IELTS VOCABULARY BY TOPIC

Complete collection • Units 1–10

30 topics • 600 vocabulary words

Unit 1: The Natural World

Environmental Impacts of Logging

Vocabulary	Meaning
aquatic	Living in or relating to water.
array	A large number or collection of things.
defense	Protection against harm or danger.
deforestation	The removal of all trees from a large area.
environment	The natural world and the conditions in which living things exist.
erosion	The wearing away or loss of soil by water or wind.
extend	To reach beyond a point or to become larger.
fell	To cut down a tree.
habitat	The natural area where a plant or animal lives.
impact	A strong effect or influence.
inhibit	To prevent, restrain or slow down.
intercept	To catch or stop something before it reaches its destination.
logging	The cutting down of trees for commercial purposes.
myriad	A very large number; numerous.
nutrient	A substance that provides nourishment or food.
pollution	Damage or contamination of air, water or the environment.
stabilize	To make or keep something steady; to prevent it from changing.
terrestrial	Living on or relating to land.
vanish	To disappear.
vegetation	Plants considered collectively, especially those in a particular area.

Bird Migration

Vocabulary	Meaning
aspect	A part, feature or particular element of something.
breed	To reproduce.
diurnal	Active during the day.
endure	To continue to exist or live through difficult conditions.
evolve	To develop gradually over time.
fascinate	To interest someone greatly.
feat	A difficult act or notable achievement.
fuel	To provide energy for something.
hemisphere	One half of the Earth or one half of a sphere.
imperative	A priority or urgent necessity.
inhabit	To live in or occupy a place.
migration	The movement from one place to another, often seasonally.
navigation	The process or skill of finding the way from one place to another.
nocturnal	Active during the night.
observer	A person who watches or notices something.
obscure	To make difficult to see or understand.
optimal	Best or most favourable.
species	A type or basic group in biological classification.
stray	To leave the correct route or become separated from a group.
windswept	Exposed to strong winds.

Plant Life in the Taklimakan Desert

Vocabulary	Meaning
accumulate	To gradually gather or increase over time.
adapt	To change to suit a particular situation or environment.
determine	To decide or establish something.
dilute	To make a substance weaker by mixing it with water or another liquid.
diverse	Varied; consisting of many different kinds.
evaporation	The process by which a liquid changes into a gas; the loss of water to the air.
extreme	Very severe, strong or difficult.
fringe	The edge or outer boundary of something.
mechanism	A process, method or behaviour used to deal with a situation.
minimize	To reduce something to the smallest possible amount.
moisture	A small amount of water or wetness.
occupy	To be in or take up a place; to exist in a particular area.
prolific	Producing a large amount or number of something.
resilient	Able to recover or endure difficult conditions.
sparse	Present in small numbers or amounts; not dense.
stressor	Something that causes pressure, strain or difficulty.
swing	A sudden or significant change.
thrive	To grow, develop or prosper well.
transitional	Relating to a change from one state, stage or type to another.
violent	Strong, sudden and destructive.

Unit 2: Leisure Time

Peripheral Vision in Sports

Vocabulary	Meaning
anticipate	To expect something or be ready for it to happen.
athlete	A person who plays sports.
blur	Something that cannot be seen clearly.
boundary	An edge or border.
complicate	To make something more difficult.
coordinate	To organize things or make them work together.
demonstrate	To show or model something.
detect	To notice or become aware of something.
distracting	Taking attention away from something.
focus	To concentrate attention on one thing.
indiscernibly	In a way that is impossible to see or notice.
indistinct	Unclear; not sharply defined.
maneuver	A movement or action requiring skill.
performance	How well a person or machine does something.
peripheral	At or relating to the outer edge.
range	An area or extent.
scan	To look over or examine quickly.
tolerate	To accept or allow something, even if it is unpleasant.
unconsciously	Without thinking; automatically.
vision	The ability to see; sight.

History of the Circus

Vocabulary	Meaning
ancient	Very old; belonging to the distant past.
band	A small group of people.
century	A period of 100 years.
develop	To grow or change over time.
entertainment	A performance or show that provides enjoyment.
exhibit	Something shown or displayed to the public.
exotic	Unusual or originating from a foreign place.
found	To start or establish an institution or organization.
grandeur	Greatness or impressive magnificence.
massive	Very large or great in size.
permanently	In a lasting way; for always.
popular	Liked or enjoyed by many people.
reduce	To make something smaller or less.
remnant	A small remaining piece or part.
renovation	The repair or rebuilding of something.
spectator	A person who watches an event.
survive	To continue to live or exist.
talent	A special natural ability or skill.
trainer	A person who teaches skills to people or animals.
venue	A place where an event is held.

