PTE Junction

PTE SPEAKING · FREE GUIDE

Describe Image Answer Structures

One answer plan for all eight image types, with a starter for each step and a sample answer for every type.

25 sec
to study the image before the microphone opens

40 sec
to speak. Aim to finish just before the bar runs out

Speaking
scored on content, oral fluency and pronunciation

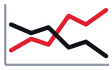
What is Describe Image?

Describe Image is one of the speaking tasks in PTE Academic. A graph, chart, map, diagram or picture appears on screen. You get 25 seconds to look at it, then 40 seconds to describe it out loud. It tests two things at once: how clearly you speak and how quickly you can organise information in your head.

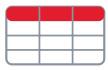
Your answer is marked on **content** (did you describe the key features accurately?), **oral fluency** and **pronunciation**, and it counts towards your Speaking score. Fluency matters as much as accuracy: long pauses, restarts and hesitation will cost you marks, even if every detail you mention is correct.

The 8 image types you are likely to see


Bar graph


Line graph


Pie chart


Table


Process diagram


Map


Venn diagram


Pyramid

The 5-step structure for every image

1 · Introduce
Read the title; for graphs, add the axes.

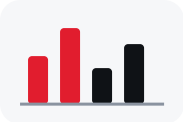
2 · Main feature
The highest, lowest or the biggest trend.

3 · Detail
A real value, label or stage.

4 · Detail
A second value or a comparison.

5 · Conclude
One sentence on the overall message.

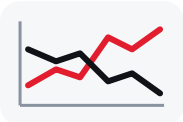
A structure, not a template. A template is a memorised paragraph that could fit any image. A structure tells you what to say and in what order; the words and numbers come from the image. Since 7 August 2025, Pearson says the content of Describe Image answers is part-scored by human experts as well as AI, and generic sentences are easy to spot.



1 Bar graph

Bar graphs can be vertical or horizontal. Read the title exactly as it appears and say what the two axes show. Then pick out the highest and lowest bars and one other clear feature: a similarity or a big gap.

1 · READ THE TITLE	"This bar graph gives information about [title]."
+ THE AXES	"The x-axis shows ..., and the y-axis shows ... in ..."
2 · THE HIGHEST BAR	"Comparing the bars, ... is the highest, at about ..."
3 · THE LOWEST BAR	"By contrast, ... is the lowest, at roughly ..."
4 · A SIMILARITY OR GAP	"... and ... are fairly similar, at around ..."
5 · CONCLUDE	"Overall, the graph suggests that ..."



2 Line graph

You may see one line, two parallel lines or several crossing lines. The **trend** is what matters, so follow each line from start, through the middle, to the end.

1 · READ THE TITLE	"This line graph gives information about [title]."
+ THE AXES	"The x-axis shows the years from ... to ..., and the y-axis shows ... in ..."
2 · THE STARTING POINT	"In ..., ... started at about ..."
3 · THE TREND	"It then rose steadily, reaching a peak of ... in ..."
4 · END OR SECOND LINE	"By ..., it had fallen to ..., while ... ended at ..."
5 · CONCLUDE	"Overall, ... increased over the period."

TREND PHRASES TO DROP INTO STEP 3

- ↗ It went up and down between ... and ...
- ↗ It climbed steeply to a high of ...
- ↗ It dropped gradually to a low of ...
- ↗ It rose steadily, peaking at ...
- ↗ It remained stable at about ...
- ↗ After a series of rises and falls, it hit ...



3 Pie chart

One of the easiest images. Each slice is a share, so go from the largest slice to the smallest.

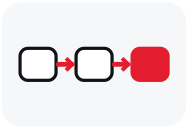
1 · READ THE TITLE	"This pie chart gives information about [title]."
+ THE DATA	"The data is shown in percentages."
2 · THE LARGEST SLICE	"The largest share is ..., at about ..."
3 · THE NEXT SLICE	"This is followed by ..., at around ..."
4 · THE SMALLEST SLICE	"The smallest share is ..., at only ..."
5 · CONCLUDE	"Overall, ... makes up the majority of ..."



