Revised
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The Complete Solution

IELTS™

WRITING

2ND Edition

Strategies to achieve
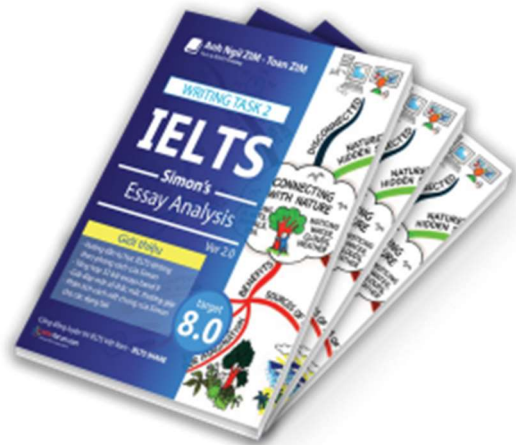Band 8 in IELTS Writing

By Anh Toan anh the Staff of ZIM IELTS INSTITUTE

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Foreword

This book has been written to provide students who are preparing for the IELTS exam with a brief summary of how to write a report in the first part and to write an effective essay in the second part of the IELTS writing section. It helps IELTS learners have thorough insights into the structure as well as the style necessary to answer a variety of different types of writing that commonly appear in the exam.

The way this book is organized is quite clear and simple. The general understanding of the task's requirements and a common structure used to write every type of essay in the IELTS writing task 1 & 2 will be primarily presented in order for students to grab hold of the overall idea of how they should divide their essays into a few key paragraphs. Then the complete guidance of how to ace each particular type of essay will instruct students to effectively study for the real exam.

This small guide only acts as a self-studying material and a supplement for students' IELTS writing courses. Therefore, it is not recommended that students only take this book, albeit helpful and valuable, as a sole source of preparation. Non-stop effort and diligence result in success in the real exam!

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Contents

IELTS WRITING

TASK 1

CHAPTER 1

What you need to know about the IELTS writing task 1

1. General introduction

- This is the first part of the writing section which makes up one third of the overall band score.
- Candidates are required to write a report on a given info graphic of at least 150 words or more within suggested 20 minutes.

2. Assessment criteria

Your writing will be assessed on 4 different criteria, each of which is worth 25% of your total marks for task 1.

TA Task achievement	CC Coherence & Cohesion	LR Lexical resource	GRA Grammatical range & accuracy
The examiner will check your information, overview, detail and accuracy.	Your organization of information, your paragraphing, and your use of linking devices will be marked.	Your use of vocabulary, your spelling and the number of mistakes will affect your score.	You will get a band score for your sentence structures, tenses, control of grammar and the number of mistakes.

3. IELTS writing task 1 band descriptors

- TA: Task Achievement

Band	Requirements
9.0	- Fully satisfies all the requirements of the task - Clearly presents a fully developed response
8.0	- Covers all requirements of the task sufficiently - Presents, highlights and illustrates key features/bullet points clearly and appropriately
7.0	- Covers the requirements of the task - (Academic) Presents a clear overview of main trends, differences or stages

	- (General training) presents a clear purpose, with the tone consistent and appropriate - Clearly presents and highlights key features/bullet points but could be more fully extended
6.0	- Addresses the requirements of the task - (Academic) Presents an overview with information appropriately selected - (General) Presents a purpose that is generally clear; there may be inconsistencies in tone - Presents and adequately highlights key features/bullet points but details may be irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate
5.0	- Generally addresses the task; the format may be inappropriate in places - (Academic) Recounts detail mechanically with no clear overview; there may be no data to support the description - (General training) may present a purpose for the letter that is unclear at times; the tone may be variable and sometimes inappropriate - Presents, but inadequately covers, key features/bullet points; there may be a tendency to focus on detail
4.0	- Attempts to address the task but does not cover all key features/bullet points; the format may be inappropriate - (General training) Fails to clearly explain the purpose of the letter; the tone may be inappropriate - May confuse key features/ bullet points with detail; parts may be unclear, irrelevant, repetitive or inaccurate
3.0	- Fails to address the task, which may have been completely misunderstood - Presents limited ideas which may be largely irrelevant/repetitive
2.0	- Answer is barely related to the task
1.0	- Answer is completely unrelated to the task
0	Does not attend Does not attempt the task in any way Writes a totally memorized response

- CC: Coherence & Cohesion

Band	Requirements
9.0	- Uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention - Skillfully manages paragraphing
8.0	- Sequences information and ideas logically - Manages all aspects of cohesion well - Use paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately
7.0	- Logically organizes information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout - Uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use
6.0	- Arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression - Uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical - May not always use referencing clearly or appropriately
5.0	- Presents information with some organization but there may be a lack of overall progression - Makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices - May be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution
4.0	- Presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response - Uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive
3.0	- Does not arrange ideas logically - May use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas
2.0	- Has very little control of organizational features
1.0	- Fails to communicate any message
0	Does not attend Does not attempt the task in any way Writes a totally memorized response

- LR: Lexical Resource

Band	Requirements
9.0	- Uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8.0	- Uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings - Skillfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation - Produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation
7.0	- Uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task - Attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy - Makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication
6.0	- Uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task - Attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy - Makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication
5.0	- Uses limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task - May make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader
4.0	- Uses limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task - May make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader
3.0	- Uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling - Errors may severely distort the message
2.0	- Uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling
1.0	- Can only use a few isolated words
0	Does not attend Does not attempt the task in any way Writes a totally memorized response

- GRA: Grammatical Range & Accuracy

Band	Requirements
9.0	- Uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8.0	- Uses a wide range of structures - The majority of sentences are error-free - Makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies
7.0	- Uses a variety of complex structures - Produces frequent error-free sentences - Has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors
6.0	- Uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms - Makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication
5.0	- Uses only a limited range of structures - Attempts complex sentences but the these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences - May make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader
4.0	- Uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses - Some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty
3.0	- Attempts sentences forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning
2.0	- Cannot use sentence forms except in memorized phrases
1.0	- Cannot use sentence forms at all
0	Does not attend Does not attempt the task in any way Writes a totally memorized response

Common types of IELTS writing task 1

- **Line graph**

The graph below shows the average number of UK commuters travelling each day by car, bus or train between 1970 and 2030.

- **Pie chart**

- **Bar chart**

The chart below shows the expenditure of two countries on consumer goods in 2010.
(pounds sterling)
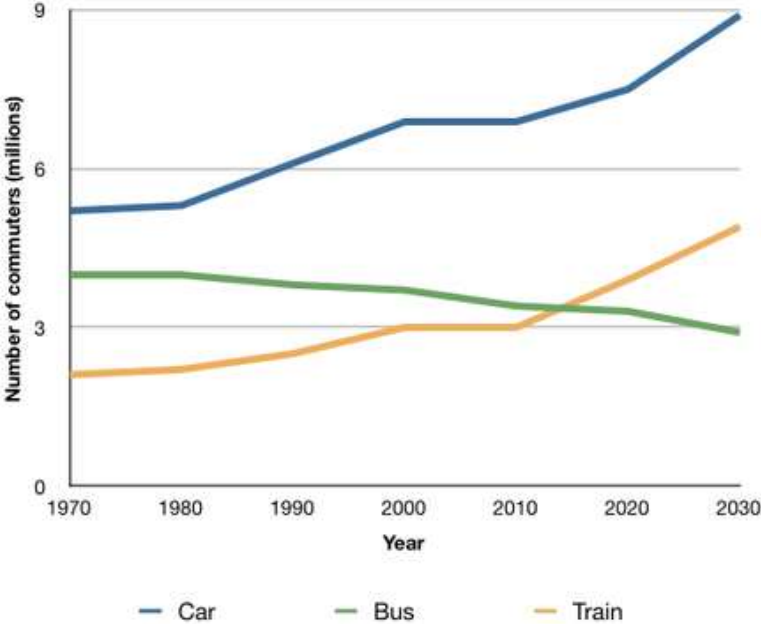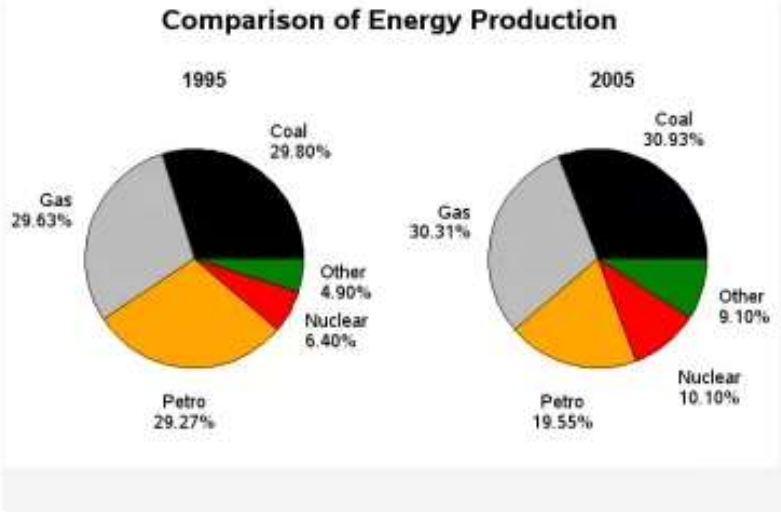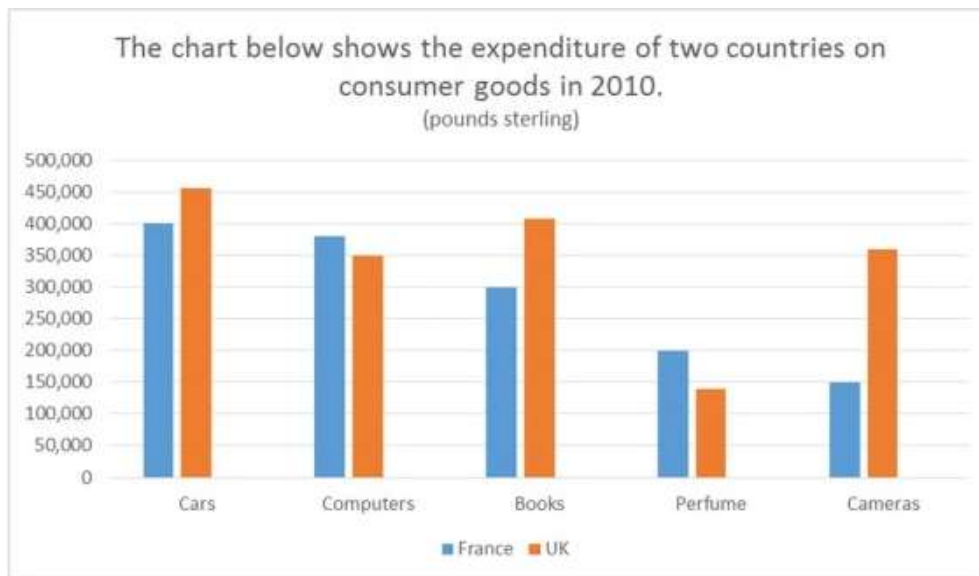
- **Table**

Family type	Proportion of people from each household type living in poverty
single aged person	6% (54,000)
aged couple	4% (48,000)
single, no children	19% (359,000)
couple, no children	7% (211,000)
sole parent	21% (232,000)
couple with children	12% (933,000)
all households	**11% (1,837,000)**

- **Mixed**

Gender of Prison Inmates in the UK

Female 4%

Male 96%

Criminal Convictions in the UK by Age and Gender

- **Maps**

Shopping center B
15 km to next town

12 km to next town

Shopping center A

25 km to next town

N

Rural Zone (Countryside)	Central Business District (no traffic)
Industrial Zone	Main Road
Residential Zone (Suburbs)	Railway line

- **Process**

Hydro-electric power generation
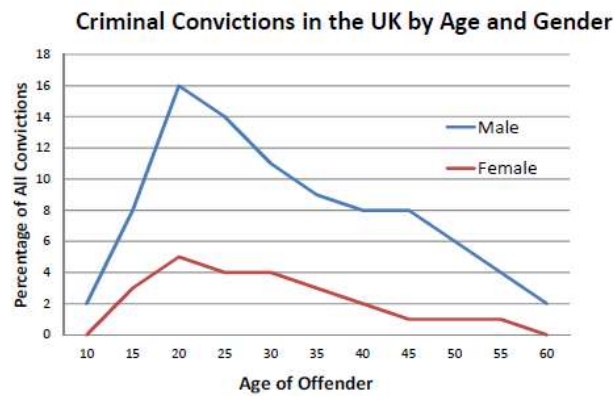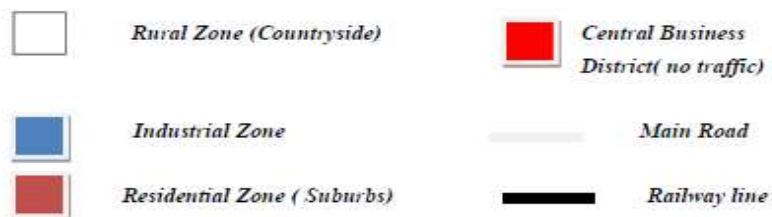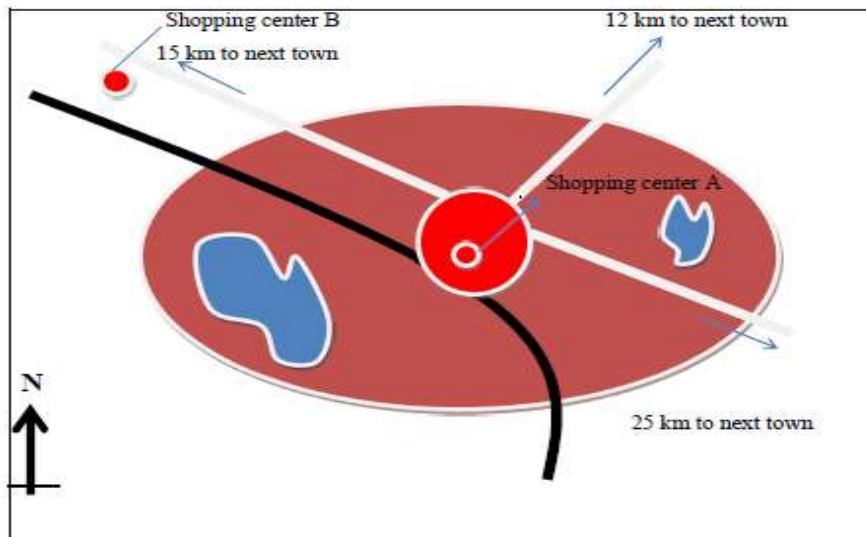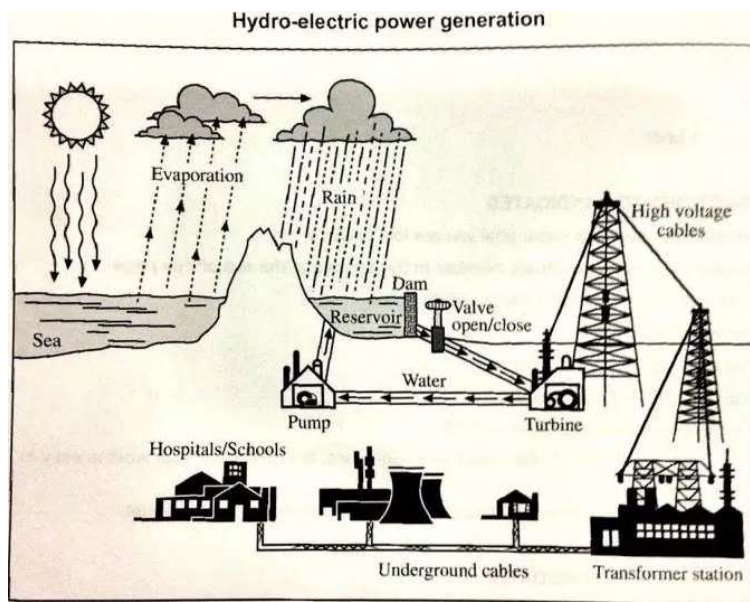
4. **Important notes:**

- *No contractions*

- *No "I" or "you"*

- *Always paraphrase where possible*

- *DON'T include any personal opinions*

- *DON'T try to include everything*

- *Writing an overview is a must*

- *Be careful of verb tenses*

- *Try to write 4 paragraphs*

CHAPTER 2

General structure

The 3-paragraph structure can be applied to write a report in the first part of the IELTS writing section.

Introduction
- Paraphrase the rubric***** (see how to paraphrase in page)
- Summarize the main trends or the most remarkable featres

Detail paragraph 1
- Describe the main features

Detail paragraph 2
- Describe the main features
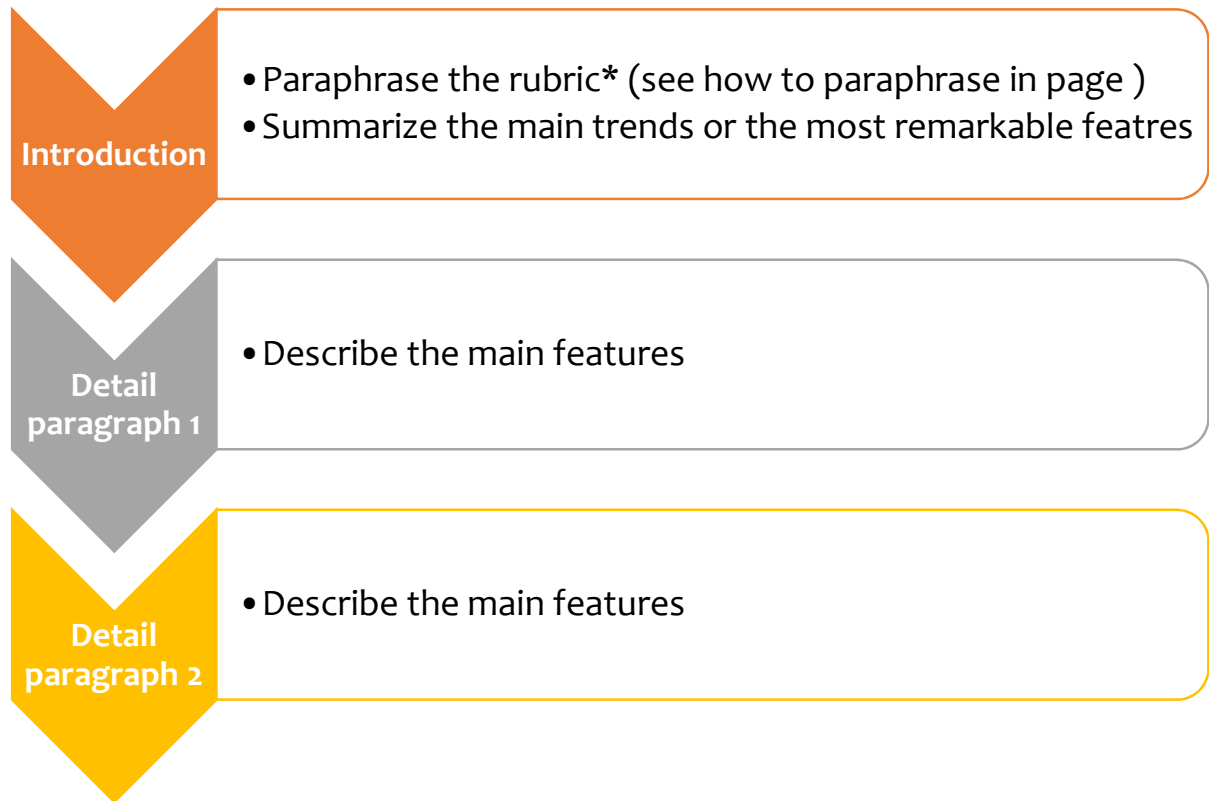
- *It is important to keep in mind that writing an overview (the summary of the main trends and the most remarkable features) is a must.*
- *What is "the rubric"?*

  Every chart, graph, table or diagram has a sentence that describes what the info graphic is about. That sentence is called "the rubric".

