**Coherence and Cohesion: How to make your IELTS writing answer flow smoothly**  
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Coherence and cohesion is one of four major parts that IELTS examiners consider when marking IELTS writing papers. Therefore, it is important for candidates to understand what to consider about coherence and cohesion in order to receive a high IELTS score.  
  
Coherence and cohesion basically mean how well your writing connects or flows together. Some things you should ask yourself while writing your IELTS answer are:  
  
- Do you use a range of transition signals (for example, however, firstly..)?  
- Do you avoid repeating words by using synonyms (increase, rise, jump..) or pronouns (it, them, they..)?  
- Is your writing nicely arranged into logical paragraphs focusing on one idea?  
- Do you have a thesis statement introducing your essay in your first paragraph?  
- Is there good flow between sentences and paragraphs?  
  
Try the following coherence and cohesion exercise then check your answers:  
  
**Exercise 1: *Coherence & Cohesion***  
  
Study the essay below. There are some gaps in the text, and some words which need improving. You should:  
add transition signals in *some* of the gaps;  
add phrases in the other gaps (e.g. in the thesis and summary – study the topic sentences to help);  
change some words or phrases to make the coherence and cohesion better.  
*Add transition signal*  
  
*Add trans signal to show similarity*  
  
  
  
  
  
  
*Complete the thesis by studying the topic sentences*  
  
*Change this to show*importance  
  
In the past, most women stayed at home to take care of housework \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ cooking or cleaning. Women’s liberation has meant that this situation has been changed, and in modern society women are playing an almost equal role to men in employment. This has had significant effects, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in terms of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, for example by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and increasing children’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and also for society itself with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
*These tr signals are very simple- make them better*  
  
*Use pronouns to avoid repetition*  
  
The salary of a woman in her lifetime is generally much less than that of a man. A woman can nevertheless make a big addition to the family income. One result of adding to the family income is an improved quality of life. By helping to keep a stable salary for the family, the pressure on the husband is much reduced, so improving both the husband’s and the wife’s good feeling. And the things that can be bought by the family will also be raised. So the family can have enough money to buy more luxuries such as foreign travel and a family car.  
Secondly is the promotion of independence in the children. Some might argue that having both parents working might be harmful to the children because of a lack of care by parents. But such children have to learn to look after themselves at an earlier age, and their parents often depend on them to help with the housework. So this teaches them important life skills.  
*Add transition signal*  
  
*Change this to show*importance  
  
As regards society, one impact of women going to work is greater sex equality. There are an increasing number of women who are becoming politicians, lawyers, and even CEOs and company managers. This in turn has led to greater equality for women in all areas of life, not just employment. Women are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ allowed by law to vote, they can be in the armed forces, and they have legal rights to protect themselves against  
home violence or sex bothering or unfair treatment at work.  
*Complete the summary by studying the topic sentences*  
  
In conclusion, the increasing number of women at work has brought about some important changes to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, including \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and increased \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, as well as affecting \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It is clear that the sexes are still a long way from being equal in all areas of life, however, and perhaps the challenge for the present century is to ensure that this takes place.  
  
  
  
**Coherence & Cohesion (1): Answers**  
  
[Note: there are other possible answers – yours should be similar to these, but may not be exactly the same.]  
  
In the past, most women stayed at home to take care of housework such as cooking or cleaning. Women’s liberation has meant that this situation has been changed, and in modern society women are playing an almost equal role to men in employment. This has had significant effects, both in terms of the family, for example by improving quality of life and increasing children’s sense of independence, and also for society itself with greater equality for the sexes.  
The salary of a woman in her lifetime is generally much less than that of a man. She can nevertheless make a big addition to the family income. The most important result of this is an improved quality of life. By helping to keep a stable salary for the family, the pressure on the husband is much reduced, hence improving both the husband’s and the wife’s good feeling. Additionally, the things that can be bought by the family will also be raised. This means that the family can have enough money to buy more luxuries such as foreign travel and a family car.  
A further effect on the family is the promotion of independence in the children. Some might argue that having both parents working might be harmful to the children because of a lack of care by parents. However, such children have to learn to look after themselves at an earlier age, and their parents often depend on them to help with the housework. As a result, this teaches them important life skills.  
As regards society, the most significant impact of women going to work is greater  
sex equality. There are an increasing number of women who are becoming politicians, lawyers, and even CEOs and company managers. This in turn has led to greater equality for women in all areas of life, not just employment. Women are now allowed by law to vote, they can be in the armed forces, and they have legal rights to protect themselves against home violence or sex bothering or unfair treatment at work.  
In conclusion, the increasing number of women at work has brought about some important changes to family life, including improved quality of life and increased independence for children, as well as affecting society itself. It is clear that the sexes are still a long way from being equal in all areas of life, however, and perhaps the challenge for the present century is to ensure that this takes place.