4 Table

Don't read out every number. Scan the rows and columns for the biggest and smallest values, then pick one comparison worth mentioning.

1 · READ THE TITLE	"This table gives information about [title]."
+ ROWS AND COLUMNS	"The rows show ..., and the columns show ..."
2 · THE HIGHEST VALUE	"The highest figure is ..., for ..."
3 · THE LOWEST VALUE	"The lowest is ..., at just ..."
4 · ONE COMPARISON	"It is also worth noting that ..."
5 · CONCLUDE	"Overall, the table shows that ..."



5 Process diagram

Follow the arrows in order. Sequencing words (first, next, after that, finally) let the listener follow every stage.

1 · READ THE TITLE	"This diagram gives information about [title]."
2 · THE FIRST STAGE	"First, ..."
3 · THE MIDDLE STAGES	"Next, it is turned into ... After that, ..."
4 · THE FINAL STAGE	"Finally, ..."
5 · CONCLUDE	"Overall, the process turns ... into ..."



6 Venn diagram

Cover what is unique to each circle first, then the overlap. The overlap is usually the key point.

1 · READ THE TITLE	"This Venn diagram gives information about [title]."
2 · LEFT CIRCLE ONLY	"... is linked to ... and ..."
3 · RIGHT CIRCLE ONLY	"..., on the other hand, is linked to ..."
4 · THE OVERLAP	"However, both share ... and ..."
5 · CONCLUDE	"Overall, the two differ mainly in ..."



7 Map

Maps are much easier when you know your geography: learn the continents and countries that often appear in the news. If a name slips your mind, don't stop. Switch to directions such as "countries in the north".

1 · READ THE TITLE	"This map gives information about [title]."
2 · ONE REGION	"In the west, countries such as ... have ..."
3 · A SECOND REGION	"Moving east, ... shows ..."
4 · CONTRAST OR CENTRE	"By contrast, the central region has ..."
5 · CONCLUDE	"Overall, most of ... has ..."



8 Pyramid

Here you mainly read the labels on each level. The title is often in the centre. Levels get narrower towards the top, so start at the base and work up.

1 · READ THE TITLE	"This pyramid gives information about [title]."
2 · THE BASE	"At the base is ..."
3 · THE MIDDLE LEVELS	"Above that comes ..., followed by ..."
4 · THE TOP	"At the very top is ..."
5 · CONCLUDE	"Overall, the pyramid shows that ... is built on ..."

What Pearson says about Describe Image

Do

- Use the 25 seconds to find the key trends and the biggest feature.
- Speak for 30 to 40 seconds. A 20-second answer is unlikely to cover the key features.
- Use numbers from the image.

Don't

- Use memorised answers or templated sentences. Pearson says these are likely to score 0 for content, and then fluency and pronunciation aren't scored either, so the task scores 0.
- Try to mention every feature, or spend too long on the labels.
- Add your own opinion. Only describe what you can see.

Summarised from Pearson's *PTE Academic Describe Image Test Tips* (October 2024). More at pearsonpte.com/preparation. This is why the guide gives a structure, not a script: keep the axes line to one short sentence, and change the wording to suit each image.

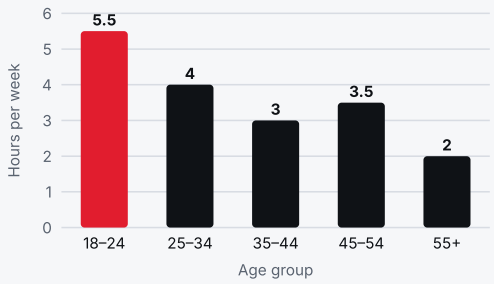
Sample answers

One answer for each image type, built with the 5 steps. Read each one aloud: it should take about 35 to 40 seconds. On test day, use your own words and the details from your image.