  Example:

  The line graph below shows the unemployment rate in Vietnam from 1990 to 2010.

CHAPTER 3

How to write all types of IELTS writing task 1

I. Line graph

The graph below shows the consumption of fish and some different kinds of meat in a European country between 1979 and 2004.
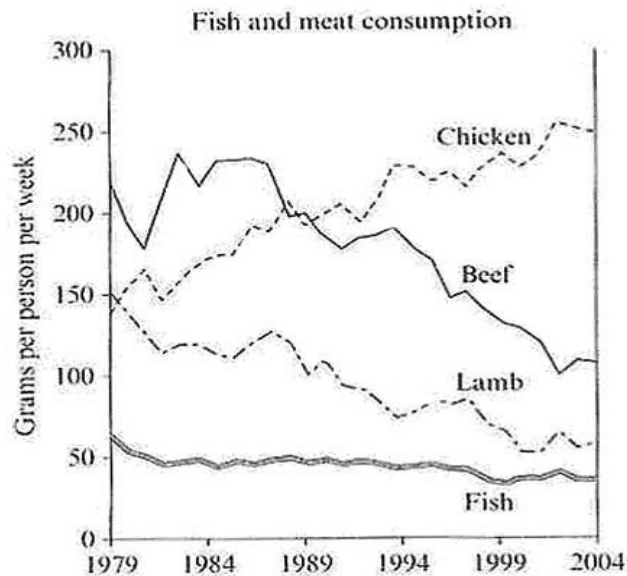
The line graph above illustrates the amount of fish and three other kinds of meat namely lamb, beef and chicken that people of a European country consumed during the period of 1979 and 2004. Overall, the consumption of fish showed small degree of fluctuation; meanwhile, the figure for Lamb, Beef and Chicken changed dramatically from the year of 1979 to 2004.

Starting with more than 50 grams for each individual per week in 1979, the amount of Fish slightly declined for the next five years until 1984, followed by fifteen years of stability. In 1999, this amount decreased a little and then nearly remained unchanged until 2004.

However, Lamb and Beef consumption with very high starting points of 150 grams and more than 200 grams per person per week respectively experienced many years

of up and down and had the main tendency to diminish up to the year of 2004. Unlike these two kinds of food, the consumption of Chicken with a rather lower start than Lamb tended to soar and reached its peak of more than 250 grams for each person a week in 2003 and stopped in 2004 with a small decline.

Analysis:

- The introduction

The line graph above illustrates the amount of fish and three other kinds of meat namely lamb, beef and chicken that people of a European country consumed during the period of 1979 and 2004. Overall, the consumption of fish showed small degree of fluctuation; meanwhile, the figure for Lamb, Beef and Chicken changed dramatically from the year of 1979 to 2004.

➔ Sentence 1: '*The line graph above illustrates the amount of fish and three other kinds of meat namely lamb, beef and chicken that people of a European country consumed during the period of 1979 and 2004*' is the paraphrase of the rubric: *The graph below shows the consumption of fish and some different kinds of meat in a European country between 1979 and 2004.*

➔ Sentence 2: '*Overall, the consumption of fish showed small degree of fluctuation; meanwhile, the figure for Lamb, Beef and Chicken changed dramatically from the year of 1979 to 2004*' is the summary of the main trends of the four lines.

- Detail paragraph 1

Starting with more than 50 grams for each individual per week in 1979, the amount of Fish slightly declined for the next five years until 1984, followed by fifteen years of stability. In 1999, this amount decreased a little and then nearly remained unchanged until 2004.

➔ Describe how the consumption of Fish changed over the given period.

- Detail paragraph 2

However, Lamb and Beef consumption with very high starting points of 150 grams and more than 200 grams per person per week respectively experienced many years of up and down and had the main tendency to diminish up to the year of 2004. Unlike these two kinds of food, the consumption of Chicken with a rather lower start than Lamb tended to soar and reached its peak of more than 250 grams for each person a week in 2003 and stopped in 2004 with a small decline.

➔ Describe how the consumption of the other types of food over the given period

- **Note:**
  - **Don't give numbers in the summary sentence**
  - **Try not to describe the lines separately. Try to make comparisons where possible.**
  - **Use past tenses for past years, and use future tenses for future years.**
  - **Don't use the passive, continuous or perfect tenses.**

Language of change:

To peak

To hit a peak

To reach a peak

To plummet/plunge	
To drop	sharply
To fall	rapidly
To decrease	dramatically
To decline	significantly

To rocket/surge	
To increase	sharply
To rise	rapidly
To climb	dramatically

To drop	gradually
To fall	slightly
To decline	minimally

4

1

2

3

6

7

8

To remain	the same
	unchanged
	stable

5

To fluctuate (wildly)

To increase	gradually
	slowly
rise	minimally

To reach the lowest point

To hit the bottom

To stabilize

To level off

To remain constant

II. Pie chart

The charts below show the comparison of some kinds of energy production of France in 2 years.

Comparison of Energy Production

1995

Coal 29.80%
Gas 29.63%
Other 4.90%
Nuclear 6.40%
Petro 29.27%

2005

Coal 30.93%
Gas 30.31%
Other 9.10%
Nuclear 10.10%
Petro 19.55%

The pie charts compare 5 different types of energy sources, namely coal, gas, petrol, nuclear and other, of France in 1995 and 2005. It is clear that gas and coal made up the same and also the biggest proportion of energy production in both examined years; and remarkably, the amount of energy produced from petro decreased in 2005 in comparison with the increase in the use of nuclear and other sources.

In 1995, both gas and coal occupied approximately 29% of the French total energy production. After 10 years, there was a slight rise in those figures to just under 31%.

Roughly 29% of the entire amount of energy in France came from petro in 1995. However, up to the year of 2005, that figure considerably declined be about 10%. Meanwhile, the use of nuclear and other materials to generate energy became more popular, from 6.4 % and nearly 5% in 1995 to around 10% and 9% in 2005 respectively.

Analysis

- The introduction

The pie charts compare 5 different types of energy sources, namely coal, gas, petrol, nuclear and other, of France in 1995 and 2005. It is clear that gas and coal made up the same and also the biggest proportion of energy production in both examined years; and remarkably, the amount of energy produced from petro decreased in 2005 in comparison with the increase in the use of nuclear and other sources.

➔ Sentence 1: '***The pie charts compare 5 different types of energy sources, namely coal, gas, petrol, nuclear and other, of France in 1995 and 2005***' is the paraphrase of the rubric: ***The charts below show the comparison of some kinds of energy production of France in 2 years.***

➔ Sentence 2: '***It is clear that gas and coal made up the same and also the biggest proportion of energy production in both examined years; and remarkably, the amount of energy produced from petro decreased in 2005 in comparison with the increase in the use of nuclear and other sources***' is the summary of the most remarkable features.

- Detail paragraph 1

> *In 1995, both gas and coal occupied approximately 29% of the French total energy production. After 10 years, there was a slight rise in those figures to just under 31%.*

➔ Describe some main features of the pies

- Detail paragraph 2

> *Roughly 29% of the entire amount of energy in France came from petro in 1995. However, up to the year of 2005, that figure considerably declined be about 10%. Meanwhile, the use of nuclear and other materials to generate energy became more popular, from 6.4 % and nearly 5% in 1995 to around 10% and 9% in 2005 respectively.*

➔ Describe some main features of the pies

III. Bar chart

The chart below indicates the number of people who have heart attacks every year in the US.
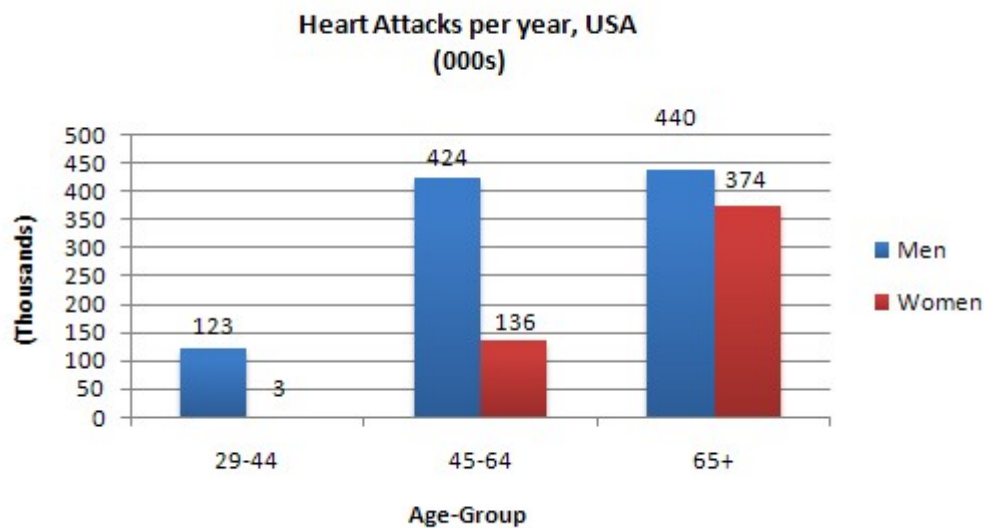
The chart gives data about the differences in the annual number of men and women of three age groups who suffer from heart attacks in the USA. It is clear that as people grow older, the risk for heart attack increases; and it can also be seen from the chart that heart attacks often happen to men rather than women.

At the age of 29 to 44, 123 thousand female patients have heart attacks, while the figure for women is only 3 thousand. Remarkably, from 45 to 64 years old, there are 424 thousand men who undergo heart attacks and 136 thousand was the number of women suffering from the same medical situation.

440 thousand men are recorded to have heart attacks when they reach 65 or higher while the figure for women of the same age is only 374 thousand.

Analysis

- The introduction

The chart gives data about the differences in the annual number of men and women of three age groups who suffer from heart attacks in the USA. It is clear that as people grow older, the risk for heart attack increases; and it can also be seen from the chart that heart attacks often happen to men rather than women.

➔ Sentence 1: *'The chart gives data about the differences in the annual number of men and women of three age groups who suffer from heart attacks in the USA'* is the paraphrase of the rubric: *'The chart below indicates the number of people who have heart attacks every year in the US'.*

➔ Sentence 2: *'It is clear that as people grow older, the risk for heart attack increases; and it can also be seen from the chart that heart attacks often happen to men rather than women'* is the summary of the most remarkable features.

- Detail paragraph 1

At the age of 29 to 44, 123 thousand female patients have heart attacks, while the figure for women is only 3 thousand. Remarkably, from 45 to 64 years old, there are 424 thousand men who undergo heart attacks and 136 thousand was the number of women suffering from the same medical situation.

➔ Describe some main features

- Detail paragraph 2

440 thousand men are recorded to have heart attacks when they reach their 65 or higher while the figure for women of the same age is only 374 thousand.

➔ Describe some main features

IV. Table

The table below shows the sales at a small restaurant in a downtown business district in 2010.

Sales: week of October 7-13

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Lunch	$2,400	$2,450	$2,595	$2,375	$2,500	$1,950	$1,550
Dinner	$3,623	$3,850	$3,445	$3,800	$4,350	$2,900	$2,450

The table gives data about the profit that a restaurant in a business area made from 2 main meals during the second week of October in the year of 2010. It can be seen that the sales from dinner were much higher than those from lunch during the examined period.

From Monday to Friday, the profit was the lowest on Thursday, at only 2375$ in comparison with the highest figure on Wednesday, at nearly 2600$. Meanwhile, customers spent the least amount of 3623 $ on dinner on Monday compared to the other days of the week and 4350$ on Friday, which was the highest number in the category.

At the weekend, the difference in the sales between lunch and dinner was almost 1000 $. While the money gained from lunch on Saturday was only 1950 $, the figure for dinner was 2900$. Diners coming to the restaurant on Sunday spent 1550 $ and 2450 $ for lunch and dinner respectively.

Analysis

- The introduction

The table gives data about the profit that a restaurant in a business area made from 2 main meals during the second week of October in the year of 2010. It can be seen that the sales from dinner were much higher than those from lunch during the examined period.

➔ Sentence 1: *'The table gives data about the profit that a restaurant in a business area made from 2 main meals during the second week of October in the year of 2010'* is the paraphrase of the rubric: *'The table below shows the sales at a small restaurant in a downtown business district in 2010'*

➔ Sentence 2: *'It can be seen that the sales from dinner were much higher than those from lunch during the examined period'* is the summary of the most remarkable feature.

- Detail paragraph 1

From Monday to Friday, the profit was the lowest on Thursday, at only 2375$ in comparison with the highest figure on Wednesday, at nearly 2600$. Meanwhile, customers spent the least amount of 3623 $ on dinner on Monday compared to the other days of the week and 4350$ on Friday, which was the highest number in the category.

- Detail paragraph 2

At the weekend, the difference in the sales between lunch and dinner was almost 1000 $. While the money gained from lunch on Saturday was only 1950 $, the figure for dinner was 2900$. Diners coming to the restaurant on Sunday spent 1550 $ and 2450 $ for lunch and dinner respectively.

V. Mixed

Some students find this mixed type (usually 2 different graphs or charts) difficult to describe. However, this particular type of info graphic is quite easy. The structure of the report would be as follows:

The introduction
- Paraphrase the rubric

The summary
- Sentence 1: The most remarkable feature of the first graph/chart
- Sentence 2: The most remarkable feature of the second graph/chart

Detail paragraph 1
- Describe the main features of the first graph/chart

Detail paragraph 2
- Describe the main features of the second graph/chart
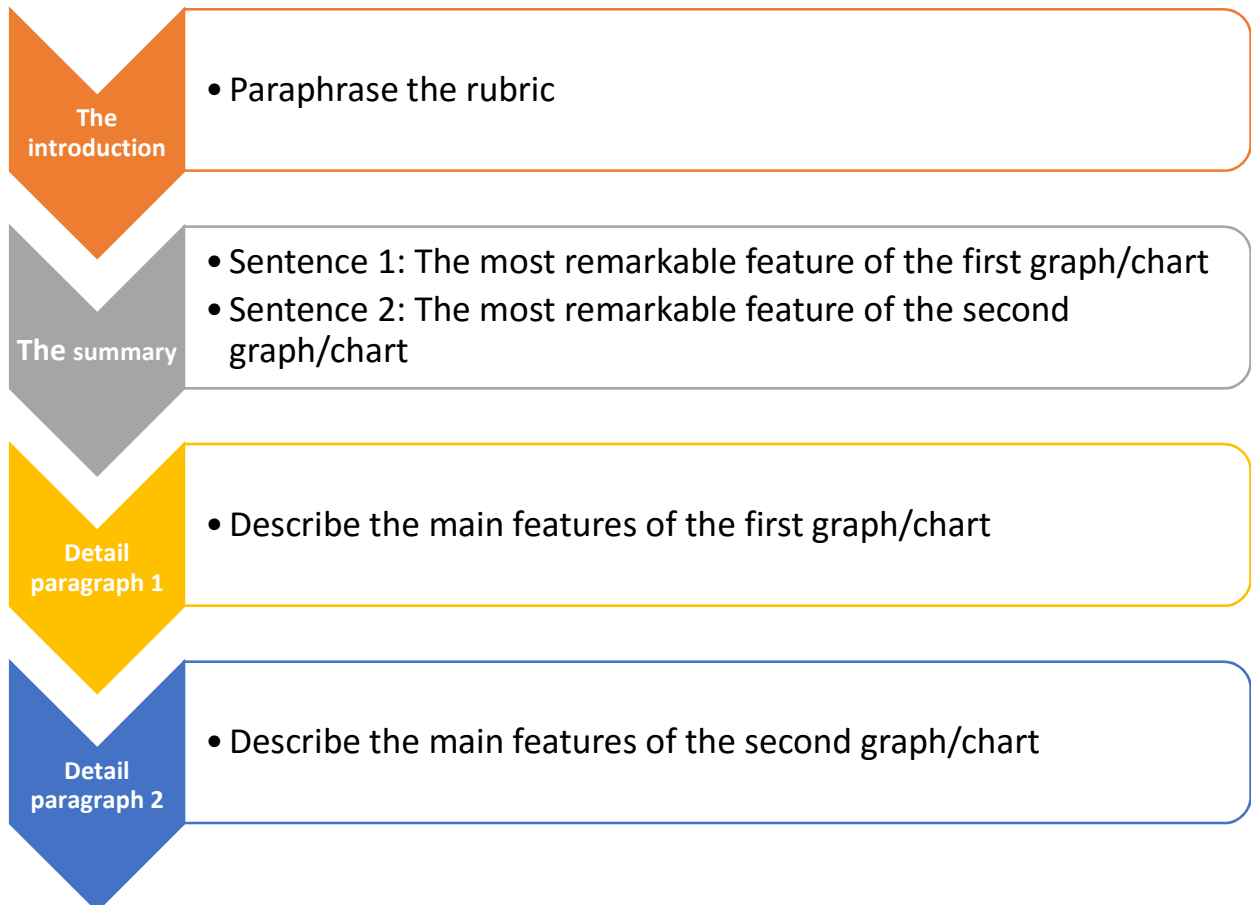
VI.   Maps

A map usually show changes of some given place in 2 different periods of time (a village, a city, a building …)