Uses of Leisure Time

Vocabulary	Meaning
acknowledge	To admit or accept something as true.
authority	A person or organization with power or special knowledge.
chunk	A large piece or portion.
crucial	Extremely important.
deliberately	Intentionally; on purpose.
depression	A state of constant sadness.
emotion	A strong feeling, such as anger or love.
engage	To participate in or become involved in something.
industrious	Hardworking.
intellectual	Related to thinking or the mind.
merely	Only; simply.
obesity	The condition of being very overweight.
obvious	Easy to see or understand; clear.
overwhelming	Extremely powerful or very large.
passive	Not active; accepting things without taking action.
pastime	An activity done for enjoyment during free time.
physical	Related to the body.
rejuvenate	To refresh or restore energy.
reluctant	Unwilling or hesitant to do something.
suffer	To experience something difficult or painful.

Unit 3: Transportation

First Headlamps

Vocabulary	Meaning
cast	To throw light on something.
disaster	A terrible or catastrophic event.
display	To show or exhibit something.
drawback	A problem or disadvantage.
efficient	Able to work well without wasting time, energy or resources.
equip	To provide someone or something with the necessary items or equipment.
freight	Goods or cargo carried by a train, truck or ship.
generate	To make or produce something.
illuminator	An object or device that produces light.
innovation	A new idea, method or product.
intense	Very strong or powerful.
knot	A hard bump or raised area in wood.
locomotive	The engine of a train.
mode	A method or type of doing something.
portable	Easy to carry or move.
reflector	An object that sends light back or makes it stronger.
rugged	Strong and able to withstand rough treatment.
stringent	Strict, firm or severe.
tricky	Difficult to deal with or understand.
vulnerable	Weak or unprotected; easily harmed.

Major Subways of Europe

Vocabulary	Meaning
architecture	The style or design of a building.
centerpiece	The main or most important feature of something.
clog	To fill or block something so that movement becomes difficult.
decorate	To make an object or place more attractive.
destruction	The act of ruining or damaging something completely.
disruptive	Causing an interruption to the usual course of activity.
expand	To make or become bigger.
headquarters	The central office or main base of an organization or commander.
intrinsic	Basic or essential; belonging naturally to something.
operation	The working or functioning of something.
pedestrian	A person travelling on foot.
release	To let something out.
rival	To compete with or be equal to someone or something.
shield	Something that serves as protection.
showcase	A setting or display in which something is presented.
spring up	To appear or develop suddenly.
surface	The outer part or top of something.
underground	Below the surface of the ground.
utilize	To use something for a particular purpose.
vent	An opening that allows air, steam or smoke to escape.

Electric Cars Around the Globe

Vocabulary	Meaning
accelerate	To gain speed or make something move faster.
appeal	To be interesting or attractive to someone.
charge	The amount of electrical power a battery can store.
classify	To divide things into groups according to type.
commuter	A person who regularly travels between home and work.
consume	To use up a resource, such as energy or fuel.
embrace	To accept or welcome something enthusiastically.
flair	A natural talent or an elegant, distinctive style.
fume	Harmful gas or smoke in the air.
hamper	To make something difficult or obstruct its progress.
incentive	A reason or reward that encourages someone to do something.
markedly	Noticeably; to a significant degree.
monetary	Related to money.
plodding	Moving or progressing slowly.
rural	Related to the countryside.
span	To cross or extend across an area or distance.
sprawl	An area of spreading or uncontrolled growth.
standard	The normal or commonly accepted thing.
suburban	Related to the area just outside a city.
urban	Related to a city or town.

Unit 4: Culture

Origins of Writing

Vocabulary	Meaning
adopt	To accept or start to use something new.
agricultural	Related to farming.
attribute	To give credit to or identify something as the origin or cause of something.
carve	To cut and shape a hard material.
civilization	Human society, its organization and culture.
creator	The first maker of something.
deed	An act, especially one that is good or bad.
encompass	To include or contain something.
excavation	An area or process of digging, especially to find objects from past cultures.
function	To perform or work well; to serve a purpose.
inscribe	To mark a surface with words or letters.
literacy	The ability to read and write.
mythology	A set of traditional stories used to explain the origins of things.
property	Something that is owned.
scholar	A person who has a great deal of knowledge about a particular subject.
settle	To establish a permanent place to live.
specialized	Related to a particular area or type of work.
structure	Something that is built, such as a building or bridge.
tablet	A thin, flat piece of material used for writing.
token	An object used to represent something else.