1 title + AXES axes or units 2 main feature 3 4 details 5 conclusion

PRACTICE IMAGE · EXAMPLE DATA

Average hours of exercise per week, by age group



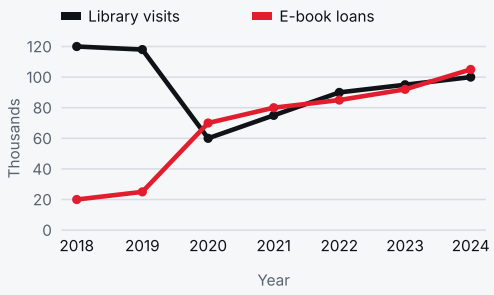
Sample 1 · Bar graph

1 This bar graph gives information about the average hours of exercise per week, by age group. + AXES The x-axis shows five age groups, and the y-axis shows the time in hours. 2 Comparing the bars, people aged 18 to 24 exercise the most, at about 5.5 hours a week. 3 By contrast, people aged 55 and over exercise the least, at only 2 hours. 4 The 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 groups are fairly similar, at around 3 to 3.5 hours. 5 Overall, the graph suggests that exercise time generally falls with age.

Why it works: Highest, lowest and a similarity, each with a real number, then a conclusion about the pattern. (90 words)

PRACTICE IMAGE · EXAMPLE DATA

Library visits and e-book loans in one city (thousands)



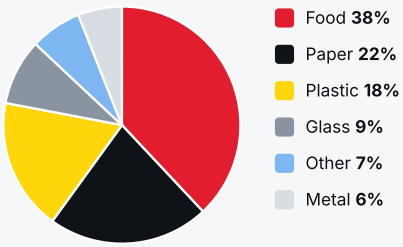
Sample 2 · Line graph

1 This line graph gives information about library visits and e-book loans in one city. + AXES The x-axis shows the years from 2018 to 2024, and the y-axis shows the numbers in thousands. 2 In 2018, visits started at about 120 thousand, and e-book loans at only 20 thousand. 3 Visits then dropped sharply to 60 thousand in 2020, while e-book loans climbed steeply to 70 thousand. 4 By 2024, visits had recovered to 100 thousand, but e-book loans had reached 105 thousand. 5 Overall, e-book loans rose steadily and overtook library visits by 2024.

Why it works: Follows both lines from start to middle to end, and the conclusion names the key change: the lines cross. (89 words)

PRACTICE IMAGE · EXAMPLE DATA

Household waste by type



Sample 3 · Pie chart

1 This pie chart gives information about household waste by type. + DATA The data is shown in percentages. 2 The largest share is food waste, at about 38 per cent. 3 This is followed by paper at 22 per cent and plastic at 18 per cent. 4 The smallest share is metal, at only 6 per cent. 5 Overall, food, paper and plastic together make up more than three quarters of household waste.

Why it works: Largest to smallest, and the conclusion adds up the three biggest slices (78%) instead of repeating them. (67 words)

PRACTICE IMAGE · EXAMPLE DATA

Cafe sales by item on three weekdays

Item	Mon	Wed	Fri
Coffee	210	180	260
Tea	60	55	70
Muffins	45	50	90
Sandwiches	80	85	75

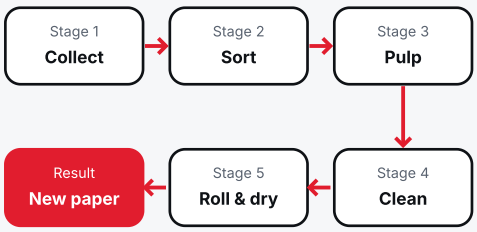
Sample 4 · Table

1 This table gives information about cafe sales by item on three weekdays. + ROWS The rows show four items, and the columns show sales on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. 2 The highest figure is 260, for coffee on Friday. 3 The lowest is muffins on Monday, at just 45. 4 It is also worth noting that muffin sales almost doubled from Wednesday to Friday. 5 Overall, the table shows that coffee is by far the best seller every day.

