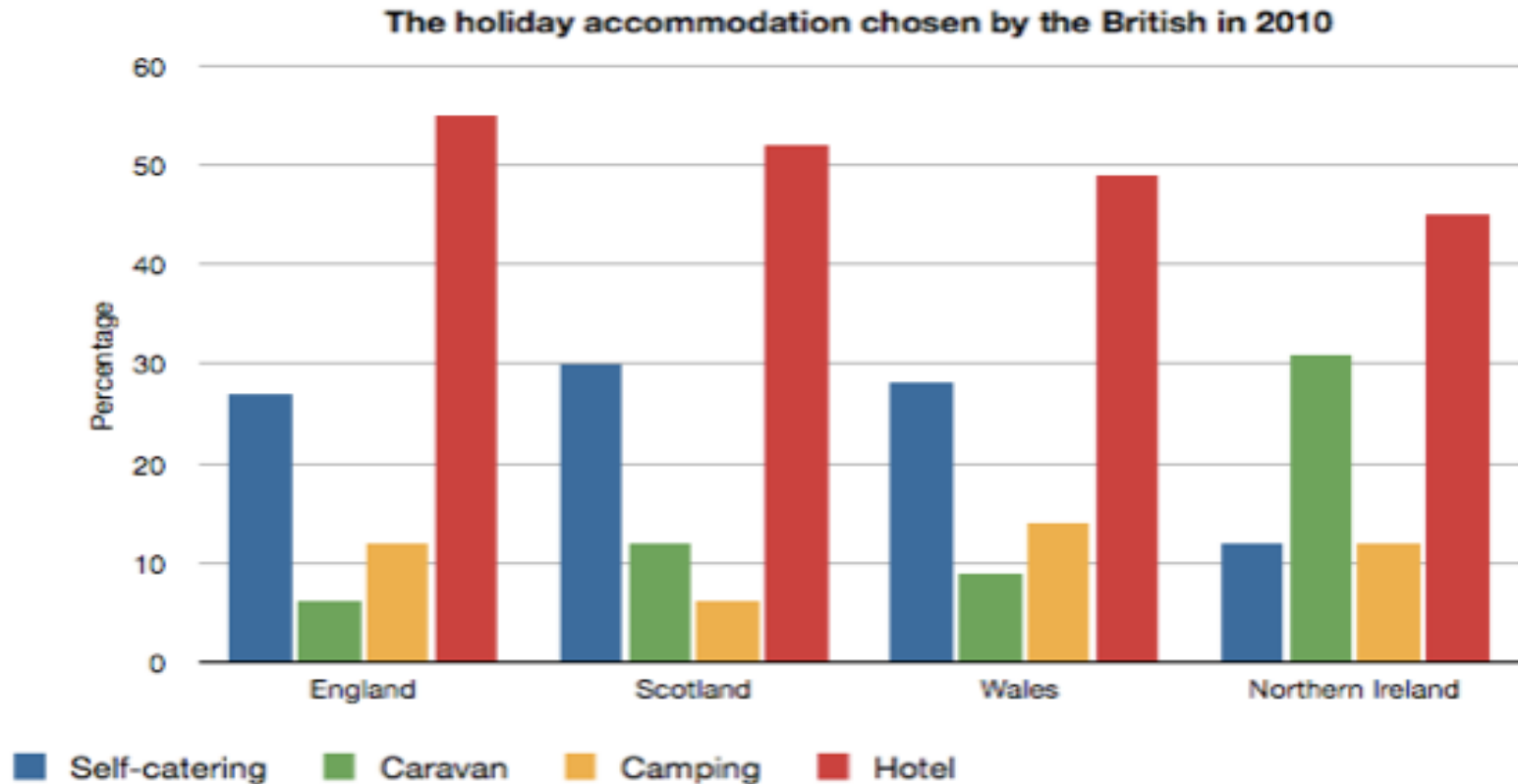


Bar Chart

****Sample task**

The bar chart below shows the different types of accommodation chosen by the British when they went on holiday in 2012. Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant



Analysing the key details

Don't look at the whole chart, look at the x axis and the y axis separately

- The first step is to analyse the chart – **carefully**. Don't rush this stage. One way to do this is by asking yourself some simple questions. Ask yourself which is the biggest/longest? Are there any patterns? As you do this I suggest that you
- don't worry about names of countries and types of accommodation. Think colours and lengths. Look don't read.
- look at each element one by one. It can be very confusing if you look at the chart as a whole.
- look at the extremes (the biggest/the smallest) first – they are almost always important
- look for patterns – these are also important. Note that a pattern can have exceptions.
- note exceptions – these are also details you want to include.