Hula Dancing in Hawaiian Culture

Vocabulary	Meaning
accompany	To go with something or happen at the same time.
altar	A table or similar structure used for religious ceremonies.
benefit	Use or advantage.
celebration	A social event marking a special day or occasion.
discourage	To try to stop or prevent something.
elaborate	Having a lot of detail and decoration.
energetic	Having a lot of energy.
evidence	Signs or proof that something is or is not true.
evoke	To bring something to mind.
floral	Related to flowers.
garland	A decorative rope or chain of flowers or leaves.
graceful	Having beauty of movement.
image	A mental picture.
influence	An effect or power.
reign	The period of time during which a king or queen is in power.
revive	To bring back to life.
ritual	A set of actions used as part of a ceremony.
stereotype	A fixed idea people have about something, especially one that is wrong.
sway	To move back and forth.
tradition	A custom or belief shared by a group of people.

The Art of Mime

Vocabulary	Meaning
abstract	Not concrete; related to ideas or feelings.
atmosphere	The feeling or character of a place.
conflict	Difficulty, opposition or disagreement.
considerably	A great deal; noticeably.
culminate	To result in or end with something.
effectively	Well or successfully.
emerge	To appear or develop.
exaggerated	Made to seem larger or more important than it really is.
frailty	Weakness or lack of strength.
gesture	A movement used to express a feeling or idea.
humorous	Funny or entertaining.
illusion	An appearance of being real; a false impression.
literal	Following the exact meaning of words.
merge	To combine or join together.
portray	To represent or act out.
prominent	Important or major; easily noticed.
prop	An object used by actors during a performance.
reminiscent	Similar to or reminding someone of something.
renowned	Famous or well known.
sharpen	To improve or perfect a skill or ability.

Unit 5: Health

Nurse Migration

Vocabulary	Meaning
abroad	in a foreign country
administer	to give medicine or medical treatment
bulk	the largest part
complex	not simple
cripple	to cause serious damage; weaken
decade	a period of ten years
decline	to gradually go lower or become smaller
epidemic	the rapid spread of a disease
estimate	to guess based on information
lure	to attract
primary	main; most important
qualified	skilled and able to do a job
rampant	spreading out of control
retain	to keep
rudimentary	basic; not well developed
shortage	a lack of something
standpoint	a point of view
stem	to come from; originate
supply	the total amount available
vacancy	a position or job that needs to be filled

Aerobic Exercise and Brain Health

Vocabulary	Meaning
aerobic	of or relating to energetic exercise
capacity	the total amount available
cognition	the use of mental processes
concentration	a large amount of something in the same place
counteract	to work against
dementia	the loss of intellectual functioning of the brain
deterioration	the situation of becoming worse
diagnose	to identify an illness
disorder	a disease or illness
gravity	seriousness
impaired	damaged or weakened
indicate	to show
link	a connection
mood	a feeling; a state of mind
previously	before
regulate	to control
rodent	a small animal in the group that includes mice and rats
spatial	of or relating to space
stave off	to prevent
stimulate	to cause a response

How Drugs Are Studied

Vocabulary	Meaning
absorb	to take in
alleviate	to lessen; ease
ascertain	to determine; find out
chronic	long-lasting
combat	to fight against
culture	the growing of organic materials in a laboratory setting
deem	to believe; judge
desirable	wanted; worth having
enhance	to improve
fraction	a small part
interval	the period between two times or events
investigation	a study
manufacture	to produce
monitor	to watch; observe
outcome	a result
recur	to happen or occur again
substance	material
target	to focus on
theoretical	abstract; based on theory
toxic	poisonous

Unit 6: Tourism

Hiking the Inca Trail

Vocabulary	Meaning
accessible	reachable; easy to get to
adventurous	daring; willing to try new or dangerous activities
archaeologist	a person who studies ancient cultures
ceremonial	related to traditional or formal practices
construct	to build
draw	to attract; pull
imagination	the ability to think creatively and form pictures in the mind
institute	to start; put in place
luxury	something expensive and desirable but unnecessary
marvel	a wonderful thing
mystery	something strange, unknown, or difficult to understand
native	original to a place
network	a system of various parts that work together
pertain	to be related to something
precisely	exactly
preserve	to protect; save
restriction	an official limit on something
site	a place
spectacular	wonderful to see
upside	an advantage; good part

What Is Ecotourism?