Why it works: Picks out 3 numbers from 12 instead of reading every cell, and spots one change worth mentioning. (73 words)

PRACTICE IMAGE · EXAMPLE DATA

How paper is recycled



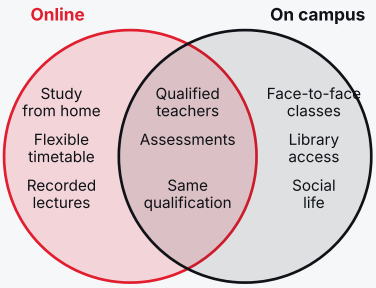
Sample 5 · Process diagram

1 This diagram gives information about how paper is recycled. 2 First, used paper is collected and taken to a recycling plant. 3 Next, it is sorted and mixed with water to make pulp. After that, the pulp is cleaned to remove ink and glue. 4 Finally, it is rolled flat and dried, ready to be made into new products. 5 Overall, the process turns waste paper into new paper in five stages.

Why it works: Follows the arrows in order with sequencing words, and the conclusion links the start to the end. (68 words)

PRACTICE IMAGE · EXAMPLE DATA

Studying online and studying on campus



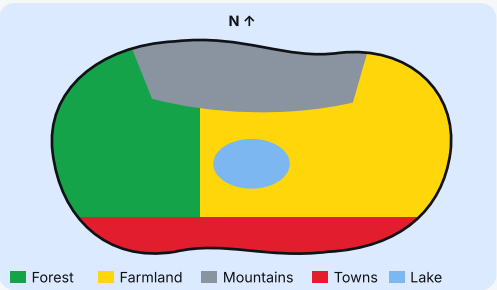
Sample 6 · Venn diagram

1 This Venn diagram gives information about studying online and studying on campus. 2 Online study is linked to flexible timetables, recorded lectures and studying from home. 3 On-campus study, on the other hand, is linked to face-to-face classes, library access and social life. 4 However, both share qualified teachers, assessments and the same qualification. 5 Overall, online study offers more flexibility, while on-campus study offers more face-to-face contact.

Why it works: Each circle, then the overlap, then one sentence on the real difference. No personal opinion. (64 words)

PRACTICE IMAGE · EXAMPLE DATA

Land use on Kestrel Island



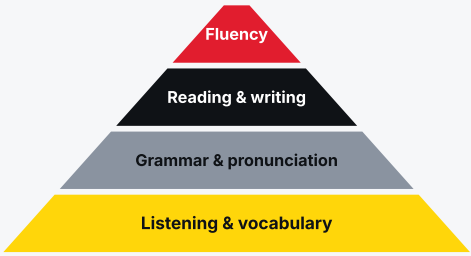
Sample 7 · Map

1 This map gives information about land use on Kestrel Island. 2 In the west, most of the land is covered by forest. 3 Moving east, the land is mainly used for farming, which covers the largest area of the island. 4 By contrast, the north is mountainous, the towns are along the south coast, and there is a lake in the centre. 5 Overall, most of the island is used for forest and farming.

Why it works: Uses directions (west, east, north, south, centre) to move around the map in a clear order. (70 words)

PRACTICE IMAGE · EXAMPLE DATA

Building language skills



Sample 8 · Pyramid

1 This pyramid gives information about building language skills, in four levels from the base to the top. 2 At the base, which is the widest level, are listening and vocabulary. 3 Above that come grammar and pronunciation, followed by reading and writing. 4 At the very top, the smallest level, is fluency. 5 Overall, the pyramid shows that fluent communication is built on strong basic skills.

Why it works: Bottom to top, reading the labels. A short image still needs a full answer, so add how the levels connect. (62 words)

Before you hit "Next": quick checklist

- I said what the image is about, using its title.
- I named at least two real values, labels or stages from the image.
- I kept talking. No long pauses, no restarting sentences.
- I finished with an overall sentence before 40 seconds.

Practise with real images and instant feedback

Try Describe Image on PTE Junction and get feedback on content, fluency and pronunciation. Practice scores are estimated practice scores, not official Pearson scores.

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