The introduction
- Paraphrase the rubric
- Indicate the biggest change

Detail paragraph 1
- Describe the main differences in 2 given periods of times

Detail paragraph 2
- Describe the main differences in 2 given periods of times
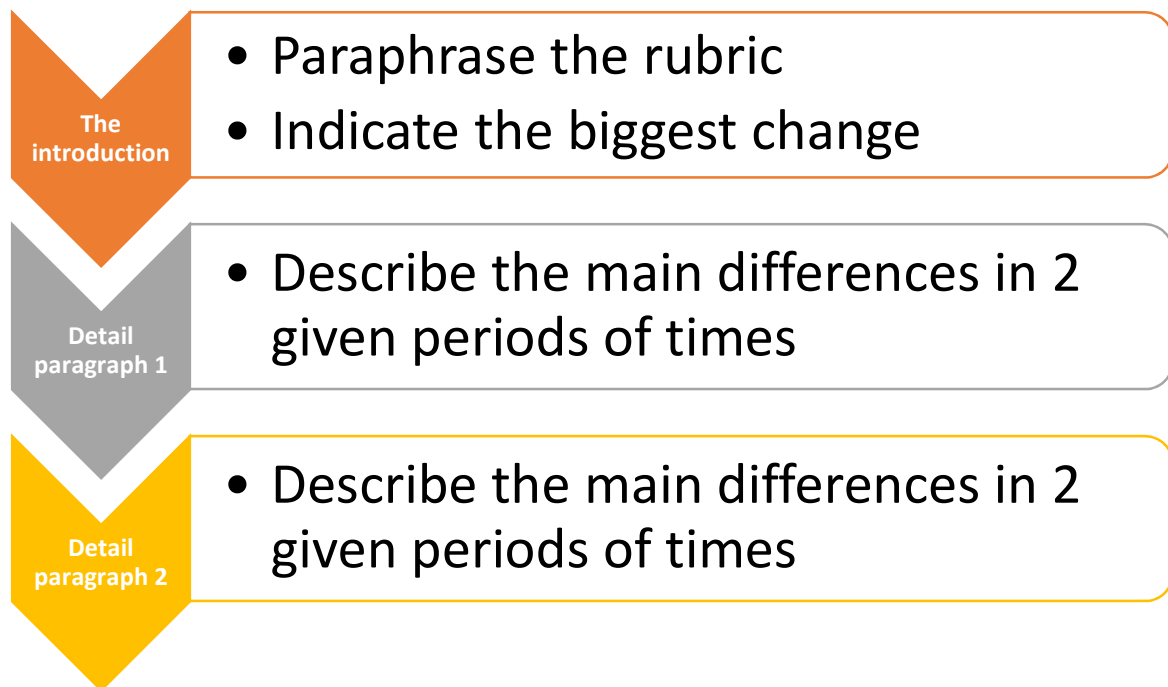
VII.   Process

There are 2 common types of processes: ***How something is made*** and ***life cycle.*** Both of these types can be written in the following structure:

The introduction
- Paraphrase the rubric
- The first step/stage-> through how many steps/stages -> the final step/stage

Detail paragraph 1
- Describe in detail the steps in the diagram

Detail paragraph 2
- Describe in detail the steps in the diagram
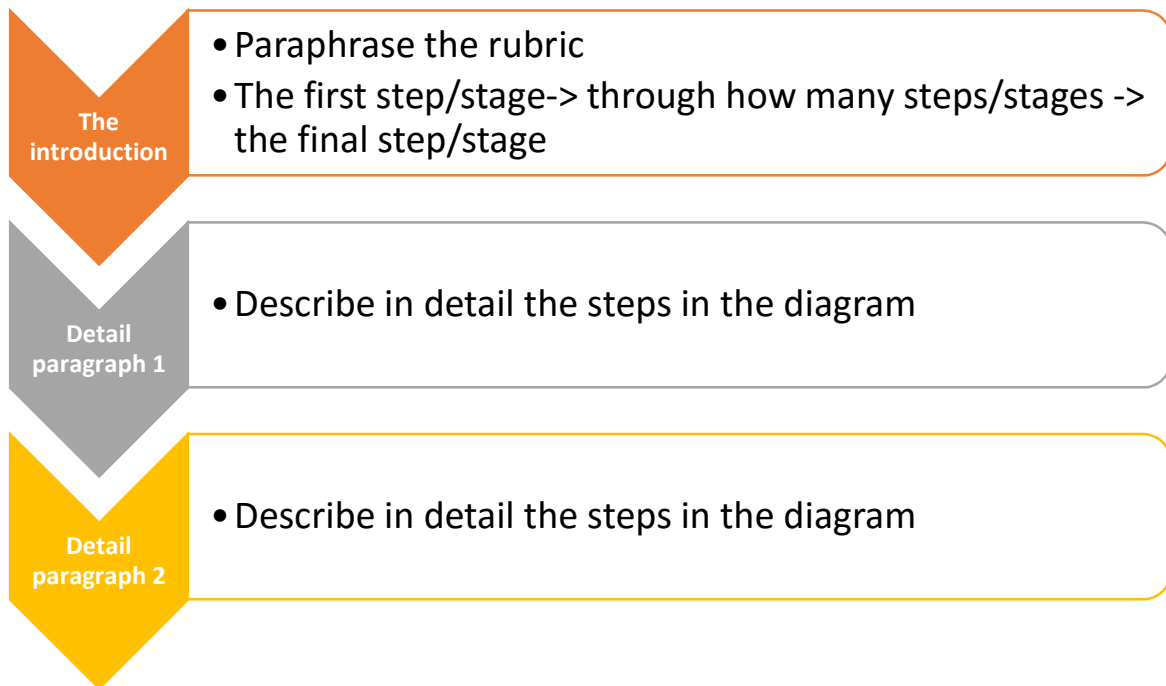
- *Note:*
  - *In paragraphs 2 and 3, describe the process step by step, including the first and final step/stage mentioned in the summary sentence but in more detail.*
  - *Describe all the steps/stages illustrated in the diagram*
  - *Use language of sequence to describe steps/stages: First/Second, The first step/stage is..., next, then, after that etc.*
  - *Use the present simple tense.*
  - *When describing how something is made, use the passive voice.*

IELTS WRITING TASK 2

CHAPTER 1

What you need to know about the IELTS writing task 2

1. General introduction

- This is the second part of the writing section. It requires you to produce an academic essay with the minimum length of 250 words within a suggested period of 40 minutes.
- There is no obligation of the maximum length.
- This part takes up 2/3 the overall score of the writing section.

2. Assessment criteria

An IELTS essay is marked in accordance with 4 different criteria, each of which shares an equal proportion in the overall band score (25% each)

TR *Task Response (25%)*	CC *Coherence & Cohesion (25%)*
This criterion assesses your answer to the question mentioned in the topic. The examiner will check your response in the introduction, relevant ideas and supporting details (including examples and explanations) in the body. Also of importance is the length of the essay.	- Coherence means that your essay is easy to read and understand, which goes with handwriting and language used in the essay. - Cohesion means your essay stays on-topic and does not provide any irrelevant and redundant ideas or details.
LR *Lexical Resource (25%)*	GRA *Grammatical Range & Accuracy (25%)*
This criterion assesses how effectively and accurately you can use your vocabulary to develop your ideas. Big words and phrases might lead to your essay becoming forced and unnatural.	This criterion assesses your flexibility and accuracy in using grammatical structures.

3. IELTS writing task 2 band descriptors

- TR: Task response

Band	Requirements
9.0	- Fully addresses all parts of the task - Present a fully developed position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well supported ideas.
8.0	- Sufficiently addresses all parts of the task - Presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas.
7.0	- Addresses all parts of the task - Presents, extends and supports main ideas, but there may be a tendency to overgeneralize and/or supporting ideas may lack focus
6.0	- Addresses all parts of the task although some parts may be more fully covered than others - Presents a relevant position although the conclusions may become unclear or repetitive - Presents relevant main ideas but some may be inadequately developed/unclear
5.0	- Addresses the task only partially; the format may be inappropriate in places - Expresses a position but the development is not always clear and there may be no conclusions drawn - Presents some main ideas but these are limited and not sufficiently developed; there may be irrelevant detail
4.0	- Responds to the task only in a minimal way or the answer is tangential; the format may be inappropriate - Presents a position but this is unclear - Presents some main ideas but these are difficult to identify and may be repetitive, irrelevant or not well supported
3.0	- Does not adequately address any part of the task - Does not express a clear position - Presents few ideas, which are largely undeveloped or irrelevant
2.0	- Barely responds to the task

	- Does not express a position - May attempt to present one or two ideas but there is no development
1.0	- Answer is completely unrelated to the task
0	Does not attend Does not attempt the task in any way Writes a totally memorized response

- CC: Coherence & Cohesion

Band	Requirements
9.0	- Uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention - Skillfully manages paragraphing
8.0	- Sequences information and ideas logically - Manages all aspects of cohesion well - Uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately
7.0	- Logically organizes information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout - Uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use - Presents a clear central topic within each paragraph
6.0	- Arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression - uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical - May not always use referencing clearly or appropriately - Uses paragraphing, but not always logically
5.0	- Presents information with some organization but there may be a lack of overall progression - Makes inadequate, inaccurate or over use of cohesive devices - May be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution - May not write in paragraphs, or paragraphing may be inadequate
4.0	- Presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response - Uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive - May not write in paragraphs or their use may be confusing
3.0	- Does not organize ideas logically - May use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a

	logical relationship between ideas
2.0	- Has very little control of organizational features
1.0	- Fails to communicate any message
0	Does not attend Does not attempt the task in any way Writes a totally memorized response

- LR: Lexical Resource

Band	Requirements
9.0	- Uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8.0	- Uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings - Skillfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation - Produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation
7.0	- Uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision - Uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation - May produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation
6.0	- Uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task - Attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy - Makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication
5.0	- Uses limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task - May make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader
4.0	- Uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task - Has limited control of word formation and/or spelling; errors may cause strain for the reader
3.0	- Uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling - Errors may severely distort the message
2.0	- Uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling
1.0	- Can only use a few isolated words
0	Does not attend Does not attempt the task in any way Writes a totally memorized response

- GRA: Grammatical Range & Accuracy

Band	Requirements
9.0	- Uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8.0	- Uses a wide range of structures - The majority of sentences are error-free - Makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies
7.0	- Uses a variety of complex structures - Produces frequent error-free sentences - Has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors
6.0	- Uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms - Makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication
5.0	- Uses only a limited range of structures - Attempts complex sentences but the these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences - May make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader
4.0	- Uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses - Some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty
3.0	- Attempts sentences forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning
2.0	- Cannot use sentence forms except in memorized phrases
1.0	- Cannot use sentence forms at all
0	Does not attend Does not attempt the task in any way Writes a totally memorized response

4. Common essay types

- Opinion essays (40%)

- Discussion essays (20%)
- Advantage & Disadvantage essays (10%)
- Cause & solution essays (15%)
- Direct-question essays (some might refer to "Two-part question") (15%)

5. **When to give your opinion**

In many cases, you are asked to give your opinion in your essay. However, you will lose marks if you present your personal point of view in an essay that does not require an opinion.

Let's take a look at some possible questions that might appear in the task:

- **To what extent do you agree or disagree/Do you agree or disagree?**
- **Discuss both views and give your opinion**
- **Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?**
- **Is this a positive or negative development?**

These are the questions that ask for your opinion.

And the following questions are those that DO NOT require personal views.

- **Discuss the advantages and disadvantages**
- **What are the benefits and drawbacks/What are the advantages and disadvantages?**
- **What are the causes? What are the solutions?**

6. **Important notes:**

- *Contractions are not allowed (he's, she's, can't, won't)*
- *No "you"!*
- *Don't raise a question*
- *Don't use informal language*
- *Always use paraphrase when possible*

- *Never copy the topic*
- *Never use plagiarism or memorized items.*
- *The 4-paragraph format is recommended for IELTS task 2*
- *No idioms. (except a few typical idioms used in writing such as "do more harm than good")*
- *Don't use "so on", "…" and "etc."*
- *You are writing for an educated non-specialist audience. Therefore, your language does not need to be as formal as that of university essays.*
- *You are, in most cases, are expected to give your opinion. You may also have to include your life experience and relevant examples to support your opinion.*
- *The topics of the IELTS writing questions will be of general interest, no specialist knowledge is required. For example, topics and include travel, accommodation, current affairs, shops and services, health and welfare, health and safety, recreation, social issues, environmental problems …*
- *Do not copy whole sentences or long phrases from the question. The examiner will recognize them, and they will not count towards your minimum number of words you must write.*

CHAPTER 2

Sharpening your writing skills

I. There are 3 skills that are the most important factors in writing an IELTS essay, namely **brainstorming, paraphrasing** and **sentence building skills.**

- **Brainstorming skills:** The ability to come up with good ideas and to organize those ideas logically within the paragraph

The sequence of brainstorming would be as follows:

Step 1

Identify the key features,think of a real example of the given situation

Step 2

From the example, think about what's going to happen and form some ideas as well as explanations

Step 3

Choose some ideas that are easiest to write. After the ideas are final, form your opinion
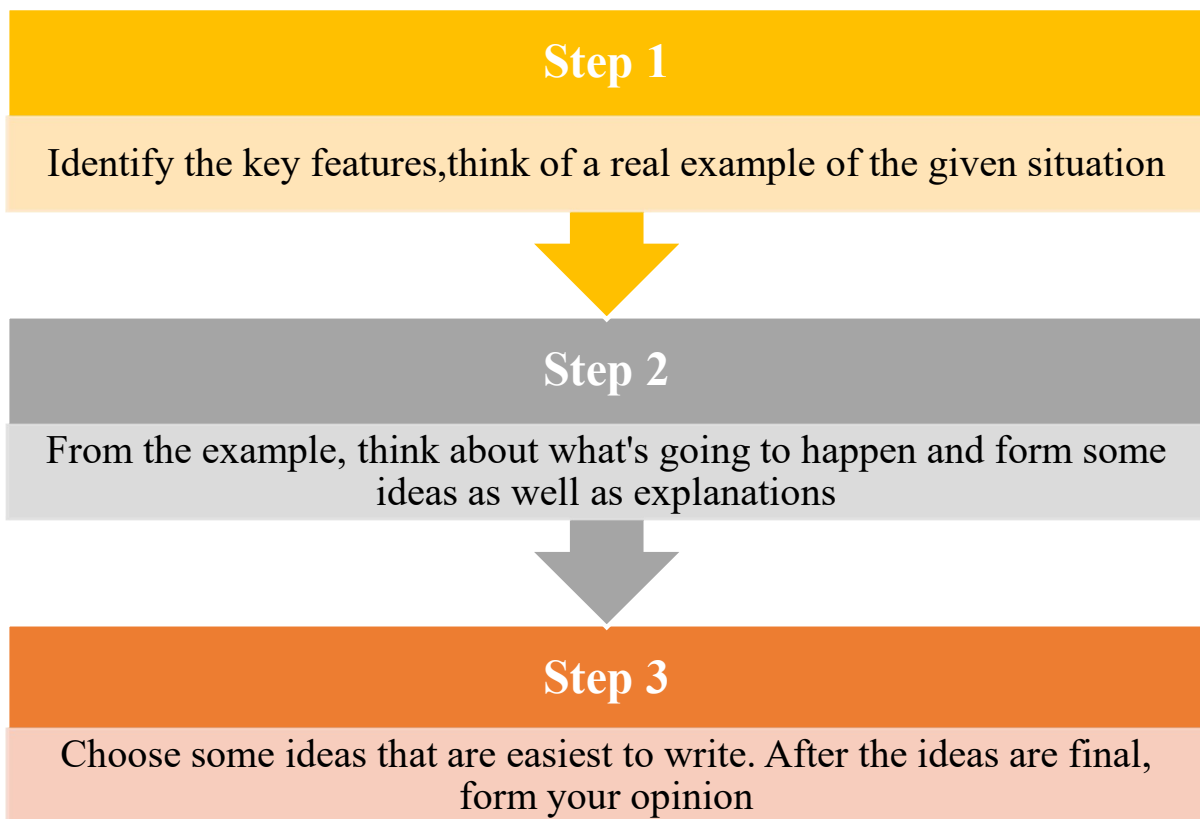
Let's take a look at this topic:

It is more important for schoolchildren to learn about local history than world history.

Do you agree or disagree?

STEP 1: Identifying the key words and thinking of a specific example of local history and world history.	**Key words:** more, history, schoolchildren **Examples:** - *Local history*: the Vietnam War, the fight against the North Empire, how making Chung cake became a tradition during Tet holiday - *World history*: The world war, the feminism protest, foreign cultures
STEP 2: Forming ideas and explanations	- The Vietnam War, the fight against the North Empire -> Schoolchildren will be prouder of their country -> patriotism. - How making Chung cake became a tradition during Tet holiday -> Schoolchildren will understand traditional values of their hometown. - The world war, the feminism protest -> Schoolchildren can expand their horizons. - Foreign cultures -> Schoolchildren will have an advantage in their future occupation
STEP 3: Forming an opinion	For me, it is easier to write about local history with the ideas that I have noted down earlier. Therefore, my opinion would be "I completely agree that learning about local history is more important."

This is what a real outline of an IELTS essay would look like:

Local history	World history
- <u>Patriotism</u>	- <u>Expanding children's horizons</u>
• The Vietnam War, the fight against the North Empire	• The world war, the feminism protest
• Children will take pride in their history	• Different aspects of the world -> become more well-rounded citizens
- <u>Traditional values</u>	- <u>Future career</u>
• How making Chung cake became a tradition during Tet holiday	• Foreign cultures
• History conveys the culture of a country	• In the age of globalization, it is valuable to understand the cultural differences between foreign partners

Under the real test condition, you only need to write down the underlined phrases, the rest is what you think during the brainstorming process.

- **Paraphrasing skills**: The ability to express the same idea in different words, sentences and structures. There is no need for you to replace all the words and phrases in the original sentence.

  Example:

  > *Both governments and individuals should be responsible for protecting wild animals as human activities are destroying their habitats.*

  - **Tip 1:** *Active – Passive structure*

    Human activities are destroying their habitats.
    - ➔ *Their habitats are being destroyed by human activities*

  - **Tip 2:** *Word forms (Usually nouns -> verbs and verbs -> nouns)*

    Both governments and individuals should be ==responsible== for ==protecting== wild animals
    - ➔ *Both governments and individuals should take ==responsibility== for the ==protection== of wild animals.*

  - **Tip 3:** *Dummy – Subjects (it & there)*

    Both governments and individuals should be responsible for protecting wild animals
    - ➔ *It is both governments' and individuals' responsibility to protect wild animals*

When combining these tips, you have the final paraphrased sentence as follows (without using any synonyms)

> *It is both governments' and individuals' responsibility to protect wild animals as their habitats are being destroyed by human activities.*

- **Sentence building skills:** The ability to construct complex, yet clear sentences.

A good and informative sentence is created by a **complex structure**, **vocabulary** and **specific details**.

Example:

Sentence 1: Traffic congestion is a serious problem.

This sentence is too general and simple in terms of vocabulary and sentence structure.

Sentence 2: In many big cities, traffic congestion remains one of the biggest concerns among people.

In this sentence, the information is given more specifically (in big cities)

Sentence 3: In many major cities like Hanoi, people suffer from several severe consequences of traffic congestion caused by a high volume of transport and poorly executed construction plans.

This sentence is written in a complex style, yet an understandable message is still reached. The information is given in a very **SPECIFIC** way with a flexible use of vocabulary.