Test yourself

Ask yourself if the lines look similar, different or the same

- Try this brief quiz to analyse the y axis. As you go through the test, you should notice how I ask simple questions. What is the biggest? Are they the same, different or similar? Does any one bar look different from the rest? Remember that you are looking for patterns

*****My conclusion from this is that we must state:**

- hotels were the most common form of accommodation at over 50%
- self-catering was second most popular (just below 30%) but there is one major exception
- caravan and camping holidays were typically least popular (around 10%) but again there was an exception
- England, Scotland and Wales follow a broadly similar pattern (Scotland is only slightly different)
- the popularity of caravanning in Northern Ireland needs to be highlighted

Organising the report – choose the simplest option

There is always more than one way to organise a report. In the exam you are under time pressure, so it makes sense to choose the simplest option. Here the 2 main choices you have are:

- go through each type of accommodation (the y axis option)
- go through the countries (the x axis option)

My choice would be to use the countries. There are only 4 of them and 3 of those are very similar and it seems natural and **easy** to group England, Scotland and Wales together. Northern Ireland is the odd one out.

This answer is not perfect. It is not meant to be. Rather you should note how it is logically organised, **grouping similar information together**. There is one paragraph for England, Scotland and Wales showing the main pattern. **I start by noting the most evident feature of the chart.** **I also use England as a model** and **then compare the situation in Wales and Scotland.** Then there is a separate paragraph for Northern Ireland, highlighting the key exception.

This bar chart shows illustrates the holiday accommodation chosen by people in the United Kingdom in 2010. Generally, it is possible to say that the English, Scottish, Northern and Welsh made very similar choices and that hotels were much the most popular form of accommodation.

In all four countries approximately half the people chose to stay in hotels. This figure was highest in England at around 55%, almost twice the number of people who cooked for themselves (27% of the sample) and far greater than the number who stayed in campsites (12%) and finally caravans (6%). **A similar pattern was repeated for the Scots and the Welsh.** In each case, around 50% of holidaymakers went to hotels with around 30% in self-catering apartments. The one difference being that caravan holidays at 12% were twice as popular as camping holidays in Scotland, while the opposite pattern could be seen in Wales.

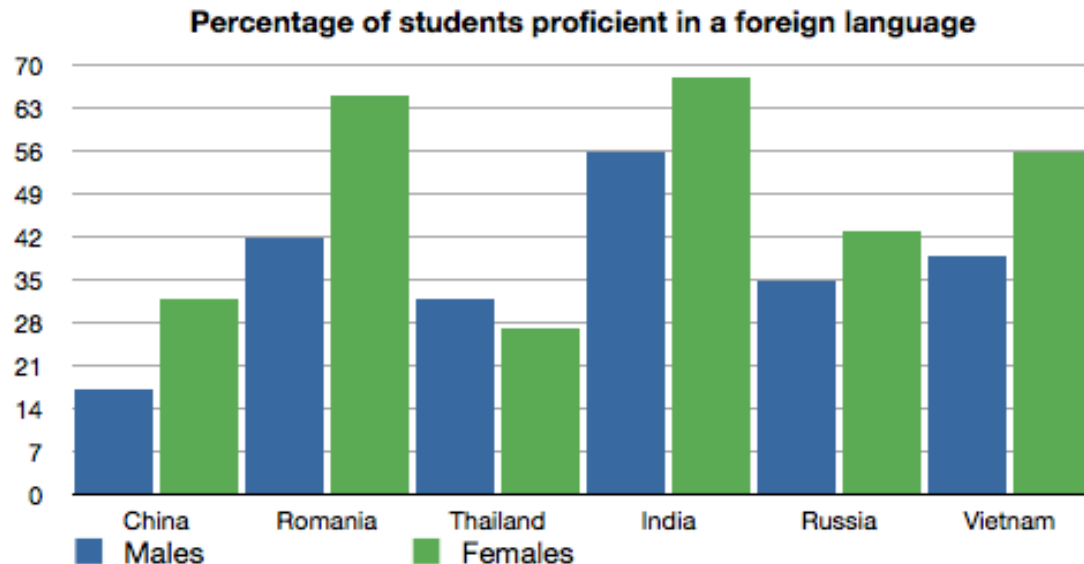
The one country that shows a different pattern is Northern Ireland. It is notable how there just over 30% of the population chose caravan holidays in preference to self-catering accommodation and camping (both around 12%)

Test yourself first

This is a simple bar chart similar to one you might find in task 1. Your task is to analyse and decide what information you would choose to include in your writing.

