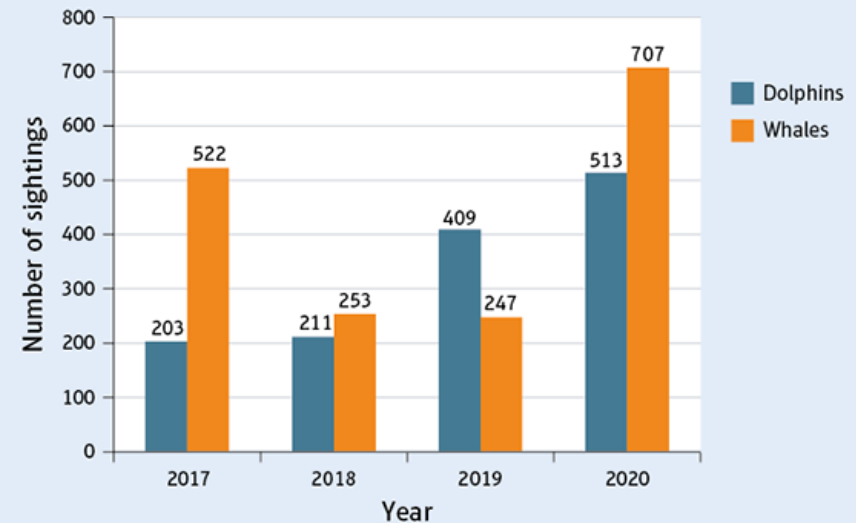
The whales stayed the same and in 2020 there was a very large increase in both the sightings of dolphins and whales.”

ANSWER EXPLANATION:

This is an average answer for content. It mentions most key elements of the image and refers to some conclusions (e.g., there was a large increase in both sightings of dolphins and whales in 2020).

Practice image

Sightings of dolphins and whales in the bay



Describe Image - Average sample answers

Answer D

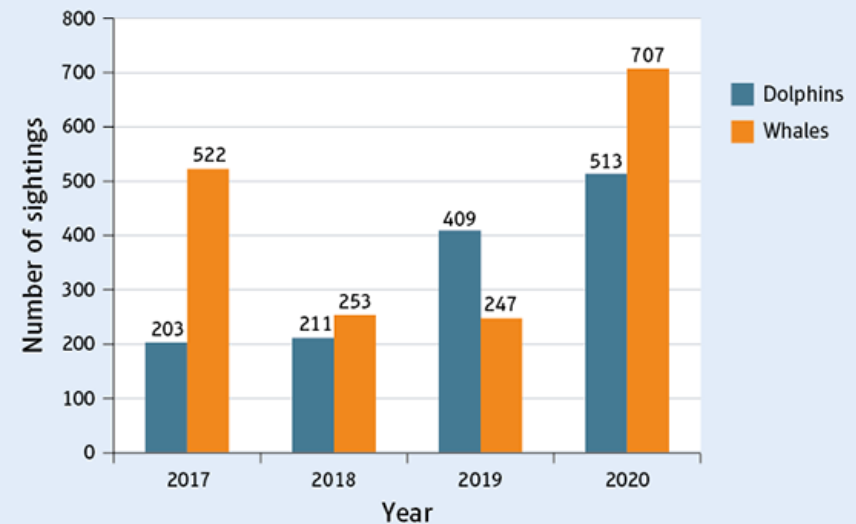
"In this graph we can see sightings of dolphins and whales in the years 2017 to the year 2020, and can also see that in nearly every year the number of whales - the number of whales sightings were bigger than the dolphins."

ANSWER EXPLANATION:

This is an average answer for content. It mentions key elements of the image and refers to some conclusions (e.g., the number of whales sightings were bigger than dolphins). The answer does not describe all the key features.

Practice image

Sightings of dolphins and whales in the bay



Describe Image - Poor sample answers

Answer E

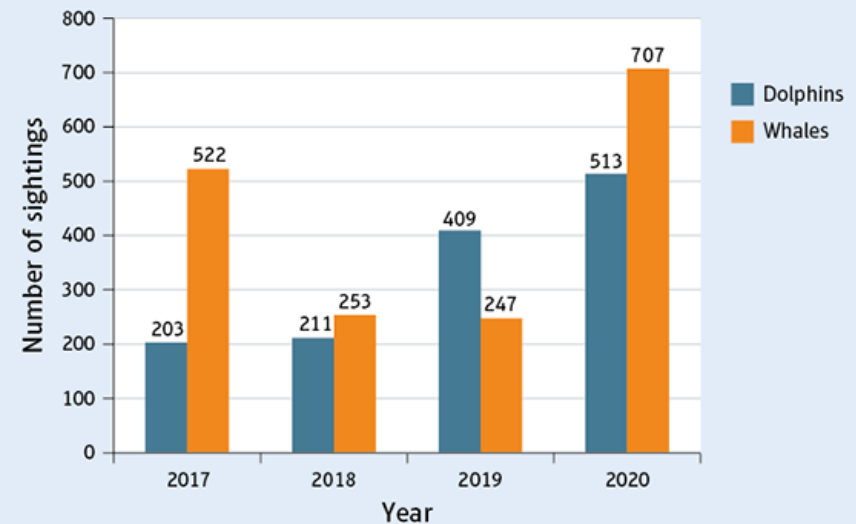
"It shows an increasing amount of spotting of dolphins throughout the the last years and the spottings of whales also."

ANSWER EXPLANATION:

This is a poor answer for content. It only describes some basic elements of the image and is a very short response.

Practice image

Sightings of dolphins and whales in the bay



Describe Image - Poor sample answers

Answer F

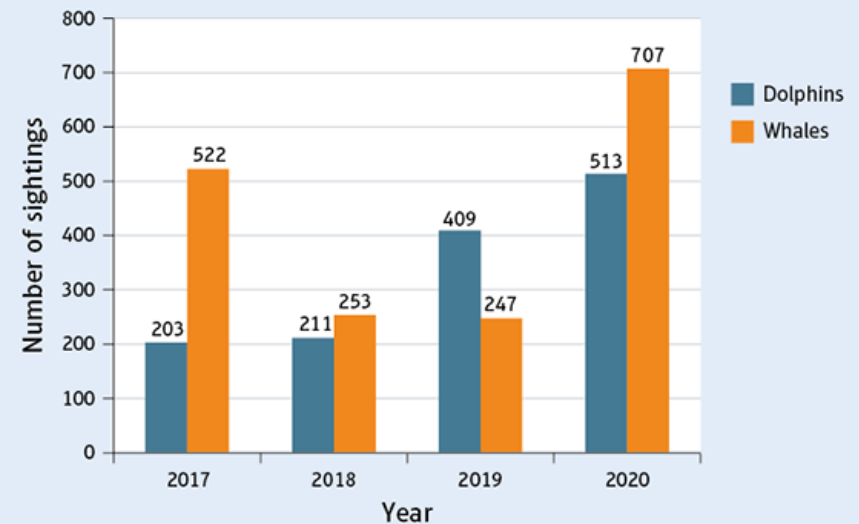
"This is a very informative and interesting picture. It shows 2017, it shows 2018, it shows 2019 and 2020. It shows number of sightings. It shows sightings of dolphins. It shows dolphins. It shows whales. It shows that the data is increasing and decreasing to different levels. That is the end of my task describing an image. Thank you very much for listening to me."

ANSWER EXPLANATION:

This is a very poor answer for content. The test taker does not deal with the prompt because they include a significant amount of pre-prepared material.

Practice image

Sightings of dolphins and whales in the bay



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