Vocabulary	Meaning
accommodations	a place to stay, such as a hotel
avoid	to prevent from happening; stay away from
barrier	something that blocks or separates
category	a group of things that have something in common
concept	an idea
culprit	the guilty party; the origin of a problem
delicate	easily hurt or broken
destination	the place somebody or something is going to
dump	to get rid of garbage and trash
injure	to hurt
pleasure	enjoyment
practice	a custom or method
principle	a rule; the basic idea behind a system
publicity	activity that makes something known to the public
recycling	the collection and treatment of trash for reuse
remote	far away
strive	to work very hard to do something
volunteer	to work for no pay; freely offer to do something
wary	not completely trusting
wilderness	a natural region away from towns and cities

Learning Vacations

Vocabulary	Meaning
acquire	to learn something or get something
breeze	a light wind
broad	wide or large
budget	a plan for spending money
colorful	interesting and unusual
content	subject matter
costly	expensive
cuisine	a style of cooking
economical	inexpensive
endeavor	an activity with a specific purpose; an effort
enroll	to sign up for a class
hone	to sharpen; improve
ingredient	an item in a recipe
ongoing	continuing
residential	with living accommodations; related to housing
resort	a vacation place
sponsor	to organize and be responsible for
supervision	direction; assistance
survey	a study of opinions in a sample of the population
taste	a preference

Unit 7: Business

What Makes a Small Business Successful?

Vocabulary	Meaning
afloat	having enough money to pay what you owe
characteristic	a feature or quality
compete	to do as well as or better than others
edge	an advantage
financial	related to money
inevitably	certainly; to be expected
initial	first; beginning
motivation	a reason for doing something
niche	a position or place that is very suitable
particular	specific
personalized	made or done especially for a certain person
potential	possible
product	something that is made
profit	money earned after paying costs
project	to estimate or calculate a future amount
reputation	the general opinion about something or somebody
sound	healthy; without financial risk
tip	a piece of advice
unique	special; different from all others
vital	very important; necessary for success

Brand Loyalty

Vocabulary	Meaning
bond	a connection
brand	a company name for a product
burgeoning	growing
conglomerate	a large company that owns smaller companies
consistently	regularly; always
convince	to get somebody to do or believe something
endorsement	public support for something
fleeting	brief; ending quickly
ignore	to not pay attention to
loyalty	faithfulness; belief in something
outperform	to perform better than
passion	a very strong feeling or interest
phenomenon	something unusual that happens; a fact
prevail	to be common among certain groups
promote	to advertise
reverse	to turn around; change to its opposite
selective	intentionally choosing some things and not others
staple	a basic household item
status	social position
thirst	a strong enthusiasm for something

Global Outsourcing

Vocabulary	Meaning
boon	a benefit; advantage
branch	a local office of a larger company
catch up	to reach someone or something that is ahead
coincide	to happen at the same time
confront	to face a difficulty
controversy	a lot of disagreement affecting many people
decisive	important; affecting a decision
enticing	attractive
epicenter	a central or most important place
firm	a company or business organization
looming	nearing; usually said of a threat or difficulty
opponent	someone who disagrees and speaks out
point	to call attention to
preponderance	the largest amount
proponent	a supporter
remainder	the rest; what is left
routinely	on a regular basis
shift	a period of work time
turnover	the rate at which employees leave and are replaced
wealthy	rich

Unit 8: Society

Social Networking

Vocabulary	Meaning
acquaintance	a friend you do not know well
adolescent	a person between the ages of thirteen and nineteen
apparently	seemingly
carry out	to do; perform
community	a social group
consequence	a result
contact	communication; connection
eradicate	to remove completely
exchange	to trade something
explode	to grow suddenly and rapidly
immense	very big; huge
impose	to force
interact	to communicate with
post	to display information in a public place
pursue	to hunt for; seek
statistics	information in the form of numbers; data
susceptible	easily affected
trend	movement in a certain direction; popular fashion
undergo	to experience; suffer
unfold	to develop; open up

Why Are Women Leaving Science Careers?

Vocabulary	Meaning
absence	not being present; time away
academic	related to school, especially university
approximately	close but not exactly
bear	to carry; have responsibility for
commensurate	similar in size or amount
devote	to give; commit
dire	very serious or extreme; very bad
discrepancy	a difference between two things that should be the same
equality	being the same; having the same rights and opportunities
frustration	lack of satisfaction; inability to reach goals
funding	financial support
guidance	advice; assistance
inordinate	more than is reasonable
invaluable	very valuable; extremely useful
mentor	a person who gives help and advice
persist	to continue
pressure	demands; responsibilities
progress	to move forward
struggle	to fight
validate	to confirm; make a person feel valued