*****Note:** It is NOT recommended that every sentence in an essay has to be written in a complex style like the third sentence. The flexible change of sentence length would make an essay more understandable and natural.*

II. The differences between a band 5.0, 6.0 and 8.0 paragraph

Band 5.0	Band 6.0-6.5
(1) In my opinion, playing video games helps people relax after their hard-working hours. (2) In the modern time, people usually suffer from stress. (3) It is because they have to work and study all the time. (4) For example, students in many countries around the world have to go to school 5 to 6 days a week. (5) In addition, they have to take many kinds of examinations during their semesters. (6) Therefore, the amount of stress from studying is very huge. (7) Playing video games is a good way of entertainment, and students will have time to relax and enjoy themselves. (8) In conclusion, I believe video games are very entertaining to players.	*(1) In my opinion, playing video games is a useful tool for people to relax after hard-working hours. (2) In the modern time, people usually suffer from stress because they have to work and study all the time. (3) Especially students in many countries around the world, along with constant examinations, the time they spend at school is at least 5 days a week, which leads to a huge amount of stress. (4) Playing video games, such as Flappy Bird or Mario, is a good way of entertainment, and students will have time to relax and enjoy themselves. (5) In conclusion, I believe video games are very entertaining to players.*

- In the first paragraph, despite the accuracy in grammar rules, sentences structures are used in a simple way (most of the sentences in this paragraph are simple sentences).
- In the second paragraph, most of the sentences are complex. Vocabulary is more flexible and there are less repetitions in comparison with the first paragraph.

*In the modern time, people usually suffer from stress because they have to work and study all the time. => **Complex sentence***

*Especially students in many countries around the world, along with constant examinations, the time they spend at school is at least 5 days a week, which leads to a huge amount of stress. => **Complex sentence***

*Playing video games, such as Flappy Bird or Mario, is a good way of entertainment, and students will have time to relax and enjoy themselves. => **Compound sentence***

- Phrases to avoid repetitions:

   *To help people relax after their hard-working hours=> **To be a useful tool for people to relax after hard-working hours***

   *To take many kinds of examinations during their semesters => **along with constant examinations***

   *Have to go to school 5 to 6 days a week=> **the time they spend at school is at least 5 days a week***

(1)In my opinion, playing video games is among the most powerful tools of relaxation for hard-working individuals. (2) In the modern time, the daily amount of stress people have to suffer from is enormous, which emphasizes the need for recreation. (3) Students, for example, spend almost all of their time at school attending classes, not to mention the excessive load of assignments to finish at home and constant examinations. (4) Therefore, video games, such as Flappy Bird or Mario, act as an effective way of entertainment to alleviate studying pressure. (5) In conclusion, I suppose that players can enjoy themselves through the means of video games.

In this final paragraph, grammar rules and sentence structures are used accurately and flexibly.

Some useful expressions from the paragraph:

To be a useful tool for people to relax after hard-working hours

> ➔ *Is among the most powerful tools of relaxation for hard-working individuals*

Along with constant examinations, the time they spend at school is at least 5 days a week, which leads to a huge amount of stress

> ➔ *To spend almost all of their time at school attending classes, not to mention the excessive load of assignments to finish at home and constant examinations*

To be a good way of entertainment, and students will have time to relax and enjoy themselves

> ➔ *To act as an effective way of entertainment to alleviate studying pressure.*

Huge

> ➔ *Enormous*

Relaxation

➔ *Recreation*

The huge amount of

➔ **The excessive load of**

To be a good way

➔ **To act as an effective way**

III. Extending your sentences

- Using relative clauses

For example, students in many countries around the world have to go to school 5 to 6 days a week. In addition, they have to take many kinds of examinations during their semesters. Therefore, the amount of stress from studying is very huge.

The second sentence is an extended example of the first sentence and you can use "which" to connect the first two sentences with the last one as follows:

➔ **Especially students in many countries around the world, along with constant examinations, the time they spend at school is at least 5 days a week, WHICH leads to a huge amount of stress.**

- Giving an example

Playing video games is a good way of entertainment, and students will have time to relax and enjoy themselves.

You can extend this sentence by giving specific examples of video games:

➔ **Playing video games, such as Flappy Bird or Mario, is a good way of entertainment, and students will have time to relax and enjoy themselves.**

- Using clauses of results

In the modern time, the daily amount of stress people have to suffer from is enormous.

To extend this sentence, you can use clauses of results. In this case, the result of people suffering from stress is their demand for leisure. So the sentence can be rewritten as follows:

➔ *In the modern time, the daily amount of stress people have to suffer from is enormous, which emphasizes the need for recreation.*

- Using clauses of purpose

Therefore, video games, such as Flappy Bird or Mario, act as an effective way of entertainment.

You can use a clause of purpose to extend this sentence as follows:

➔ *Therefore, video games, such as Flappy Bird or Mario, act as an effective way of entertainment to alleviate the studying pressure.*

- Using clauses of reasons

In the modern time, people usually suffer from stress. It is because they have to work and study all the time.

These 2 sentences are quite simple and can be combined by a clause of reasons:

➔ *In the modern time, people usually suffer from stress because they have to work and study all the time.*

CHAPTER 3

General structure

This 4-paragraph structure can be applied to write most of the IELTS task 2 essays. A few exceptions may occur when the task specifically requires more than 2 body paragraphs.

THE INTRODUCTION *(2 sentences)*

- Sentence 1: Giving background information by paraphrasing the topic
- Sentence 2: Giving a clear answer to the question

THE BODY *(2 paragraphs with 4-6 sentences in each)*

- The first body paragraph
    - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence
    - ✓ Sentence 2-4/6: Supporting sentences (explanations & examples)
- The second body paragraph
    - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence
    - ✓ Sentence 2-4/6: Supporting sentences (explanations & examples)

THE CONCLUSION *(1 sentence)*

- The restatement: repeat your answer to the question

I. How to write a good introduction?

- Introduce the topic
- Answer the question

These are the two requirements of a good introduction. For each requirement, you only need 1 sentence.

Giving the background information	• Introduce the topic • Simply paraphrase the given topic
Giving a clear answer	• Answer the question • An outline can be optionally added in the thesis statement. Make sure your outline is written in a parallel structure.
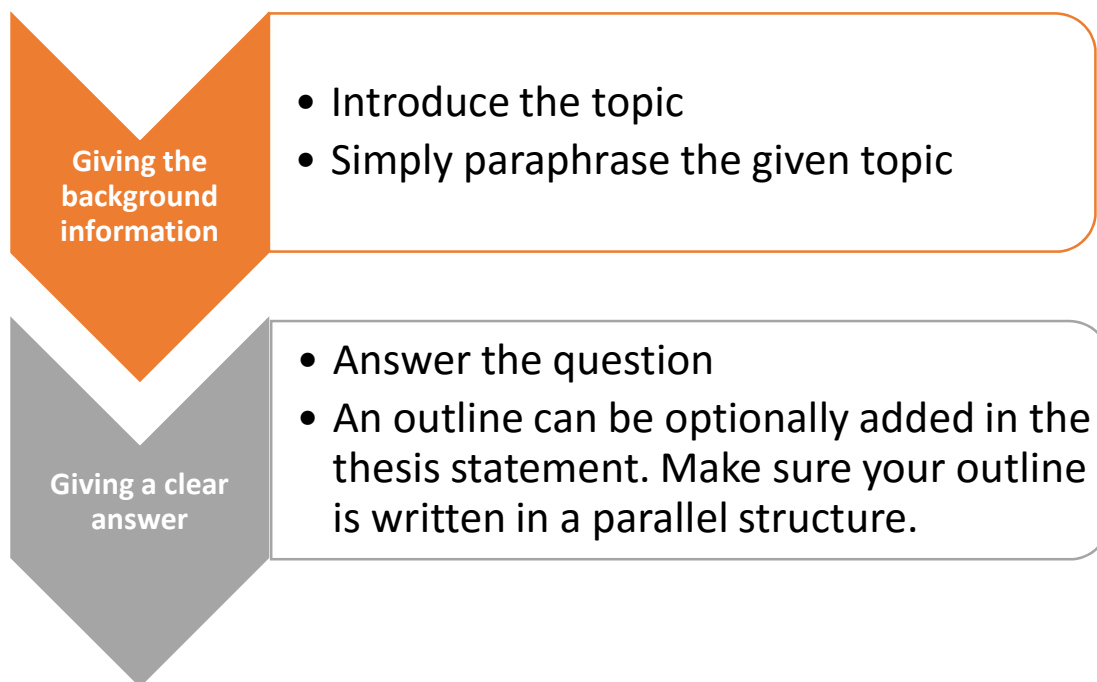
The introduction is approximately 35-50 words long. It is unnecessary for you to write a long introduction because it is the body that you need to focus on.

Example:

Topic: The Internet has caused people to be isolated from their real lives. Do you agree or disagree?

Model answer

It is generally believed by many people that the Internet is the root of people's seclusion from their society (GIVING BACKGROUND INFORMATION)*. From my perspective, this idea is completely flawed owing to the benefits in terms of communication and knowledge acquisition that the Internet offers* (GIVING A CLEAR ANSWER)*.*

Let's analyze my answer:

➤ My first sentence is the narrow background statement which simply is a paraphrase of the topic. Let's see how I did it: "*It is generally believed by many people that the Internet is the root of people's seclusion from their society*". The topic is: "*The Internet has caused people to be isolated from their real lives*," so instead of saying "The Internet has caused" I wrote "The Internet is the root of". The phrase "to be isolated from their real lives" was replaced by "people's seclusion from their society". It is necessary that you use paraphrased words and phrases in this sentence because it shows that you understand the given topic.

➤ The second sentence of my introduction is the thesis statement which is very direct and clear: "*From my perspective, this idea is completely flawed*". You do not need complex structure or advanced vocabulary to write the thesis because it might cause confusion to the examiner. At the beginning, I used a phrase: "*From my perspective*" as a linker to signal my opinion, you can use a lot of other words and phrases to express your opinion. It only plays a role of telling the examiner that you are going to present your opinion, so it does not matter what words or phrases you use. Note that I also added an outline for my essay: "*owing to the benefits in terms of communication and knowledge acquisition that the Internet offers*". I listed my 2 main ideas using a

parallel structure: "*communication*" and "*knowledge acquisition*", very general, do not provide any specific details in the outline. Remember that an outline is only optional.

II.   How to write a body paragraph?

A well-written and well-discussed body paragraph should answer these 3 following questions:

What is the paragraph about?

How to explain the idea?

What examples are suitable to support the stated idea?

In order to answer those questions, a body paragraph should include 3 key features (the P.E.E rule) in correlation with the 3 questions:

Point
- The topic sentence
- Answer the question "what is the paragraph about?"

Explanations
- Develop and analyze the topic sentence
- Answer the question "How to explain the idea?"

Examples
- Give **SPECIFIC** examples to illustrate the point
- Answer the question "What examples are suitable to support the idea?"
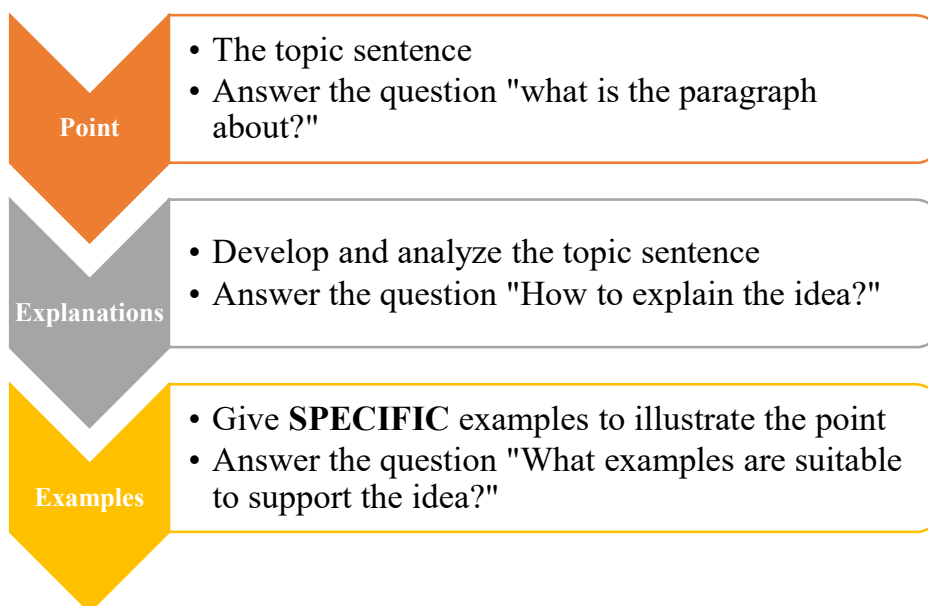
For a fully-developed body paragraph, 5-6 sentences are enough. Remember, examples are greatly important as they help your essay more convincing.

On writing the body, keep asking yourself the question "**why**" in order to produce an in-depth analysis to support the essay.

Model answer

Firstly, I would argue that the Internet is one of the most powerful facilitators in communication **(POINT).** *At the moment, numerous websites such as Facebook or Yahoo offer much faster and more convenient services for users to keep in touch with their friends and relatives regardless of geographic distance* **(SPECIFIC EXAMPLE).** *These websites create an online network which connects everyone within their users' social circle and enables them to send instant messages or to make video calls in a few seconds no matter where they are. People, therefore, can enjoy both the convenience and the swiftness that those services provide* **(EXPLANATION).**

Secondly, I believe the Internet has empowered people to acquire more knowledge about their society than ever before **(POINT).** *As a matter of fact, it is able to bring every aspect of life to people, which I think is valuable because people will have a closer look at how their society really is* **(EXPLANATION).** *Latest news about sports, education or criminals for example is updated constantly in many online sources that are open to everyone* **(SPECIFIC EXAMPLE).** *This easy accessibility equips people with sufficient information, in other words, they are more aware of the problems lying within their society* **(EXPLANATION).**

*Writing tip: To begin each paragraph, just go for a simple linker. More complicated transitional words are unnecessary and you will not get more marks.

Let's analyze my answer:

> ➢ I always start my paragraph with a simple linking word (firstly, secondly) and a short and clear topic sentence which presents very general information about what I am going to write in the paragraph: **"Firstly, I would argue that the Internet is one of the most powerful facilitators in communication"** and **"Secondly, I believe the Internet has empowered people to acquire more knowledge about their society than ever before".**

➢ Take a look at my first paragraph. After my topic sentence I gave an example of the two online websites to support my point: "***At the moment, numerous websites <u>such as Facebook or Yahoo</u> offer much faster and more convenient services for users to keep in touch with their friends and relatives regardless of geographic distance***". It is important that your examples are specific. After that I explain how these 2 websites facilitate communication between people, which would prove my point that the Internet helps people to keep in touch conveniently with others.

➢ And the second paragraph, I did not provide any detailed examples. Instead, I analyzed and developed the topic sentence to convince the examiner of my point of view.

➢ A concluding sentence is not needed in each body paragraph.

III. How to write a good conclusion?

- Summarize the main ideas (Optional)
- Restate the thesis statement

A conclusion should only be 1-2 sentences long. You can paraphrase your thesis statement either with or without the outline (summary).

Take a look at my sample for the topic about the Internet above:

In conclusion, as the two analyzed reasons above, I strongly disagree with the idea that Internet users are drifting away from their lives because of the online service. (THE RESTATEMENT)

➢ In my conclusion, I only restate my thesis statement in a different way.

Let's see a complete essay about the Internet

The Internet has caused people to be isolated from their real lives.

Do you agree or disagree?

Answer

It is generally believed by many people that the Internet is the root of people's seclusion from their society. **From my perspective, this idea is completely flawed owing to the benefits in terms of communication and knowledge acquisition that the Internet offers.**

Firstly, I would argue that the Internet is one of the most powerful facilitators in communication. At the moment, numerous websites such as Facebook or Yahoo offer much faster and more convenient services for users to keep in touch with their friends and relatives regardless of geographic distance. These websites create an online network which connects everyone within their users' social circle and enables them to send instant messages or to make video calls in a few seconds no matter where they are. People, therefore, can enjoy both the convenience and the swiftness that those services provide.

Secondly, I believe the Internet has empowered people to acquire more knowledge about their society than ever before. As a matter of fact, it is able to bring every aspect of life to people, which I think is valuable because people will have a closer look at how their society really is. Latest news about sports, education or criminals for example is updated constantly in many online sources that are open to everyone. This easy accessibility equips people with sufficient information, in other words, they are more aware of the problems lying within their society.

In conclusion, as the two analyzed reasons above, I strongly disagree with the idea that Internet users are drifting away from their lives because of the online service.

(262 words)

CHAPTER 4

How to write all types of IELTS writing task 2

I. Opinion essay

General information

- An opinion essay is a formal academic essay which requires you to state your opinion (usually "agree or disagree") on a given topic.
- You need to provide reasons and supporting details to convince the examiner of your answer.
- There are 2 common approaches to write an opinion essay: 1-sided and balanced.

One-sided approach

✓ A one-sided essay is an essay where your opinion is completely inclined to only one side of the argument, which means you either **completely agree** or **completely disagree** with the issue given in the topic.

✓ Always give 2 reasons to support your opinion, each of which must be analyzed and supported by specific details in each of the two paragraphs in the body.

✓ There are 2 places where you have to give your opinion very clearly and directly: **the thesis statement in the introduction** and **the restatement in the conclusion.**

Let's see the complete structure of a one-sided opinion essay:

The introduction:

- Sentence 1: Paraphrase the background information given in the topic
- Sentence 2: State whether you **completely agree** or **completely disagree** with the issue.

The body:

- The first paragraph:
  - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence (your 1st idea)
  - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: Give SPECIFIC examples or explanations to support the idea
- The second paragraph:
  - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence (your 2nd idea)
  - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: Give SPECIFIC examples or explanations to support the idea

The conclusion:

Restate your opinion that **completely agree** or **completely disagree** with the issue given in the topic.

Let's take a look again at my essay about the Internet:

> **Topic: The Internet has caused people to be isolated from their real lives. Do you agree or disagree?**

First, let's see the way I do my brainstorming:

Agree

- Highly addictive

    + Appealing apps

    + People enjoy making online friends

       -> forget their real lives

- Some people prefer the virtual world

    + The find tranquility in something not real

    + They can freely express themselves

Disagree

- A powerful means of communication

    + Facebook & Yahoo

    + Long distance messaging & calling

       -> bring people together

- Expand social circles

    + Make friends easily

- Bring knowledge to people

    + Many sources of infor

       -> know more about society

> *Writing tip: Spend more time planning your essay, a good plan equals a good essay (5-7 minutes for brainstorming). When you are brainstorming, find as many ideas as possible for both sides, after that you can choose 2 ideas that you think are the easiest to write. Always think of supporting details and examples to write in your body during your planning time.*

I have listed a few ideas of both sides, for me the "against" side seems easier to write so I will write an essay that DISAGREES with the given statement. Out of the 3 ideas I presented above, I would choose the first and the third one to write which are: "a powerful means of communication" and "bring knowledge to people". Remember, you don't need to include everything in your essay, just pick 2 ideas and some typical supporting details.