- Look at the chart and think for 3/4 minutes
- Make notes of what details you would include
- Try the test – how many of the details I suggest did you find?

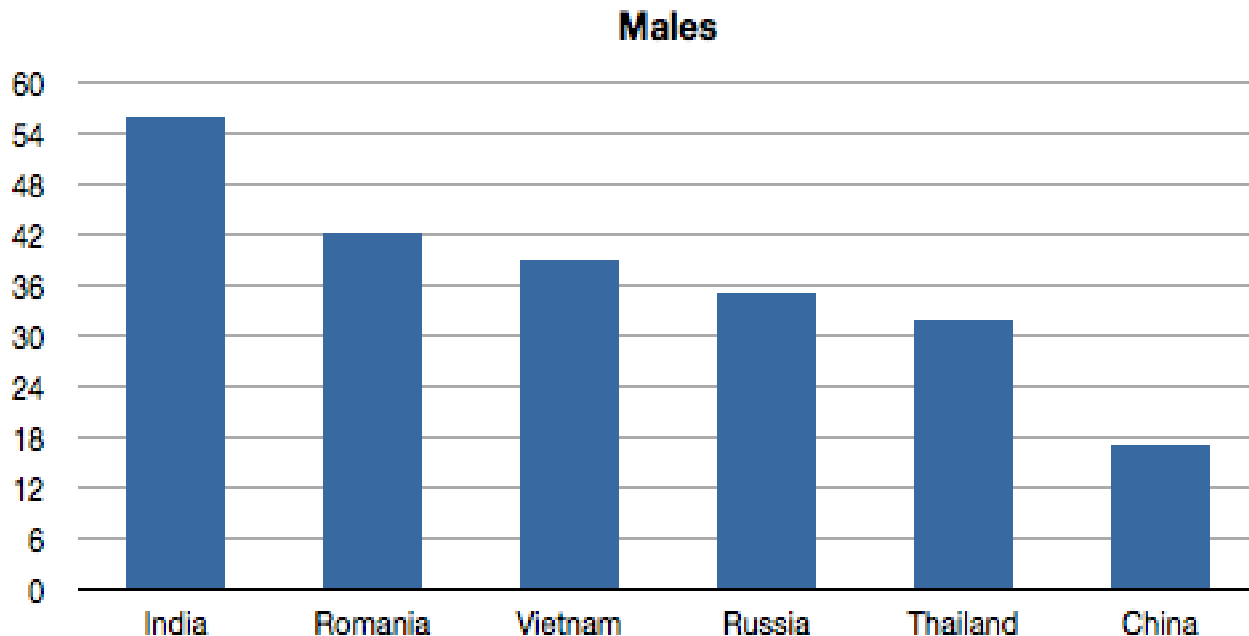
Have problems? Disagree with me? Read on below.



Look at the key – use it to organise your answer

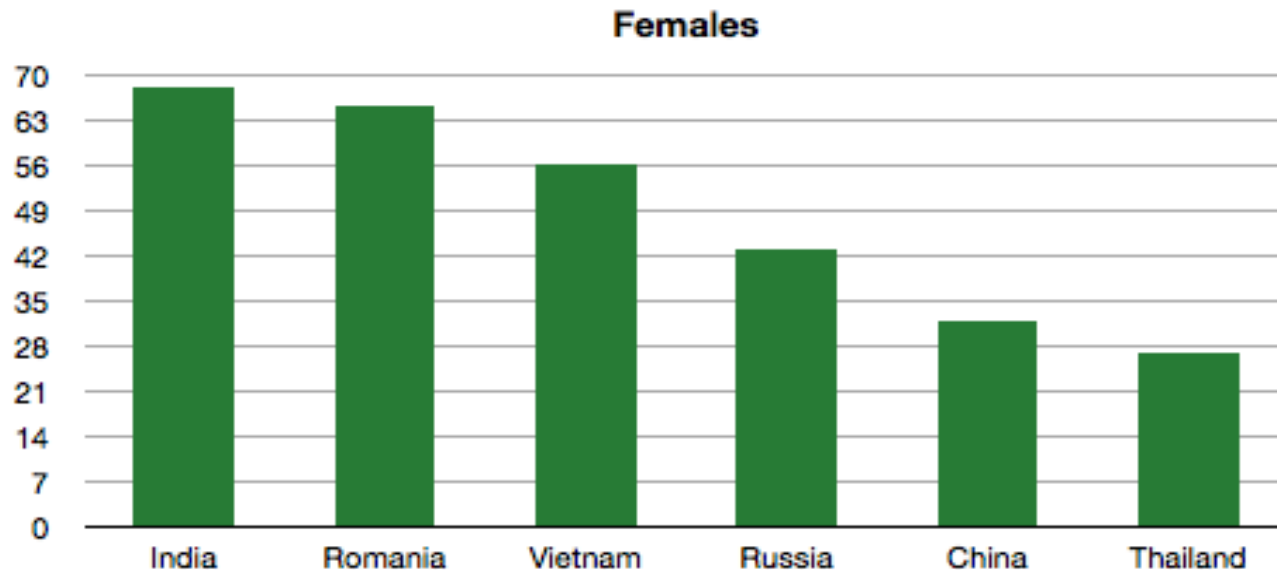
The key can also help you. Its role is to show what the different lines mean. One thing that you can do is to use it to organise your answer: in this case, that means making sure you write about:

