



101 Essays

**IELTS Writing Task 2
(General / Academic)**

(Version 1)

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Preface

As you probably know, we get essays sent to us by students every day and apart from the English part of writing (grammar, syntax, punctuation, vocab, etc) one of the main reasons that students get a low score is that they fall down on Task Response and Cohesion and Coherence. That is to say, they do not address the question properly, and often use an incorrect structure when writing. They may write about both views when the question asks them to give an opinion, or they might be too general or not directly answer the question as clearly as possible.

For a Band 9.0, the criteria say 'All parts of the prompt are appropriately addressed' and 'A clear and fully developed position is presented which directly answers the question' Also, many students do not know how to start writing their introduction and the rest of the essay, this e-book aims to correct that uncertainty. By following these structures and samples you will write faster and easier than before.

One more thing, these structures are guidelines, not rules, there are many ways to write a high scoring essay. As long as you answer the question directly and give good reasons and examples, you will be fine, but these structures work. Our students tell us so. And the results speak for themselves.

So, happy writing!

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Opinion Essay Structure

Introduction

1. Paraphrase

Restate the topic using methods like synonyms, word formation, change in grammar and word order.

2. Thesis Statement

Answer the question and briefly say what you will be writing about in the coming body paragraphs. For example, in the question 'To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?' if you dis/agree with the topic, directly say that you dis/agree with the statement. Then concisely give two reasons why you dis/agree.

Body Paragraph 1

3. Topic Sentence

Mention the first reason / idea that you outlined in the introduction.

4. Explanation

Add a sentence or two to elaborate more on the idea; be specific and narrow down the topic sentence. Do not repeat or reword the previous sentence without any progression. While narrowing the idea down, try not to digress from the main, central point of the paragraph as the paragraph should have one central idea.

5. Example

Give an example to convince the reader; not a general example, be as specific as possible. Refer to who, where, when, how, etc. Your example, depending on the context, can be social, academic or personal.

6. Reinforcement

Write a concession sentence or reinforce/reiterate example/main idea.

Body Paragraph 2

7. Topic Sentence

Mention the second reason / idea that you outlined in the introduction

8. Explanation

Add a sentence or two to elaborate more on the idea; be specific and narrow down the topic sentence. Do not repeat or reword the previous sentence without any progression. While narrowing the idea down, try not to digress from the main, central point of the paragraph as the paragraph should have one central idea.

9. Example

Give an example to convince the reader; not a general example, be as specific as possible. Refer to who, where, when, how, etc. Your example, depending on the context, can be social, academic or personal.

10. Reinforcement

Write a concession sentence or reinforce/reiterate example/main idea.

Conclusion

11-12. Restate topic & main ideas

Rewrite the introduction, use different words, do not copy it. In this paragraph you are paraphrasing the topic and giving a summary of main ideas.

Essay #1 (Theme: Travel)

***Governments should spend money on railways rather than road.
To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?***

Introduction

Paraphrase

It has been argued that governments ought to allocate more of their national budget to rail rather than to the roads.

Thesis Statement

I agree with this statement for two reasons: firstly, trains are faster, and secondly, they are more environmentally friendly.

Body Paragraph 1

Topic sentence

Investing in a modern railway network will mean that it will be easier for people to travel around their country faster.

Explain

This is because train passengers do not have to deal with the congestion most road users experience everyday which increases average travel time. Also, trains can achieve much higher speeds than cars due to this fact. Consequently, people will spend less time commuting and will have more time available to use as they wish.

Example

For example, the British Government recently unveiled plans to connect cities in the North of England with London via a high-speed rail network which will reduce travelling times to the capital by half, allowing thousands of people in the Midlands easy access to London.

Body Paragraph 2

Topic sentence

Additionally, locomotives tend to be less harmful to the environment than cars.

Explain

This is due to the fact that a train can carry hundreds of passengers which prevents the use of hundreds of internal combustion engines, thus reducing the amount of carbon emissions. If this is repeated every day over many different routes, the reduction in the carbon footprint would be significant.