Now that we have the outline, let's see what I did!

It is generally believed by many people that the Internet is the root of people's seclusion from their society. **From my perspective, this idea is completely flawed owing to the benefits in terms of communication and knowledge acquisition that the Internet offers. =>** *This is my opinion about the issue, I wrote "This idea is completely flawed", which means "I completely disagree with the idea". This is a very short, clear and direct answer.*

Firstly, I would argue that the Internet is one of the most powerful facilitators in communication. At the moment, numerous websites such as Facebook or Yahoo offer much faster and more convenient services for users to keep in touch with their friends and relatives regardless of geographic distance. These websites create an online network which connects everyone within their users' social circle and enables them to send instant messages or to make video calls in a few seconds no matter where they are. People, therefore, can enjoy both the convenience and the swiftness that those services provide. => *My first body paragraph only developed the first reason.*

Secondly, I believe the Internet has empowered people to acquire more knowledge about their society than ever before. As a matter of fact, it is able to bring every aspect of life to people, which I think is valuable because people will have a closer

look at how their society really is. Latest news about sports, education or criminals for example is updated constantly in many online sources that are open to everyone. This easy accessibility equips people with sufficient information, in other words, they are more aware of the problems lying within their society.=> *My second body paragraph only developed the second reason.*

In conclusion, as the two analyzed reasons above, I strongly disagree with the idea that Internet users are drifting away from their lives because of the online service. => *I also restate my opinion here in the conclusion.*

✓ It is important to keep in mind that this is the one-sided approach, you only have to convince the examiner of your opinion that you completely agree or completely disagree, and therefore, it would be unnecessary to present the other side of the argument.

✓ Always remember that you have to state your opinion in the thesis and in the conclusion. Missing one of the two would cost some mark penalties.

✓ The 4-paragraph format is recommended: **1 introductory paragraph, 2 body paragraphs**, each of which develops only 1 reason and **1 concluding paragraph**

Counter-argument & Refutation

In order to make your argument stronger, you can write a paragraph in which you present the opposite opinions from other people and deny it with your reasons. This paragraph contains 2 parts: **the counter-argument** and **the refutation** and it usually is the last one in your body.

The counter-argument	• The counter-argument is the first part of this kind of paragraph. • In this part, you need to present the opponents' opinions about the topic you are discussing.
The refutation	• The refutation is your response to the counter-argument. • This is where you show why the opposite opinions are weaker than yours by refuting those opinions.
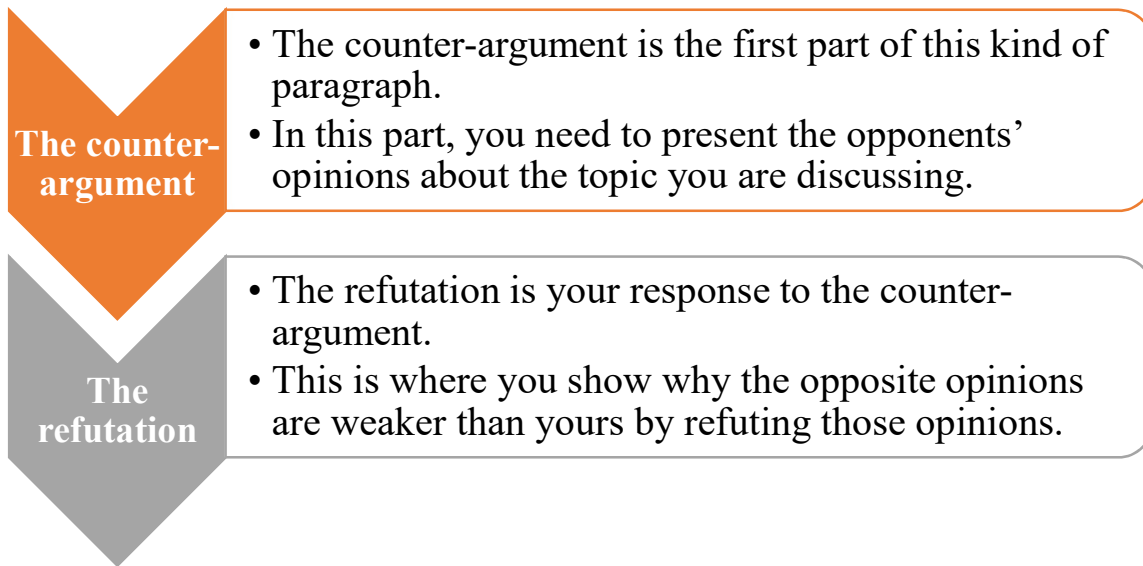
Therefore, your essays would be structured as follows:

The introduction:

- The background statement

- The thesis statement

The body:

- The first paragraph: 2 reasons to support your opinion

- **The second paragraph: The counter-argument & refutation**

The conclusion:

The restatement

Look at the example below

> **Topic: Trial marriage is becoming more and more popular among college students. Many people believe this trend has a negative impact on students' lives.**
>
> **To what extent do you agree or disagree with this idea?**

I am going to **DISAGREE** with trial marriage so my counter-argument and refutation paragraph must include opinions that **AGREE** with this living arrangement.

Advocates of this idea might think that living together during early age of adulthood acts as a test of the couple's compatibility, hence avoiding the risk of future divorce. They also think that the couple who choose this premarital relationship can support each other with their studies. However, I think those thoughts are rather ill-founded as the fact might be the opposite. Going through a long intimate relationship like trial marriage, young couples, paradoxically, might be less understanding and sympathetic, which might lead to the early end of their marriage. Furthermore, reality has shown that many university students become more neglectful of their studies while living under the same roof with their partner on account of the most of their time devoted to each other.

The counter-argument
(Usually 2 opposing views are presented in this part)

The refutation
(Denying each opposing view respectively)

Let's see the complete essay about this topic:

> **Topic: Trial marriage is becoming more and more popular among college students. Many people believe this trend has a negative impact on students' lives.**
>
> **To what extent do you agree or disagree with this idea?**

Sample

Premature life with partners has gained enormous popularity as students reach their adulthood. **In my opinion, cohabitation is more of a deleterious impact on their life.**

There are several severe problems that this living arrangement would cause. The first and also the biggest concern relates to the possibility of unexpected pregnancy. If the couple who have this premarital experience is poorly equipped with sufficient knowledge about a safe sexual life, the chance of the female partner's being pregnant might be relatively high. Another drawback is the deterioration in social interactions. As college couples spend almost all their time to take care of their partners because they live in the same place, they hardly have time to hang out with their friends or look for a job. Therefore, their social relationships and skills would suffer.

Advocates of this idea might think that living together during early age of adulthood acts as a test of the couple's compatibility, hence avoiding the risk of future divorce. They also think that the couple who choose this premarital relationship can support each other with their studies. However, I think those thoughts are rather ill-founded as the fact might be the opposite. Going through a long intimate relationship like trial marriage, young couples, paradoxically, might be less understanding and sympathetic, which might lead to the early end of their marriage. Furthermore, reality has shown that many university students become more neglectful of their studies while living under the same roof with their partner on account of the most of their time devoted to each other.

In conclusion, despite the existence of some opinions in favor of this early decision, I do believe students' lives would be adversely affected.

(282 words)

Essay analysis:

The introduction:

- The first sentence is the paraphrase of the topic which is about cohabitation among college students
- The second sentence is the thesis statement, short and direct as usual

The body:

- The first paragraph presents 2 reasons to support my opinion:
  - ✓ The possibility of unexpected pregnancy.
  - ✓ The deterioration of social interactions
- The second paragraph is the counter-argument & refutation

The counter-argument	*The refutation*
Trial marriage helps couples avoid the risk of divorce.	*After a long time in close relationship, young couples might get bored, leading to less sympathy and higher chance of divorce.*
Couples can help each other with their studies.	*Students often get sidetracked when living with their lovers.*

The conclusion:

Restate my opinion.

Useful vocabulary & expressions:

1. **Premature life with partners:** Cuộc sống sớm với bạn đời

2. **To gain enormous popularity:** Giành được nhiều sự yêu thích

3. **To reach their adulthood:** Đến thời kì trưởng thành

4. **Cohabitation:** Sống thử

5. **To have a deleterious impact on sth:** Có ảnh hưởng nguy hại tới cái gì

6. **Unexpected pregnancy:** Mang thai ngoài ý muốn

7. **Premarital experience:** Trải nghiệm trước hôn nhân

8. **Social interactions:** Các mối quan hệ xã hội

9. **To suffer:** Phải chịu đựng hậu quả

10. **To act as sth:** Coi như là

11. **Compatibility:** Sự tương thích

12. **To be ill-founded:** Vô căn cứ

13. **Paradoxically:** Trớ trêu thay

14. **To be neglectful of sth:** Sao nhãng

15. **To be in favor of:** Thiên về cái gì

Balanced approach

- ✓ A balanced essay is an essay where you are inclined to one side of the argument but you do not deny the other side, which means you **partly agree or partly disagree** with the issue given in the topic. Never sit on the fence, you accept that there are 2 sides of the argument but you still need to choose which one you would agree more.

- ✓ You need to analyze both sides of the issue and state which side you are in favor of at the same time.

- ✓ The first body paragraph is used to talk about the weaker side and the stronger side (the side that you are inclined to) is presented in the second body paragraph.

- ✓ Always find 2 reasons for each side of the argument.

- ✓ There are 3 places where you need to give you opinion: **the thesis statement, the topic sentence of the second body paragraph** and **the restatement.**

Therefore, your balanced essays would be structured as follows:

The introduction

- Sentence 1: Paraphrase the background information given in the topic
- Sentence 2: State your **balanced opinion** (you accept the opposing views, but your points are stronger)

The body

- The first paragraph: The weaker argument (2 ideas)
  - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence: introduce the opposing views
  - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: Give SPECIFIC examples and explanations to support those opposing views
- The second paragraph: The stronger argument (2 ideas)
  - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence: introduce your favorable side of the argument
  - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: Give SPECIFIC examples and explanations to support your ideas

The conclusion

The restatement: restate your **balanced opinion**

Let's take a look at my essay about the Internet, written in a more balanced way:

> **Topic: It is thought by many people that the Internet has caused people to become more isolated from society. To what extent do you agree or disagree?**

Now, I did the brainstorming for this topic above, let's take a look again at my sketch:

Agree	Disagree
- Highly addictive	- A powerful means of communication
+ Appealing apps	+ Facebook & Yahoo
+ People enjoy making online friends	+ Long distance messaging & calling
-> forget their real lives	-> bring people together
- Some people prefer the virtual world	- Expand social circles
+ The find tranquility in something not real	+ Make friends easily
+ They can freely express themselves	- Bring knowledge to people
	+ Many sources of infor
	-> know more about society

This is a balanced essay so I have to write about both sides, using the ideas I listed here, let's see how I did it!

Answer

The recent upsurge in the use of the Internet has provoked critical controversy over the possible damage it may inflict upon its users' personal lives. **In my opinion,**

despite several benefits as a modern communication facilitator, the Internet is truly the root of people's drifting away from their society.

On the one hand, the Internet has undoubtedly been offering a tremendous assistance to its users in terms of communication. To start with, the Internet is the most powerful tool in keeping in touch with friends or family members regardless of geographic distance. Compared to the past when almost all means of long distant communication was by writing letters or make phone calls, people now can save time and money with the help of numerous social websites like Facebook or Instagram. Furthermore, people can make new friends with ease through the online network provided by the Internet service, which not only expands their circle of social acquaintances but brings people closer together as well.

On the other hand, beneficial as it is, the Internet, from my standpoint, still presents more detrimental consequences concerning with users' lives. The Internet, initially, is highly addictive and people sometimes may abuse the online service. In particular, youngsters are often tempted by the very idea of being befriended on the online space such as Facebook or Yahoo, hence their negligence on real relationships. Furthermore, those people find tranquility by freely expressing themselves in their virtual world and no longer feel the need for real life interactions anymore.

In conclusion, although the positive impacts the Internet has made upon society across communication spectrum, I am still convinced that people are being separated from their communities.

> ✓ Unlike a one-sided essay, a balanced essay requires you to give your opinion in 3 different places. Let's see what I did: "**In my opinion, despite several benefits as a modern communication facilitator, the Internet is truly the root of people's drifting away from their society.**"; "**On the other hand, beneficial as it is, the Internet, from my standpoint, still presents more detrimental consequences concerning with users' lives**" and "**In conclusion, although the positive impacts the**

Internet has made upon society across communication spectrum, I am still convinced that people are being separated from their communities". In all three sentences I always write 2 clauses, the first one is always used to concede and to accept that the opposing points are reasonable to some level, the second clause is used to state my favorable side of the argument.

- ✓ The first body paragraph I always write about the weaker side of the argument with 2 reasons. The second body paragraph I use to analyze the side I am in favor of, also with 2 reasons. It is important that you provide 2 reasons for each side of the argument, whether it is the weaker or the stronger one.

One-sided v.s Balanced

Is it always possible to write a balanced essay?

The answer is no! Sometimes it would be inappropriate to say that you partly agree or disagree with the topic. In some certain cases, you can still write about both sides, but your opinion can only be "agree" or "disagree".

For example:

> *Prison is the common way in most countries to solve the problem of crime. However, a more effective solution is to provide people a better education.*
>
> *Do you agree or disagree?*

There are a few options you can take to write about this topic:

1: You think education is more effective -> you **agree** with the topic

2: You think education is less effective -> you **disagree** with the topic

3: You think education and prison are equally effective -> you **disagree** with the topic

There is no proper way to write a balanced essay in this case. But still, you can write about both prison and education in your body if you disagree with the topic because you think prison and education are equally effective.

Let's see how it is done:

Despite the popularity of prison sentences as the way to control ==illegalities==, improvements on education have gained ==social endorsement== as a means to ==eliminate the problem from its root==. **In my opinion, I disagree that education is the better one as it is rather impossible to compare these two methods' effectiveness owing to their distinct impacts.**

On the one hand, the reasons why prisons ==are of indispensable necessity== for ==social security== are varied. <u>They are the place to keep people who have broken the law contained, ensuring the safety of other citizens.</u> Especially, dangerous criminals such as murderers or rapists have to ==be imprisoned== for their ==heinous actions==. <u>Furthermore, severe prison sentences act as a</u> ==deterrent against== <u>crimes</u>. Knowing there might be a chance of getting caught and ==condemned to jail==, which also means losing freedom and living a miserable life in a cell, ones who are having the intention of committing illegalities would reconsider going down the path.

On the other hand, education ==serves as a remedy for the origin of crimes==. <u>Education contributes greatly to</u> ==heighten people's intellect== <u>and to form a</u> ==civilized society==. With access to better educational services, citizens would be well-informed about the damage that committing crimes would cause to their community and themselves, which eventually leads to the decline in crime rates. <u>Additionally, the possession of certain qualifications through fundamental education like</u> ==vocational training== <u>could secure a person's stable life, which would</u> ==dispel any ideas of committing crimes==.

In conclusion, I believe there is no absolute way to deduce whether imprisonment policies or better education would take the dominant role in dealing with crimes as they both tackle the problem just in different ways.

(280 words)

Useful vocabulary & expressions:

1. **Illegality:** Hành động bất hợp pháp

2. **Social endorsement:** Sự ủng hộ từ xã hội

3. **Eliminate the problem from its root:** Loại bỏ nguồn góc của vấn đề

4. **To be of indispensable necessity:** Là một sự cần thiết không thể thiếu (nhấn mạnh)

5. **Social security:** An ninh xã hội

6. **To be imprisoned:** Bị bỏ tù

7. **Heinous actions:** Hành động tội ác

8. **To be a deterrent against sth:** Là một rào cản chống lại cái gì đó

9. **To be condemned to jail:** Bị tống vào tù

10. **To serve as a remedy for the origin of crimes:** Như là một liều thuốc cho nguồn gốc của tội phạm

11. **To heighten people's intellect:** Nâng cao dân trí

12. **A civilized society:** Một xã hội văn minh

13. **Vocational training:** Học nghề

14. **To dispel any ideas of committing crimes:** Loại bỏ bất kì ý định muốn phạm tội

II. Discussion essay

General information

- A discussion essay is a formal academic essay where you are asked to discuss 2 sides of a given argument.

- The task may or may not ask for your opinion on the issue, only give your opinion if the task requires so.

- Try to find 2 ideas for each side of the argument.

- There are many ways to write a discussion essay; in this book I will only show you one possible approach using the 4-paragraph format.

- In a discussion essay using the 4-paragraph format, the term "**give your opinion**" can be interpreted as "**which side of the argument do you agree with?**". Therefore, the way to write this particular type of essay is rather similar to that of a balanced opinion essay. The only difference is the language used in each type, which will be shown later on.

Let's see the complete structure of a discussion essay:

The introduction

- Sentence 1: Paraphrase the background information given in the topic
- Sentence 2: State your opinion (which side you are inclined to)

The body

- The first paragraph: the first side of the argument
  - ✓ Sentence 1: the topic sentence
  - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: Give 2 reasons and use SPECIFIC examples and explanations to support those reasons
- The second paragraph: Your favorable side of the argument
  - ✓ Sentence 1: the topic sentence (restate your opinion here)
  - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: give 2 reasons and use SPECIFIC examples and explanations to support those reasons

The conclusion

The restatement: restate your opinion

Let's take a look at my sample of a discussion essay:

> *Topic: These days there are a lot of TV channels available to view. Some people think it is good to have a range of options but others argue that it affects the quality of programs.*
>
> *Discuss both sides and give your opinion as well.*

The task requires a discussion about both sides of the argument, so we need to sketch down some ideas for each side.

1st side

- **More channels = more choices**

  + Viewers' preferences are varied

  + Comparison with the past

- **Closer look at the world**

  + Domestic

  + Global

2nd side

- **Confusion**

  + Too many sources

    -> lower quality

- **Credibility**

  + Gain more viewership -> more deceiving programs

  + People will have difficult time choosing trustworthy channels

SAMPLE ANSWER

The nonstop progress of the modern TV industry has provided people with permanent access to numerous choices of channels, depending on viewers' interests. This broad availability instigates many public debates over how the number of TV programs and their quality interrelate. **From my perspective, it is true that more and more channels have been launched recently with deteriorating quality in terms of both display and content.**

On the one hand, the reasons why people enjoy more choices on TV are varied. Firstly, people believe the upsurge in the number of programs can satisfy viewers of different preferences. Compared to the limitation of TV content in the past, contemporary technology has unfolded the possibility to bring every aspect of life such as sports, science and education to people. Secondly, people now can have a more integral approach upon not only their society but also other countries around the world through TV telecasts. In fact, both domestic and foreign issues are updated daily on various sources, which equips viewers with more intimate perception on global matters.