- males
- females
- a comparison of males and females



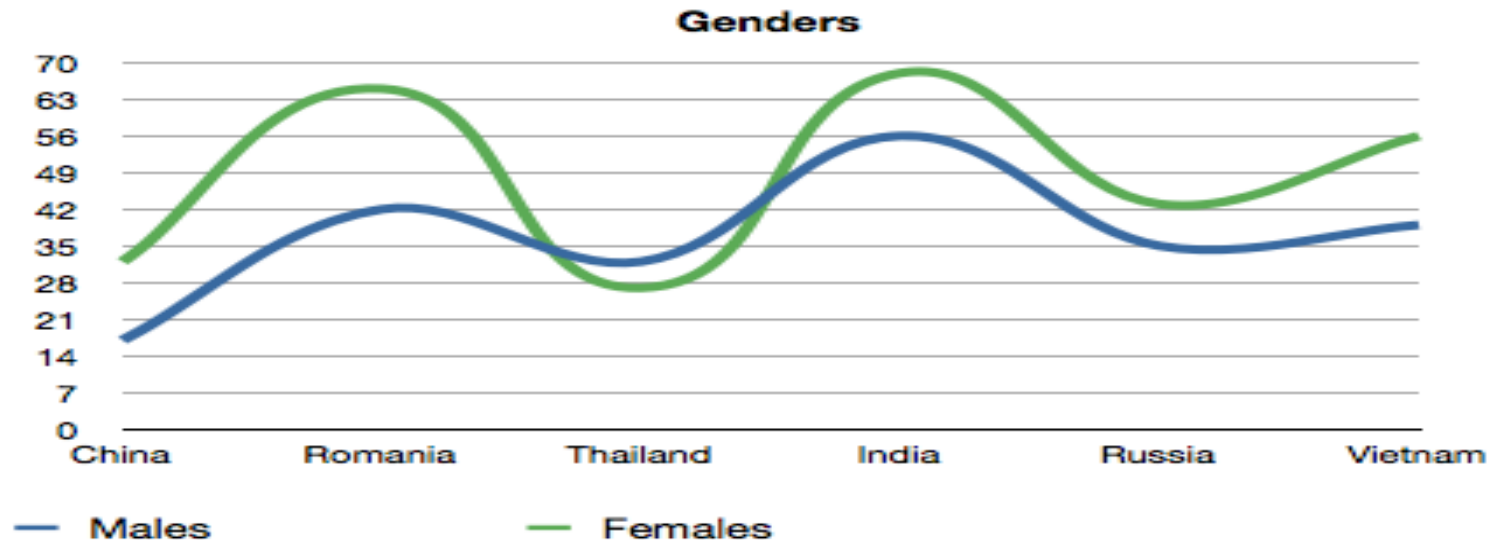
I've helped you here by re-organising the data. This is what you should see and need to include:

- India is much the largest (around 55%)
- China is the smallest (about a third of India) (around 17%)
- Romania, Vietnam, Russia and Thailand are in that order and approximately similar (between 32 and 42%)



Likewise with females, it's a good idea to look at the extremes and this is what you get:

- India and Romania are the largest (around 65% and 65% respectively)
- Thailand is the smallest (about 27%)
- There are fairly significant differences between Vietnam, Russia and China



Comparisons are almost always important. Here you should see:

- Typically, more females are proficient than males
- Thailand is the exception because there the pattern is reversed (the lines cross)
- Romanian females appear to be especially good at languages