Wheelchair-Accessibility Issues

Vocabulary	Meaning
abound	to exist in large numbers
account for	to be responsible for; be the cause of
capable	able to do something
compact	small
corridor	a hallway
curb	the raised edge of the street
disability	a condition that makes it difficult to do things other people do
exterior	the outside of something
incapacitated	unable to do things normally
interior	the inside of something
necessitate	to make necessary
poverty	the condition of being poor
ramp	a surface at an angle, with the top higher than the bottom
recreation	leisure activities
slippery	causing things to slide or slip; difficult to hold or stand on
slope	a smooth surface that allows access between levels
switch	a button used to turn on lights or machines
terrain	the surface of land
unwieldy	difficult to manage
update	to modernize; improve

Unit 9: Education

Learning Styles

Vocabulary	Meaning
approach	a method
auditory	related to hearing
blend	a mixture; combination
circumstance	a situation
confidence	belief in one's abilities
conventional	normal; traditional
diagram	a simple drawing to explain how something works
dominant	more important; stronger
encouragement	praise or support to keep going
expose	to give an opportunity to experience or learn new things
facial	related to the face
fidget	to move constantly in a nervous manner
hinder	to prevent; get in the way
incorporate	to add in; bring together
kinesthetic	related to body motion
manipulate	to move things around with the hands
obstruction	something that blocks or stands in the way
recite	to say or repeat out loud
solitary	done alone; independent
verbal	related to words

The Homeschool Option

Vocabulary	Meaning
address	to deal with a problem or issue
adequately	well enough
alternative	a choice
compulsory	required
concerned	worried
dissatisfied	not pleased
exceptional	special; above average
instruction	teaching
latter	near the end
majority	the larger part; most
mandate	to order officially; require
novel	new and unusual
obligatory	required
periodic	repeated regularly
philosophy	a set of beliefs and values
prior	before; previous
relatively	in comparison to something else
tutor	a private teacher
vast	very big
widespread	common

Educating the Gifted

Vocabulary	Meaning
assess	to measure
constructive	positive; beneficial
curriculum	the set of subjects taught at a school
dedicate	to give; devote
discipline	maintaining correct behavior
enriched	improved; describing something of higher quality
extraordinary	special; exceptional
gifted	having special talents or abilities
inquisitiveness	desire for knowledge
interpretation	understanding
moderately	slightly
peer	a person at an equal level with another
profoundly	greatly; extremely
recognize	to identify
remedial	describing education programs designed to address an area of difficulty
simultaneous	happening at the same time
sophisticated	advanced; complex
transfer	to move from one place to another
turn into	to become
withdrawal	not wanting to participate

Unit 10: Technology/Inventions

The Development of the Lightbulb

Vocabulary	Meaning
back	to support, especially financially
clamp	to hold tightly
critical	very important
current	a flow of electricity, water, or air
derive	to get something from something else; originate
device	a machine or tool
entrepreneur	somebody who starts a business
file	to officially record something
infringement	an action that breaks a rule or law
inspiration	a sudden good idea; a role model for creativity
invalid	not legal or correct
inventor	a person who creates new things
investor	a person who puts money into a business
patent	a right to an invention granted by the government
ransack	to search thoroughly, often violently or carelessly
refinement	an improvement
ruling	a legal decision
specifically	exactly; for a particular reason
suitable	appropriate; acceptable for something
unveil	to make public; uncover

The Invention of Variable-Pitch Propellers

Vocabulary	Meaning
aviation	the development, design, and use of aircraft
blade	a thin, flat part of a machine
coarse	rough; not smooth
confer	to discuss; consult with somebody
cruise	to travel at a steady speed
curiosity	interest; a need to know
design	a plan for making something
enthusiast	a person who is very interested in something
handle	to manage; work well with
inflexibility	inability to change
isolation	the condition of being alone or separated from others
pitch	the angle or slope of something
prolonged	continuing for a long time, often in a negative sense
propeller	a device that causes an airplane or boat to move
reliably	dependably
revolutionize	to change completely
rotation	turning motion
sustained	having the ability to continue for a long time
turbulence	strong, sudden movements in air
variable	able to change

The Transatlantic Cable

Vocabulary	Meaning
cable	wire used for sending electric signals
catastrophic	extremely bad
compensate	to make up for; balance out
disparate	different
flaw	a mistake or weakness, especially in design
indispensable	completely necessary
inexplicably	without explanation
inquiry	an official investigation
insulation	material used to prevent passage of electricity, heat, or sound
perseverance	continuation with a task despite difficulties
rally	to gather support
requisite	a need; requirement
set out	to start an activity
snap	to break suddenly
tow	to pull behind
transmit	to send
triumph	to succeed; win
utterly	totally
vilified	having one's reputation ruined; being spoken about in a bad way
voltage	a measure of electric power