On the other hand, I believe as the number of TV channels grows, their quality suffers in comparison. In fact, people are being bombarded with all kinds of sources of information. Unfortunately, many publishers are trying to increase their viewership which generates greater profit by deliberately producing programs with low-quality interface or even fraudulent content. This, coupled with the acceleration in numbers, can engender bewilderment amongst viewers since they will have a difficult time differentiating which channels they can trust from the deceiving ones.

In conclusion, although it is undeniable that the wider range of selections has some certain benefits to people**, I think the followed shortcomings associated with their quality are the worrying topic that people should pay heed to.**

➢ As we see, there are 3 different places where I give my opinion: **the thesis statement, the topic sentence of the second body paragraph** and **the restatement.** When the task asks for your opinion, just choose one side of the argument like a balanced opinion essay and state your opinion at the same places as you do with a balanced opinion essay. But remember, these are the only 3 sentences that you can write what you think, even in the 2nd body paragraph whose topic sentence is where you give your opinion, you have to discuss others' opinion and you agree with them. Always remember, the discussion is about what OTHER PEOPLE THINK OF THE GIVEN ISSUE, NOT WHAT YOU THINK. You cannot write "I think", "I believe" etc in any other sentences rather than the 3 places I just showed you.

➢ The first paragraph is about the first side of the argument, and the second one – the one you agree with- is about the other side, it is recommended that you find 2 ideas for each side.

* IMPORTANT NOTE: a discussion essay v.s **a balanced opinion essay**

A lot of people have a difficult time differentiating between these 2 particular types of essay since both of them require students to present 2 sides of the given argument with the same way of writing. However, the difference is that in a balanced opinion essay, you have to write about WHAT YOU THINK, whereas, in a discussion essay you have to write about WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK. This means there is a difference in the proper language you can use in each type.

A balanced opinion essay	A discussion essay
- You can use phrases to express your own opinion like "I think", "I believe", "I agree" … wherever you want.	- You can use the typical language for a discussion to express other people's opinion such as "people think", "people believe", "it is believed/considered"… ***** If the task asks for your opinion, there are only 3 sentences you can use "I think", "I believe" or "I would argue", in any other places, you have to use the language for a discussion essay as shown above.
- You can give examples of your own knowledge or experiences such as your family, your friends or a particular event you participated in to support your ideas	- You can NOT give examples of your own knowledge or experiences.

Let's see an example of a part of a body paragraph to see the difference between these types:

Some people believe that video games are bad, while others think playing these games is beneficial. **What is your opinion?**	Some people believe that video games are bad, while others think playing these games is beneficial. **Discuss both views and give your opinion**
On the one hand, **I agree** that video games have some undeniable benefits. Firstly, **I would argue** that playing video games is a way to relax after hard-working hours. For example, **my brother** has to go to school on every weekday and to do a lot of assignments at home, which is very stressful. Therefore, playing video games during his free time can help reduce the stress from his studies.	On the one hand, **it is agreed** that video games have some undeniable benefits. Firstly, **many people argue** that playing video games is a way to relax after hard-working hours. For example, **many students** have to go to school on every weekday and to do a lot of assignments at home, which is very stressful. Therefore, playing video games during their free time can help reduce the stress from their studies.

III.   Advantage & Disadvantage essays

General information

Basically, an advantage/disadvantage essay is a discussion essay that asks you to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a given issue, for example the advantages and disadvantages of using public transport. **DO NOT** give any opinions if you are not asked to.

Divide your body into 2 separate paragraphs, each of which develops either the advantages or disadvantages of the given issue.

Your advantages and disadvantages essays would be structured as follows:

The introduction

- Sentence 1: Paraphrase the background information given in the topic
- Sentence 2: Answer the question

The body

- The first paragraph:
  - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence (advantages or disadvantages)
  - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: 2 advantages or disadvantages
- The second paragraph:
  - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence (advantages or disadvantages)
  - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: 2 advantages or disadvantages

The conclusion

The restatement: Restate your answer

Notes: If the task asks for your opinion or your favorable side (advantages or disadvantages), write your essay just like a discussion essay.

WITHOUT PERSONAL OPINION

Let's see a complete advantages and disadvantages essay:

Topic: It is becoming increasingly popular to have a year off between finishing school and going to university.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?

Taking a gap year before attending college has recently gained enormous popularity amongst high school graduates. My essay below will analyze both the benefits and the drawbacks of the phenomenon.

Having a year off after high school graduation is advantageous in some certain aspects. First, students can utilize this period of time to travel to acquire knowledge of various fields such as foreign languages and cultures. This would be more difficult during their years at university owing to their intense studying schedules. Second, many high school graduates benefit from taking a temporary job before starting their college life. Due to the inadequate provision of career orientation in high school, sparing another 12 months looking for a job or signing up for a vocational course is considered a remedy for students to figure out their future path.

From an opposite angle, the disadvantages of a gap year before college are varied. Initially, compared to the students having a year off, those who go straight to university after high school are more likely to have a permanent job early. They finish their academic studies one year in advance, hence better opportunities to get a job with stable incomes. More importantly, high school seniors might lose their studying habits as well as discipline. In other words, one year spent on travelling or working can demotivate them from following tertiary education.

In conclusion, despite some benefits in terms of traveling and working, taking a year off before college life might both jeopardize students' occupational opportunities and result in studying discouragement. (257 words)

Useful vocabulary & expressions:

1. **A gap year:** Một năm cách giữa trung học và đại học

2. **To gain enormous popularity amongst high school gradutates:** Có được sự yêu thích lớn từ các học sinh trung học đã tốt nghiệp

3. **To acquire knowledge of sth:** Lấy kiến thức về cái gì

4. **A temporary job:** Nghề tạm thời

5. **Career orientation:** Định hướng nghề nghiệp

6. **Vocationl course:** Khóa học

7. **A permanent job:** Nghề lâu dài

8. **Stable incomes:** Thu nhập ổn định

9. **Studying habits:** Thói quen học tập

10. **Discipline:** Kỷ luật

11. **Demotivate:** Làm nản lòng

12. **Tertiary education:** Giáo dục đại học

> **Topic: Some people regard video games as harmless fun, or even as a useful educational tool. Others, however, believe that videos games are having an adverse effect on the people who play them.**
>
> **In your opinion, do the drawbacks of video games outweigh the benefits?**

Model answer

There have been endless arguments over the possible impact of video games upon players. Much as the dispute in favor of the significance of the advantages of those games is legitimate, personally I believe they are still outweighed by the disadvantages.

On the one hand, some certain benefits of video games are undeniable. Firstly, they are functioning as a source of harmless entertainment. In modern time, daily performances always go along with a huge amount of stress from studying and working, hence the higher demand for relaxation. As a matter of fact, the world is seeing an increasing number of not only youngsters but also adults who play video games to alleviate the intensity of their academic studies or hard-working occupations. Secondly, it is also proved that playing games can enhance logical thinking and problems solving skills since players are forced to use their brain to complete the game.

On the other hand, I would argue that those video games present more disadvantages. Video games are highly addictive, and that players are constantly given more stages in these games leads to their negligence on other important activities since the temptation of clearing those stages is sometimes irresistible. If time is spent excessively on games, players' daily routine, studying or working for instance, will suffer. More dangerously, many crime cases have been reported recently with the motive of getting money to play video games. Especially young

people are more likely to get involved in robbery or even murder as their addiction to games cannot be sufficed by their current budget.

In conclusion, although video games' entertaining and educational benefits are widely recognized, I still think that the drawbacks are more significant.

(280 words)

Useful vocabulary & expressions:

1. ***Legitimate:*** hợp lý
2. ***Occupation:*** nghề nghiệp
3. ***Excessively:*** quá nhiều
4. ***Motive:*** động cơ

Cause & Effect/Solution essays

General information

A causes and Effect/Solution essay is an essay that asks you to discuss the causes and solutions/effects of a given issue, for example the causes and solutions/effects of overpopulation. **DO NOT** give any opinions if you are not asked to.

Your cause & effect/solution essays would be structured as follows:

The introduction

- Sentence 1: Paraphrase the background information given in the topic
- Sentence 2: Answer the question

  There are 2 possible ways to write your answer:

  - ✓ Directly: Give a general outline of the main causes & effects/solutions
  - ✓ Indirectly: Inform the examiner what the essay is going to discuss.

The body

- The first paragraph:
  - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence (the causes of the given issue)
  - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: Explain in detail 2 causes
- The second paragraph:
  - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence (the effects or solutions of the given issue)
  - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: Explain in detail 2 effects/solutions

The conclusion

The restatement: Restate your answer

Let's take a look at an example:

> **Topic: Nowadays, children play less with others and this has an impact on their development.**
>
> **What are the reasons for this?**

Does it have a good or bad effect on children?

Model answer

The decreasing amount of time spent for socialization has become more and more common among children, which is believed by many to have an influence on their early development. The causes of this phenomenon are varied, and in my opinion this is adversely affecting the young generation as a whole.

Two main reasons are identified as children's present academic pressure and the appeal of high technology applications. Firstly, children are too occupied with their current studies along with stress and responsibility. Parents always hope their sons and daughters to be successful and, in some cases, compel them to overwork, which may result in the excessive deduction of their time on social interactions. Secondly, the rapid technological modernization which engenders many attractive sources of entertainment, videos games and social network like Facebook for example, is deemed the second root of the phenomenon. Children may get addicted to those virtual means with ease, hence the negligence on real life relationships establishment.

This trend, as a matter of fact, is having severe influences on the overall development of children. In terms of their social life, not only their circle of acquaintances but their soft skills such as communication and interpersonal skills are highly limited, which would hinder their future career paths. More importantly, some mental illnesses may be the cost of their seclusion from other people. That they use their time mostly for studying purposes renders them unable to leave their desk to associate with others, leading to a deteriorating sedentary lifestyle or even autism, for instance.

In conclusion, the effects of this trend can be seen as negative concerning with children's social lives deterioration and other diseases. Understanding that the origins of the problem mainly come from studying strain and tempting modern applications, parents should take immediate remedial steps to resolve such problems.

(303 words)

Useful expressions:

1. **Compel:** bắt buộc
2. **Engender:** Làm cho cái gì xảy ra/xuất hiện
3. **Deem:** coi là
4. **Seclusion:** Sự xa lánh
5. **Render:** Làm cho ai/cái gì bị làm sao

IV. Direct-question essays

General information

A direct-question essay is an essay that asks you to answer some specific questions (usually 2 questions), for example "Is money is important when considering a job? What are other factors that contribute to job's satisfaction?".

Your direct-question essays would be structured as follows:

The introduction

- Sentence 1: Paraphrase the background information given in the topic
- Sentence 2: Answer the question

The body

- The first paragraph:
    - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence (answer the first question)
    - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: Give SPECIFIC examples and explanations to support your answer
- The second paragraph:
    - ✓ Sentence 1: The topic sentence (answer the second question)
    - ✓ Sentence 2-5/6: Give SPECIFIC examples and explanations to support your answer

The conclusion

The restatement: Restate your answer

Let's take a look at an example:

> *Topic: There are many different types of music in the world today.*
>
> *Why do we need music?*
>
> *Is the traditional music of a country more important than the international music that is heard everywhere nowadays?*

Model answer

Other than writing and painting, music is another prevalent form of art, using the artistic rhythm of sounds. Music is of great essence to us for various reasons, and I believe traditional music is more important than the common international music.

Music teaches us many things about life. As children, we live in the sweet lullabies about family that our mothers sing to us at night until we fall asleep. Later in life, we are able to understand more profoundly about love and passion and other virtues through many songs. Music is also for relaxation because we listen to music when we are stressful or sad. Its soothing melodies can drive away all the pressure and frustration that we have to face every day. And for many people, music is a form of ==escapism== from the suffocation of their lives since they can find serenity in music.

From my perspective, traditional music should be more valued than international music which has gained so much popularity all over the world. International music is ==merely== catchy and appealing, but its lyrics have no virtuous or meaningful messages. Especially this kind of music has recently been used for commercial purposes to promote reputation of a business in the global market, so it has no values at all. Traditional music, on the other hand, conveys the culture and history of a country which will last for eternity. It not only connects the past to the present but also represents the identity of people who live in that country.

In conclusion, music is undoubtedly necessary for human beings, and I always believe that the role of traditional music should be more recognized than that of international music.

(282 words)

Useful words:

1. ***Escapism:*** Lối thoát
2. ***Merely:*** Chỉ là

CHAPTER 5

Top 10 frequently asked questions

1: Do I need to find unique and interesting ideas in order to get a high score?

No! The examiner is NOT looking for ideas that are interesting or unique. In order to get a high score, you need ideas that are logical and, most importantly, you can support them easily. The examiner will only look at how convincing your ideas are and how you analyze them.

2: Does a long essay mean more marks?

No! An essay longer than 300 words sometimes may result in losing marks. Keep your essay concise and clear! You should write about 260-280 words on average.

3: My teacher said that the introduction is the most important part in an essay. Therefore, it is compulsory that I have to write an interesting introduction to intrigue the examiner by writing a hook. Is that true?

No! Every part of an essay is important, but the most important one should be the body where you present your points. You do not need a hook in your introduction because it is really difficult to write a hook, it would take away a lot of time for the body. Besides, the examiner will not look at how interesting your introduction is, so writing a hook would be unnecessary.

4: Is it true that I always need to write a balanced essay to get a high score?

No! It is indeed recommended candidates with advanced writing skills write a balanced essay. But it does not mean that writing a one-sided essay would lead to a low mark. If you write a one-sided essay logically and coherently, you are likely to get a good score.

5: Do I need a concluding sentence for each body paragraph?

No! You do not need a concluding sentence because a conclusion paragraph is enough to round off an essay.

6: Is grammar important?

Yes! The examiner will check your grammatical mistakes.

7: Do I need to use uncommon words to have a high band in the LR criterion?

No! Using too many strange words may cause your essay to be unnatural and there are chances of word misuses. I recommend you focus on the accuracy of your vocabulary.

8: Should I use templates? My teacher gave me a lot of memorized phrases to use when writing an IELTS task 2.

Personally I do not like templates, because it is not your language. And chances are other candidates may use those templates too, the examiner will not appreciate those papers using the same language.

9: Do I need to use advanced linking devices?

In my opinion there are no advanced or beginner's linking devices. Which linkers you use do not reflect your level of writing, therefore I recommend you focus on the coherence of your ideas and supporting details rather than some linking words.

10: Should I write every day? How fast can I improve if I write a lot of essays every week?

From my experience, you do not need to do writing every day. I usually recommend my students write about 2-3 essays a week and focus more on the quality of their work.

It does not matter how many essays you write a week. What really matters is how intensive and how focused you are when you do your writing exercises. You can write 100 essays before the test but can receive a lower score than the person who only write 10 essays but with greater intensity. What intensity here means is that you can spend 2 days reading and writing only about 1 topic and produce the best work. Concentrate more on the quality.

CHAPTER 6

IELTS Writing task 2 review - 2016

TOPIC: 9-1-2016

It is more important for schoolchildren to learn about local history than world history.

To what extent to you agree or disagree?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **Thorough insights into:** *Hiểu biết cặn kẽ về cái gì.*
2. **Patriotism:** *Lòng yêu nước.*
3. **Sovereignty:** *Chủ quyền.*
4. **Take pride in their origin:** *Tự hào về lòng yêu nước.*
5. **Traditional values and identity:** *Những giá trị truyền thống và con người.*
6. **Well-rounded perspective of life:** *Một cái nhìn quan điểm toàn diện hơn về cuộc sống.*
7. **Historical backgrounds:** *Bối cảnh lịch sử.*
8. **Company culture:** *Văn hóa doanh nghiệp.*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

Many people have valued the role of local history to schoolchildren over that of world history. In my opinion, I disagree with those people as both of them are equally essential for young learners.

Studying the history of their hometown is for sure an indispensable part of school's curriculum during students' early education. I believe having **thorough insights into** what happened in the past at one's locality develops his **patriotism**. For example, children of primary and secondary schools in my village are taught about how their ancestors defended their land against outside intruders and reclaimed **sovereignty**. Therefore, those young children would **take pride in their origin** and treasure the life they have today. Additionally, I think it is not only students' privilege but also their responsibility to know about their own history to understand their hometown's **traditional values and identity.**

From another angle, learning about world history shares equal importance just as local one. Acquiring knowledge about the world's past events equips students with a more **well-rounded perspective of life**. Lessons about the World War or Feminism protest against women's abuse and discrimination would help those learners enhance their understanding about various aspects of the world. Furthermore, I think that being taught about the other countries' **historical backgrounds** would benefit young learners in their future career. Students who accumulate knowledge of this particular field at an early age would possess a golden selling point to work for foreign enterprises, especially those who highly value **company culture** like Japan.

In conclusion, I believe the significance of domestic and international history cannot be brought into comparison to see which one is more necessary because they have distinctively equal meanings to children.

Word count: 279

Many museums and historical sites are mainly visited by tourists but not local people. Why is this the case and what can be done to attract more local people to visit these places?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Tend to pay a visit to museums: Có xu hướng đi thăm bảo tang.*

2. *Visually unattractive to local residents: Không thu hút được dân cư địa phương vì bề ngoài.*

3. *Pick tourists' curiosity: Lấy được sự tò mò từ du khách.*

4. *Education and entertainment purposes: Mục đích giáo dục và giải trí.*

5. *Didactic as well as recreational competitions: Những cuộc thi vừa giải trí vừa mang tính giáo dục*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

Many museums and historical sites have become an attraction to tourists although they fail to increase the number of local visitors. This essay will analyze some main reasons for this as well as measures to encourage more local people to visit such places.

The causes for a huge difference in the number of the two mentioned types of visitors are varied. First, people who live in the neighborhood seem to be familiar with their traditional customs and history. Going to those places would be therefore a waste of time and money owing to the entrance cost; and people would not pay an amount of money to see what they have already known. Meanwhile, tourists from other places **tend to pay a visit to museums** to know more about a new culture when travelling to a new region. Second, the design of museums and historical sites almost remained unchanged throughout decades, which can be **visually unattractive to local residents** who have been there at least once in earlier years. However, these places always **pick tourists' curiosity** during their first trip.

Some measures can be taken to stimulate more local inhabitants to visit museums and historical places. To begin with, those places should serve both **education and entertainment purposes**. More game zones should be constructed or **didactic as well as recreational competitions** should be conducted to increase the number of the local who come enjoy their time. Furthermore, if the layout of museums and historical sites is renovated with more decorations and ornate designs of the interior, not only tourists but also more local visitors will come.

In conclusion, there are two principal causes for the locals' disinterest in spending their time in nearby museums and historical places as mentioned, and actions should be taken to encourage people to go to such places.

Word count: 301
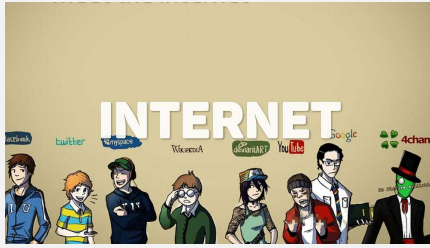
TOPIC: 23-1-2016

Although more and more people read the news on the Internet, newspaper will remain the most important source of news for the majority of people.

Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **To hold the most vital position:** *Giữ vai trò thiết yếu*
2. **To access huge storage of news:** *Tiếp cận trữ lượng thông tin lớn*
3. **To take over the position of printed newspaper:** *Chiếm lấy vị trí của báo in*
4. **To unfold the possibility to upload videos and voice records:** *Mở ra khả năng đăng tải video và băng ghi âm*
5. **The most crucial source of information:** *Nguồn thông tin quan trọng nhất*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

Some people believe that despite the widespread popularity of the online media, traditional newspaper will still **hold the most vital position** among news readers. In my opinion, this idea is rather absurd as the Internet has become increasingly dominant due to the benefits it offers.

The first thing that attracts people to reading news on the online sources is their easy access. With the presence of the Internet around almost every corner of the world, people with a portable device such as a mobile phone can **access huge storage of news**. In fact, latest events, for example IS Terrorist attacks, would be updated immediately on CNN or New York Times. By contrast, with prolonging procedures including editing and printing, traditional newspaper might not be able to compete with the Internet in terms of the updating speed.

Another benefit with which the Internet can, from my point of view, **take over the position of printed newspaper** is the new experience it brings to readers. One limitation of newspaper is that it cannot convey visual messages to the people who read news on a regular basis. Meanwhile, non-stop progress of the technology industry has **unfolded the possibility to upload videos and voice records** on various online websites. For instance, soccer fans these days can re-watch their favorite matches anytime they want with only a laptop connected to the Internet, which a mere paper cannot do.

In conclusion, I disagree that printed newspaper would continue to be **the most crucial source of information** because more and more people will be drawn to use the Internet.

Word count: 262

TOPIC: 30-1-2016

Prison is the common way in most countries to solve the problem of crime. However, a more effective solution is to provide people a better education. Do you agree or disagree?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Illegality: Hành động bất hợp pháp*
2. *Social endorsement: Sự ủng hộ từ xã hội*
3. *Eliminate the problem from its root: Loại bỏ nguồn góc của vấn đề*
4. *To be of necessity: Là một sự cần thiết không thể thiếu (nhấn mạnh)*
5. *Social security: An ninh xã hội*
6. *To be imprisoned: Bị bỏ tù*
7. *Heinous actions: Hành động tội ác*
8. *To be a deterrent against sth: Là một rào cản chống lại cái gì đó*
9. *To be condemned to jail: Bị tống vào tù*
10. *To serve as a remedy for the origin of crimes: Như là một liều thuốc cho nguồn gốc của tội phạm*
11. *To heighten people's intellect: Nâng cao dân trí*
12. *A civilized society: Một xã hội văn minh*
13. *Vocational training: Học nghề*
14. *To dispel any ideas of committing crimes: Loại bỏ bất kì ý định muốn phạm tội*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

Although prison sentences are commonly thought to effectively control illegalities, improvements on education have gained social endorsement as a means to eliminate the problem from its root. In my opinion, I disagree that education is the better one as it is rather impossible to compare these two methods' effectiveness owing to their distinct impacts.

On the one hand, the reasons why prisons are of necessity for social security are varied. They are the place to keep people who have broken the law contained, ensuring the safety of other citizens. Especially, dangerous criminals such as murderers or rapists have to be imprisoned for their heinous actions. Furthermore, severe prison sentences act as a deterrent against crimes. Knowing there might be a chance of being condemned to jail, which also means losing freedom and living a miserable life in a cell, ones who are having the intention of committing illegalities would reconsider going down the path.

On the other hand, education serves as a remedy for the origin of crimes. Education contributes greatly to heighten people's intellect and to form a civilized society. With access to better educational services, citizens would be well-informed about the damage that committing crimes would cause to their community and themselves, which eventually leads to the decline in crime rates. Additionally, the possession of certain qualifications through fundamental education like vocational training could secure a person's stable life, which would dispel any ideas of committing crimes.

In conclusion, I believe there is no absolute way to deduce whether imprisonment policies or better education would take the dominant role in dealing with crimes as they both tackle the problem just in different ways.

Word count: 275 words

TOPIC: 18-2-2016

New technologies have changed the way children spend their free time.

Do advantages of this outweigh disadvantages?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **Satisfy children of different preferences for entertainment:** Thỏa mãn trẻ em với những sở thích giải trí khác nhau

2. **Develop a passive lifestyle:** Phát triển lối sống thụ động

3. **If exposed frequently:** Nếu tiếp xúc thường xuyên

4. **Exposure to technology could lead to deterioration in health:** sự tiếp xúc với công nghệ có thể dẫn đến tình trạng sức khỏe bị giảm sút

Band 8 Sample

Answer

The advent of new technologies has led to changes in young children's recreational activities. In my view, the drawbacks of those changes are more significant than the benefits.

On the one hand, the appearance of new devices has brought certain values to children. First, more choices are now available on computers or any other electrical devices that are connected to the Internet. This would **satisfy children of different preferences for entertainment,** such as watching movies, listening to music or playing games on online platform. Second, some useful skills and necessary qualities can be either initially obtained or horned by playing electronic games. Scientifically, racing games help develop motor skills in later life. Also, creativity and fast reflexes which are of great use in the future can be enhanced though puzzle or shooting games.

Despite those said advantages, I still believe that the downside of the emergence of modern technological devices in children's leisure time is more worrying. The first drawback is that children might **develop a passive lifestyle** and possibly isolate themselves from society. This is because this way of entertainment is extremely addictive, and children therefore are likely to spend hours in their room without any communication with the outside world **if exposed frequently.** Furthermore, **exposure to technology could lead to deterioration in health** as hours spent on using computers can cause tremendous harm to eyesight. In fact, children at school age are suffering from short-sight due to playing video games or browsing Facebook for a long time.

In conclusion, it seems to me that, regarding children's leisure activities, the benefits of newly introduced technological devices are eclipsed by the disadvantages.

Word count: 272

TOPIC: 20-2-2016

Some people believe government should spend money on building train and subway lines to reduce traffic congestion. Others think that building more and wider roads is the better way to reduce traffic congestion. Discuss both views and give your opinion

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Tackle congested roads: Giải quyết tắc đường*
2. *Alleviate the current travelling overload: Giảm nhẹ tình trạng quá tải*
3. *Relieves the density of passengers on public vehicles: Giảm thiểu sự đông đúc của hành khác trên những phương tiện công cộng*
4. *Exceeds the capacity of the current system: Vượt quá khả năng của hệ thống hiện tại*
5. *The enhancement of living standards: Sự tăng lên về mức sống*

Word count: 322

Band 8 Sample

Answer

Opinions diverge greatly on how to tackle traffic congestion. Although constructing more railways and subway lines partly solves the problem, I would argue that the government should allocate their financial resources to widen roads.

On the one hand, I understand why some people think that having more train and subway lines built could **tackle congested roads**. First, this mode of transportation would **alleviate the current travelling overload** because it decrease the increased number of daily travelers on main streets in either city centers or suburbs. There would be less people on street during rush hours because trains or subways are able to carry hundreds of passengers at the same time. Second, rail transportation systems are established separately from other systems or, sometimes, outside crowded city areas, and this **relieves the density of passengers on public vehicles**, hence reducing congestions caused by those means of transportation.

On the other hand, I would side with those who think that the mentioned investment on railroads or subway lines is only temporary and less effective than improving the size of roads and streets. Traffic jam is attributable to the density of vehicles that **exceeds the capacity of the current system**. Increasing the size of roads would allow a higher volume of traffic and enable more vehicles, such as private cars or buses, to circulate smoothly. Also, expanding roads, although expensive and time-consuming, is believed to be a permanent solution to the situation of traffic jam. Private car owners are increasing in numbers owing to **the enhancement of living standards**, and they are unlikely to resort to trains or subways since using their own cars is much more convenient. Therefore, better railway systems only encourage a part of citizens to use this type of public transport.

In conclusion, it appears to me state money should go to the expansion of road systems, while it is difficult to deny some provisional change brought by railroads or subway lines.

Band 8 Sample

Answer

There is a growing number of young people from rich countries coming to less developed countries to participate in voluntary projects. There are some underlying reasons for this, and both volunteers and the community gain equal benefits.

The phenomenon can be attributable to two principal factors. First, short trips to less developed nations to aid the local communities bring about **a great deal of rewarding experience**. For example, when young people from wealthy nations visit underprivileged regions in Vietnam such as Quang Binh province, they can **have profound understanding of** the misery and hardship of the impoverished. This therefore **fosters a great sense of humanity and altruism**. Second, this situation is linked to the fact that young people want their resume to be polished by getting involved in social activities such as teaching or providing accommodation for the poor.

Not only people who travel to third world countries to do voluntary work but also the local community benefit from this particular practice. Obtaining new experiences and possessing a clear advantage in applying for jobs, those people are more likely to develop spiritually and to succeed in future career. On the other hand, the local community can have a chance to **heighten social living standards**, even though the impact of such a practice can be relatively small and, in most cases, temporary.

In conclusion, the young from first world countries move to underdeveloped ones to do unpaid work in order to gain new experience and enhance future employment. It seems that both volunteers and the area that receives help can gain some certain values.

Word count: 263
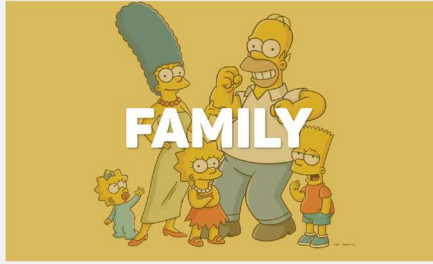
TOPIC: 5-3-2016

In recent years, the structure of a family and the role of its members are gradually changing.

What kinds of changes can occur? Do you think these changes are positive and negative?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Nuclear family: gia đình cơ bản gồm có bố mẹ và con cái*
2. *Breadwinner: trụ cột gia đình*
3. *Single-earner family: gia đình chỉ có một trụ cột*
4. *Spouse: người chồng hoặc vợ*
5. *A stay-at-home parent: bố hoặc mẹ ở nhà để chăm sóc con cái và làm việc nhà*
6. *At liberty to do sth: có thể tự do làm gì đó*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

In the past few decades, the patterns of a family have greatly diversified. There are some changes regarding its organization and members' role; and in my opinion, these changes can be seen as a progress.

Families at present have undergone two main differences compared to the past. First, **a nuclear family** now can have more than one **breadwinner** who normally is the father. This is because in the modern world, only a few jobs could secure the stability of **single-earner families**, which forces both parents to be the financial supporters. Second, the trend that parents exchange their roles has become more common. As the result of women's protest for their rights, mothers now have equal opportunities for education and work, which allows the other **spouse** to assume responsibility as **a stay-at-home parent** to take care of the children and the housework.

From my perspective, those changes in a family's structure and parental roles are positive for a number of reasons. That both parents can become the breadwinners would ensure that the family can be more financially stable. This not only directly eases the burden that the father have to bear in order to support the whole family but also enables the mother to pursue her dream job. From another angle, it is an upward step that people are **at liberty to do** what they like and what they are good at. Women can follow their dream and become the main earner if they are better at work than their husbands.

In conclusion, I think the changes occurring to a family's hierarchy and members' responsibilities are a positive step toward a better world.

Word count: 272
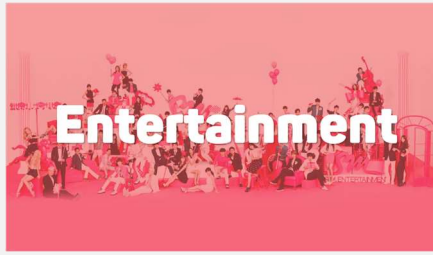
TOPIC: 12-3-2016

Some believe that it is good for a country's culture to import films and TV programmes, while others think it is better for a country to have their own films and TV programmes.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion

Useful vocabulary:

1. Telecasts: *Chương trình TV*
2. Cultural diversity: *sự đa dạng văn hóa*
3. Depraved customs: *hủ tục*
4. Cultural assimilation: *sự hòa tan văn hóa*
5. Exotic practices: *tục lệ xa lạ*
6. Long-standing ethics: *chuẩn mực đạo đức lâu đời*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

There has been a difference of opinion regarding the merits of foreign movies and TV channels to the culture of a country as people believe domestic products would be better. From my perspective, both of those categories are equally important.

On the one hand, people usually believe foreign films and **telecasts** can contribute to **the cultural diversity** of a nation. Fascinating **social norms and practices**, such as public hugging which is common in the US, can be imported to other nations as Hollywood **blockbusters** are becoming more popular. This phenomenon is believed to benefit the richness of the host country's **traditional backgrounds**. Furthermore, the import of international movies and TV shows could improve the **country's sets of beliefs**. In Vietnam, for example, the ceremony of funerals is often perpetuated with ongoing **depraved customs** such as gambling and drinking. Since the arrival of TV shows from more developed nations, which triggers a new and civilized way of thinking, such practices have been gradually aborted.

On the other hand, it appears to me that producing local movies and TV programs has the same importance. Citizens of a country would be able to acquire knowledge about their own culture. Apparently, profound insights into traditional values can be vividly conveyed in cinemas and in the media if the content is made by local people. The second point is that this way can relieve the worry of **cultural assimilation** which has emerged as a detriment to the existence of a country's traditional beliefs and customs. In fact, if **exotic practices** are absorbed thoughtlessly, it might lead to the oblivion of the **long-standing ethics**.

In conclusion, I would argue that both types of films and TV telecasts play an equal role in a country's culture.

Word count: 289
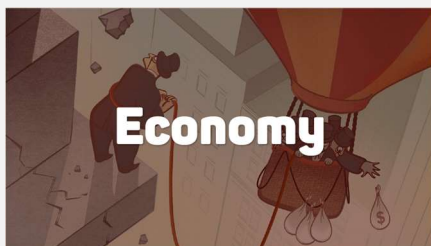
TOPIC: 19-3-2016

People in community now could buy cheaper consumer goods.

Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Affordable commodities: mặt hàng giá rẻ*
2. *Purchasing power: sức mua*
3. *The market's demand: nhu cầu của thị trường*
4. *Commodities' exorbitant price: giá cả đắt đỏ của hàng hóa*
5. *Quality products: hàng chất lượng*
6. *Toxic waste and exhaust: chất khí thải độc hại*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

These days, buyers have a wider range of choices for more **affordable commodities**. Although some benefits can be seen from the phenomenon, the drawbacks are more significant.

The provision of cheaper goods presents several advantages. Regarding **economical merits for individuals**, customers now can enjoy inexpensive purchases of **diverse types of goods**, which is particularly favorable for the households with limited incomes. In comparison with the past in Vietnam, most families could not be able to buy a TV; however, TV is among the most common electronic devices in every household owing to reduced prices. On the societal level, the **affordability** of consumer products promotes people's **purchasing power**, hence the development of the economy. It is common knowledge that the **market's demand** for products increases when **commodities' exorbitant prices** are reduced. Therefore, people will be attracted to buying these products on a large scale, fostering **the general prosperity of a country's economy.**

However, those advantages above still cannot overshadow the disadvantages. First, the quality of commodities might be only secondary when profit is primary for businesses because goods' prices are inexpensive and the quantity needed is enormous. In the long term, without **quality products**, customers will gradually lose their trust in those products' manufacturers, which directly jeopardizes the economy. Another repercussion worth mentioning is that the environment may suffer. In order to meet the increased demand from buyers, companies have to expand their factories and accelerate their production process. Such expansion would do grave harm to the surrounding due to their **toxic waste and exhaust**.

In conclusion, the benefits of cheapening modern goods should not be overrated as the disadvantages are greater.

Word count: 271

TOPIC: 2-4-2016

It is impossible to help all people in the world, so governments should focus on people in their own countries.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *International aids to deprived regions: Hỗ trợ quốc tế đến những vùng nghèo khó*

2. *The underprivileged: Người nghèo, người bất hạnh*

3. *The well-being of their citizens: Sự sung túc của công dân*

4. *Any acts of global assistance: Bất kì hành động trợ giúp quốc tế nào*

5. *Underdeveloped countries: Những nước kém phát triển*

6. *Domestic poverty: Đói nghèo trong nước*

7. *Affluent nations: Những nước giàu có*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

The question whether governments should provide aids internationally or domestically has drawn much attention from the public. **Although I understand why helping everyone in the world is unachievable, I strongly disagree that governmental support should solely be concentrated on satisfying local needs.**

On the one hand, I suppose the world's leaders' hesitation over the provision of international aids to deprived regions is legitimate. Firstly, it is unfeasible for governments' support to reach all of the underprivileged as their number is enormous in many separated places around the globe and the type of support they need also varies. For example, developed nations may encounter numerous obstacles in terms of transportation when sending food and medicines to poor regions in Africa where people are facing the threat of famine or contagions. Secondly, I believe leaders of a country should prioritize the well-being of their citizens and stabilize their economy and politics before carrying out any acts of global assistance.

On the other hand, I still believe governments should help as many people as they can regardless of the fragile possibility for worldwide comprehensive support for all people. To begin with, in many underdeveloped countries, their leaders are unable to bear the burden of eradicating domestic poverty or crises due to, for example, terrorism, which calls for the involvement from other affluent nations. Also of great significance is that this national act of charity could have a huge impact on individuals living in prosperous areas. If the government take actions to help people overseas, citizens of that country will idolize the idea of self-devotion toward a better world.

In conclusion, I truly believe the world leaders should lend their neighbors a hand to offer help to people in need on their doorstep.

Word count: 289

Science

TOPIC: 16-4-2016

Topic: In the future, it seems more difficult to live on the Earth. Some people think more money should be spent on researching other planet to live, such as Mars.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Universe study:* nghiên cứu vũ trụ

2. *A new habitable environment:* môi trường có thể sinh sống

3. *The increasingly harsh living conditions:* điều kiện sống ngày càng khắc nghiệt

4. *The population explosion:* Bùng nổ dân số

5. *Space studies:* Nghiên cứu không gian

6. *The lack of land and accommodation:* thiếu hụt đất đai và chỗ ở

7. *Rate of birth:* tỉ lệ sinh

8. *Densely populated cities:* thành phố mật độ dân số cao

9. *Depletion of natural resources:* cạn kiệt tài nguyên thiên nhiên

10. *Fossil fuel and water reservoir:* bể chứa nước và nguyên liệu hóa thạch

11. *Over-exploited:* khai thác quá đà

12. *Sustaining life:* duy trì sự sống

13. *The survival of the human race:* sự sống còn của loài người

Band 8 Sample

Answer

Many people believe more financial resources should be allocated to **universe study** in order to discover **a new habitable environment** for humans due to **the increasingly harsh living conditions** on Earth. In my opinion, this idea is completely justifiable.

The population explosion is the first urgent matter that urges results from **space study**. The world is facing the threat from **the lack of land and accommodation** for the ever-increasing **rate of birth**. Especially in **densely populated cities** like Hanoi, it is a common picture of people struggling to find an apartment. This forces humans to resort to alternatives of changing living places to other planets. Such an idea would not be actualized without enough money to employ scientists or establish research facilities, emphasizing the demand for sponsorships.