Example

For instance, according to a recent news report, Ho Chi Minh City will soon open its first underground metro service aiming to reduce the number of cars and motorbikes on the road.

Reinforcement

It is hoped that one of the main benefits to the city will be a marked reduction in carbon dioxide levels due to the reduction in traffic.

Conclusion

Restate the topic & main ideas

In conclusion, I firmly believe that the state should divert more funds to railway systems and spend less on road transportation as this will improve journey times and also be less harmful to the environment.

Essay #48 (Theme: Health)

One of the consequences of improved medical care is that people are living longer and life expectancy is increasing.

Do you think the advantages of this development outweigh the disadvantages?

Introduction

Paraphrase

As advances in medical care continue, life expectancy is increasing and more people are living longer than ever before.

Thesis Statement

I believe the disadvantages of this progress clearly outweigh the advantages. As longer lives means an ever expanding population who will need feeding and clothing, and more elderly who will require expensive medical care, in contrast to having more time to spend with their families.

Body Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence

While greater life span sounds like a good idea in practice it will only exacerbate current world problems.

Explanation

The world can barely feed, clothe and house the 7 billion or so people or so on the planet currently.

Example

For example, the WHO (World Health Organisation) estimates that if world population rises by more than 10% of the current rate per annum, then severe food and water shortages will occur in the world's poorest regions.

Body Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence

Also, just because life spans are longer this does not mean that extended life is a happy one.

Explanation

Many elderly people suffer from serious age related health complaints such as arthritis, diabetes and lung disease.

Example

For example, a recent survey by the UN (United Nations) shows that people aged 80 and above account for up to 70% of many developed nations expenditure on medical care.

Body Paragraph 3

Topic Sentence & Explanation

In contrast, living longer may give people more time to do the things they want to do after retirement, such as spending time with their families. However, as mentioned above this is only if the elderly have sufficient resources and the good health to enjoy this extended life span.

Example

For example, as WHO figures show, in the UK (and other Western countries) the average state pension is often below the rate of inflation making it difficult for old people to have a comfortable existence in their retirement.

Reinforcement

When this is taken into account with failing health it is difficult to argue that living longer has any real benefits.

Conclusion

Restate the topic & main ideas

In conclusion, although the average life span is becoming longer than ever before, I believe that the pressure of an increasing struggle for resources that an expanding population can bring, coupled with a serious decline in the quality of life for the elderly, clearly outweighs any possible benefit longer life can bring.

Essay #65

Some people think that a sense of competition in children should be encouraged. Others believe that children who are taught to cooperate rather than compete become more useful adults.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Introduction**Paraphrase**

According to some, children should be motivated to be more competitive amongst themselves, while others feel that cooperation is a more important value to instil in youngsters.

Thesis Statement

In my view, both of these character traits are equally important for children to become the best adults they can be.

Body Paragraph 1**Topic Sentence**

It is important that young people are pushed to be the best they can possibly be, in whatever pursuit they take part in.

Explanation

This drive to win boosts their work ethic and teaches them that hard work and discipline are the keys to success which will stand them in good stead when they enter the competitive world of work.

Example

For example, it is often said that behind every successful business person lies a background of achievement in childhood. The successful UK businessman, Lord Sugar, has often spoken of his childhood background where his parents pushed him and encouraged him in everything he did at school, academically and in sport.

Body Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence

That being said, if we continue with the work analogy, while being competitive is important, there are many situations where adults have to compromise and co-operate with each other.

Explanation

In many working situations we have to function as part of a team which strengthens our empathy, selflessness and makes us more responsible toward others.

Example

For example, if a person were hyper-competitive at work at the expense of those around us, it is likely that we would alienate our colleagues and be very unpopular at any job we were involved in.

Conclusion

Restate the topic & main ideas

In conclusion, in my view, children should be taught to try their best to achieve their goals, but this teaching should also be balanced with the importance of working with others. Both are equally important and will result in a more balanced young adult ready for any situation that life, and work may through at them.