Another thing which justifies the budget spent on discovering a new suitable home for human beings is the **depletion of natural resources,** such as fuel and water. Unfortunately, **fossil fuels and water reservoir** are being **over-exploited** for short-term benefits. In the long term, essential elements for **sustaining life** will dwindle away, and human life will be put at stake since there is no fuel to maintain production or transportation. Therefore, if there is even a fragile hope to discover a new environment, people should value the opportunity and invest money in researches on the space to ensure **the survival of the human race.**

In conclusion, I strongly suppose that financial investments on discovering another planet as a new home to replace the Earth are reasonable.

Word count: 252

Nowadays, more and more older people who need employment compete with the younger people for the same jobs.

What problems this causes? What are solutions?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **Accumulated more experience:** *Tích lũy nhiều kinh nghiệm hơn*
2. **Social unrest and crime escalation:** *Bất ổn xã hội và leo thang tội phạm*
3. **Great versatility and creativity:** *sự linh hoạt lớn và tính sáng tạo*
4. **Old-age pensions and medical care:** *Lương hưu và chăm sóc y tế*
5. **Retirement age:** *Tuổi nghỉ hưu*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

The job market has become more competitive as more older people start to apply for the same positions as younger people. This phenomenon leads to several severe problems, and some feasible solutions would be analyzed in the essay below.

There are a number of negative outcomes from such a competition between young and old job applicants. First, young people have to compete with older people who have **accumulated more experience**, which means that young people might fail to find work. This, consequently, heightens unemployment rates, causing **social unrest and crime escalation**. Second, if old job seekers cannot compete with young people in certain fields that require **great versatility and creativity** like sales or marketing, they might not get a job. Without adequate financial means to support their family and themselves, elderly people might have to live in poverty.

The government should take some immediate actions to mitigate this situation. New policies should be established in order to provide old people with sufficient social benefits, **old-age pensions and medical care** included, so that they can live comfortably when they retire. Another effective solution is to fix **retirement age** over which no one is by law employed by any institutions or companies. This will reduce the level of competition for the same jobs between the young and the old and empower young people to increase their chances of getting their wanted positions.

In conclusion, the mentioned competition could produce undesirable issues to both old and young job applicants, and the government certainly play a tremendous role in tackling those problems.

Word count: 258

TOPIC: 7-5-2016

Some people choose to have their first child at an older age.

What are the reasons? Do advantages outweigh disadvantages?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **To delay childbirth:** *Trì hoãn sinh con*
2. **The propensity for prioritizing their careers over taking parental roles:** *xu hướng coi trọng nghề nghiệp trước khi có con*
3. **Adopted a fear of taking unwanted custody:** *Có nỗi sợ phải nuôi con không mong muốn sau khi li hôn*
4. **Marital harmony:** *Sự hòa thuận trong hôn nhân*
5. **The possibility of infertility:** *Khả năng vô sinh*
6. **The occupational prioritization and the hesitation over the likelihood of single-parent responsibility:** *Sự coi trọng nghề nghiệp và sự đắn đo trước khả năng phải nhận trách nhiệm của bố/mẹ độc thân*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

There is a growing proportion of the world's population who decide to have children later in life. The underlying reasons for this trend are varied, and I suppose that the merits would eclipse the downsides.

There are two main factors leading to the decision of **delaying childbirth**. The first one is because people have **the propensity for prioritizing their careers over taking parental roles**. Especially in the US and other developed countries, not only men but also women want to stabilize their finance before becoming parents so as to provide their kids with sufficient living condition for their future development. Another explanation for this is that many modern individuals have **adopted a fear of taking unwanted custody** due to the recent alarming rate of divorce. It is because premature marriages have become common, which usually goes with many couples' doubt of their **marital harmony**, deterring their early desire for raising a child. There would be, consequently, fewer kids growing up without fatherhood or motherhood.

However, the drawbacks should not be overlooked. That too many couples following such a trend might exert adverse effects on the population structure, which potentially results in the future aging workforce and hinders social development in the long term. Additionally, it could both heighten **the possibility of infertility** among mothers at their old age and risk the new-born babies' mental and physical health. Down syndrome could be a typical example of the problems that those kids might have to suffer from.

In conclusion, the occupational prioritization and the hesitation over the likelihood of single-parent responsibility could be seen as the root of late childbirth, and I am convinced that the advantages are of more significance.

Word count: 279
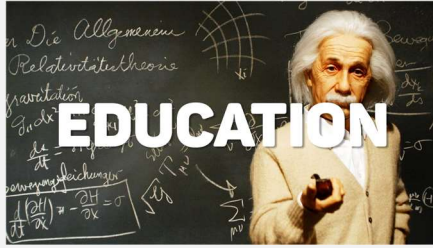
TOPIC: 19 – 5 - 2016

It is observed that in many countries not enough students are choosing to study science subject.

What are causes? And what will be effects on society?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **Disinterest in science subjects:** *Không hứng thú với những môn khoa học*

2. **Diligence as well as a great deal of patience and intelligence:** *Sự chăm chỉ cũng như là rất nhiều kiên nhẫn và sự thông minh*

3. **Higher level of both difficulty and commitment**: *Độ khó và độ cam kết cao*

4. **The scarcity of human resources:** *Thiếu hụt nguồn nhân lực*

5. **The imbalance in future workforce:** *Sự mất cân bằng lực lượng lao động tương lai*

6. **A major human resource crisis:** *Khủng hoảng nguồn nhân lực*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

It is true that the number of science students are becoming inadequate in different parts of the world nowadays. The essay below will analyze some explanations for this situation as well as its influence on society.

There are two principal factors that contribute to the common **disinterest in science subjects**. First, those subjects are often challenging and require a lot of **diligence as well as a great deal of patience and intelligence**. The number of researches that an average Biology student has to do is more than other subjects with **higher level of both difficulty and commitment**, which discourages many students from choosing science as their majors. Second, employment opportunities in this particular field are limited and extremely competitive. Although a huge amount of time and effort is spent on science study at school, there is still little chance for them to get a job after graduation.

Society greatly suffers from **the scarcity of human resources** in science fields. Apparently, as the number of science students is insignificant, other majors such as business or economics become prevalent, hence **the imbalance in future workforce**. In fact, competitiveness increased due to too many degree holders of the same expertise pushes a worrying number of graduates to the verge of unemployment. Another problem is the shortage of science professionals as qualified employees are low in number. Unless more students decided to study science at university, sooner or later we would have to face **a major human resource crisis.**

In conclusion, hurdles regarding some strict requirements of science subjects and employment opportunities are factored in a lot of students not choosing such subjects to study, and there are serious problems arising from this situation.

Word count: 280

TOPIC: 21-5-2016

In developing countries, children in rural communities have less access to education. Some people believe that the problem can be solved by providing more schools and teachers, while others think that the problem can be solved by providing computers and Internet access.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Approach education: Tiếp cận giáo dục*

2. *Acquire a great deal of knowledge from the online platform: Có được lượng lớn kiến thức từ Internet*

3. *An effective studying environment: Môi trường học tập hiệu quả*

4. *Their scholastic competence and characteristics: Khả năng học tập và tính cách*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

People have differing views about how to aid children in rural areas regarding their access to education. Although the provision of computers and the Internet can temporarily address the issue, I would argue that the best measure is to establish new schools and employ more teachers.

On the one hand, I understand why some people believe that expanding the Internet network and supplying computers for children in remote areas give them opportunities to **approach education**. Firstly, it is thought that students can **acquire a great deal of knowledge from the online platform**, most of which either is free of charge or requires small fees. Educational websites, such as Wikipedia, have been constantly established to promote distance learning for children whose neighborhoods have few schools and teachers. Secondly, online classes and courses are widely available and accessible, which makes geographic adversities become rather irrelevant. It is because students, regardless of their background or location, can enroll in a class or course of their preference. This would therefore aid them to access education in their remote communities.

On the other hand, I would side with those who think that building more schools and hiring new teachers would permanently solve the problem. Only schools can create **an effective studying environment** for students to interact or compete with one another and comprehensively develop **their scholastic competence and characteristics.** Furthermore, teachers can discover students' weaknesses during their teaching process, hence better and more effective educating methodologies, which leads to more fruitful results.

In conclusion, it seems to me that it is best to construct schools and employ teachers in rural areas, instead of depending on technology to bring about education opportunities for children at such places.

Word count: 281

Nowadays young people are admiring media and sports stars, even though they do not set a good example.

Do you think this is a positive or negative development?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Media and sport celebrities:* Người nổi tiếng trên truyền hình hoặc thể thao

2. *Role models:* Hình tượng (tạm dịch)

3. *Famous entertainment stars:* Những ngôi sao nổi tiếng trong ngành giải trí

4. *Changing patterns of fashion and behavior:* Thay đổi cách ăn mặc và cư xử

5. *Show a propensity for:* Có xu hướng cho cái gì

6. *Value the beauty and elegance of clothes:* Trân trọng vẻ đẹp và sự lịch lãm của trang phục

7. *Reverence for celebrities in the field of entertainment:* Sự hâm hộ những người nổi tiếng trong ngành giải trí

8. *Cause irritation for the locals:* Gây nên sự khó chịu cho người địa phương

9. *Sugar-coat:* Nói giảm

10. *Idolize media and sport celebrated individuals:* Hâm mộ những cá nhân nổi tiếng trên truyền hình và thể thao

Band 8 Sample

Answer

The younger generation are having great admiration for **media and sport celebrities** although they are not perfect **role models** to follow. In my view, this could be seen as detrimental.

From one standpoint, emulating **famous entertainment stars** might spark **changing patterns of fashion and behavior** among young adults who are not mature enough to judge what is suitable within their society. As matter of fact, they **show a propensity** for copying what those stars say or do on TV, even if their actions go against the cultural value of some localities. Regarding fashion, the way Dam Vinh Hung, who is a renowned Vietnamese singer, dresses would be the onset of a modern yet rather unacceptable trend of fashion with exposed skin. Unfortunately, the young have yet to understand the long-term shortcomings of such a trend to traditional way of dressing which **values the beauty** and elegance of clothes such as the Ao Dai.

Additionally, **such reverence for celebrities in the field of entertainment** would possibly cause a detriment to social security under certain circumstances. A typical example of this is the chaos during and after Korean singers and musical bands' show in Vietnam a few years ago when the crowd of fans went uncontrollable, which caused **irritation for the locals** and also danger to the fans themselves. Furthermore, if their idols were criticized due to their scandals, they would try to **sugar-coat** the situation or even trigger arguments. This would be really challenging for authorities to maintain security.

In conclusion, I suppose the phenomenon that young people **idolize media and sport celebrated individuals** who are notorious in some aspects is negative.

Word count: 271

TOPIC: 4—6 -2016

It is suggested that everyone should have a car, a TV and a fridge.

Do the advantages of this development for society outweigh the disadvantages?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **An item of some fundamental needs:** *Vật dụng đáp ứng nhu cầu cơ bản*
2. **The availability of their personal vehicle:** *Sự sẵn có của phương tiện cá nhân*
3. **A perfect choice of recreation:** *Lựa chọn giải trí hoàn hảo*
4. **In possession of a fridge:** *Sở hữu một tủ lạnh*
5. **Private form of transport:** *Loại hình di chuyển cả nhân*
6. **The growth in customers' demand:** *Sự gia tăng của nhu cầu khách hàng*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

Some people believe that it is necessary for each person to possess **an item of some fundamental needs** for travelling, entertainment and food storage. Although some clear benefits of such development could be seen, they are, in my view, eclipsed by the considerable drawbacks.

There are several advantages of having a private car, TV and fridge. First of all, people who need to travel on a daily basis, especially those who live far away from workplace, could stay active all the time thanks to **the availability of their personal vehicle**. Secondly, having a TV could be **a perfect choice of recreation** because it offers a variety of channels, such as Cartoon Network or HBO, to satisfy viewers' personal preferences. Finally, when **in possession of a fridge**, people would save a significant amount of time supposedly spent on shopping for food.

However, the disadvantages of those personal possessions are much greater regarding both environmental and individual levels. To start with, hypothetically if everyone had his own **private form of transport**, particularly cars, the emission of harmful exhaust which would be too difficult to measure would do grave harm to the environment. From an individual perspective, it would cost a legacy if every person insisted on purchasing his own fridge and TV. This is because property prices would certainly accelerate owing to **the growth in customers' demand** for those commodities. Also of great concern is the payment of expensive electric bills as fridges have to be plugged in all the time.

In conclusion, despite a few beneficial aspects of having a car, a TV and a fridge, the demerits are of greater significance from both individual and environmental angles.

Word count: 277

TOPIC: 16 – 6 – 2016

Most large companies nowadays operate multi-nationally.

To what extent multinational companies have responsibility toward local communities in which they operate?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Reducing unemployment and improving standards of living:* giảm thất nghiệp và cải thiện mức sóng

2. *The distribution of social benefits:* Phân phát phúc lợi xã hội

3. *Take any further obligation for providing support for local communities:* Có trách nhiệm bắt buộc giúp đỡ cộng đồng

4. *Survive in this competitive world:* Sống sót trong thế giới cạnh tranh

5. *Ameliorate local living standards:* Cải thiện mức sống của vùng xung quanh

Band 8 Sample

Answer

These days, many major enterprises are expanding their market overseas. Personally, I disagree that those enterprises have any responsibility to aid local people.

Firstly, the appearance of foreign companies in numerous countries already enhances employment in the neighborhood. For example, when Apple established new showrooms or retail stores in Hanoi, hundreds of local job seekers were employed, **reducing unemployment and improving standards of living**. Furthermore, multi-national companies contribute tremendously to local community by paying taxes to the state through the tax system. This amount of money will be spent on **the distribution of social benefits** such as medical care or education services. Therefore, it would be unreasonable for those companies to **take any further obligation for providing support for local communities** where they base their offices.

Secondly, the idea of overseas companies sacrificing a proportion of their profit to help local people, although preferred by some, is absurd because it is the responsibility of local authorities or the government of that country. They should learn to deal with their own domestic problems, instead of calling for help from overseas companies. Furthermore, those organizations have to make money to **survive in this competitive world**. If a part of their revenue is given to charity groups, for example, to **ameliorate local living standards,** their priority goal will not be fulfilled, leading to their retreat and a great loss to the community.

In conclusion, the operation of large enterprises from wealthy nations in less developed countries naturally sparks several positive changes in local life, and it is not their obligation to help people living around.

Word count: 262

Cycling is more environmentally friendly than other forms of transport.

Why is it not popular in many places?

And how to increase its popularity?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **The uncommon use of bicycles:** *Sự sử dụng không phổ biến của xe đạp*

2. **To fail to benefit major city dwellers in particular:** *Không có lợi ích với những người sống ở thành phố lớn*

3. **To eclipse the values of using bicycles to the environment:** *Che lấp những giá trị của việc sử dụng xe đạp đối với môi trường*

4. **To be rather impractical to expect cycling:** *Khá là phi thực tế để hi vọng mọi người sẽ dùng xe đạp*

5. **The use of this environmentally friendly vehicle:** *Việc sử dụng phương tiện thân thiện với môi trường*

6. **Monthly green days:** *Những ngày vì môi trường hàng tháng*

7. **Form a habit of cycling:** *Tạo thói quen dùng xe đạp*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

The unpopularity of using bicycle in numerous places has been brought into question although there is little doubt about its friendly effects on the environment compared to cars or airplanes. The reasons for this are varied and several feasible solutions would be proposed in the essay below.

There are two main underlying explanations for **the uncommon use of bicycles**. Firstly, it would consume a considerable amount of time to travel by this means of transport, which, according to many, justifies the price of potential environmental damage caused by other types of vehicles. This is because it **fails to benefit dwellers of major cities in particular** when their pace of working life would **eclipse the values of using bicycles to the environment**. Secondly, modern people are becoming less concerned about the negative impact that their daily use of cars and public transportation would inflict on their surroundings. Therefore, it is **rather impractical to expect cycling** in cities, or even the countryside.

The government play a vital role in encouraging **the use of this environmentally friendly vehicle**. They could conduct **monthly green days** that by law require citizens to cycle to work to get people involved in protecting their environment. In the long term, such an initiative would help to gradually **form a habit of cycling** among occupied individuals. More importantly, propagation via various means of media along with optional courses about the advantages of cycling to the environment at schools seem to be imperative to heighten social awareness of this matter.

In conclusion, cycling, regardless of its positive influences on the environment, has become a rare picture in the modern world for a number of reasons; and the government should take immediate actions to improve this situation.

Word count: 286

It is more important for governments to spend public funds on promoting a healthy lifestyle than treatment.

Do you agree or disagree?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Human resistance against a vast number of illnesses:* Sức chống lại rất nhiều bệnh tật

2. *Leading a sedentary lifestyle:* có lối sống ít vận động

3. *Launch propagation campaigns to heighten social awareness:* Thực hiện những chiến dịch tuyên truyền nâng cao nhận thức xã hội

4. *The necessity of treatment and the development of healthcare services*: Sự cần thiết của sự điều trị và sự phát triển của dịch vụ chăm sóc sức khỏe

5. *No less important and imperative:* không kém phần quan trọng và cấp bách

Band 8 Sample

Answer

It is said that state money should be better allocated to the promotion of a healthy lifestyle as a long-term prevention against all kinds of diseases than treatment for already ill people. In my opinion, both should be equally funded.

On the one hand, the government should pay attention to promoting a healthy lifestyle as it is directly linked to **human resistance against a vast number of illnesses.** As a matter of fact, the harmful habit of drinking liquor or chemical dependency are principal causes for numerous diseases including alcoholism and cancer. Also, people **leading a sedentary lifestyle** due to either intense study or work also suffer from back pain or short-sight. In most cases, victims are little aware of their daily habits bringing much damage to their body, or sometimes, students and working people cannot find a place to exercise. The government's involvement is therefore vital as they can **launch propagation campaigns to heighten social awareness** or establish more public facilities such as parks as places for residents to physically exercise.

On the other hand, similar funding should be provided for constructing hospitals, modernizing facilities, and experimenting new medicines. In reality, there are more grave threats from contagions like Ebola or unexpected accidents on street, which emphasizes **the necessity of treatment and the development of healthcare services**. Unless more significant amounts of money were allocated to discovering new cures and improving the quality of services, there would be more victims and casualties. This is **no less important and imperative** than promoting a healthy lifestyle.

In conclusion, both of these aforementioned factors should be equally and simultaneously developed by any governments.

Word count: 271

TOPIC: 9-7-2016

Studies have suggested that children watch much more television than they did in the past and spend less time on active or creative things.

What are the reasons and what measures should be taken to reduce the time children spend on watching TV and encourage children to spend more time on active or creative things?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *High-resolution graphics:* Hình ảnh phân giải cao

2. *The lack of care as well as encouragement from parents:* Sự thiếu quan tâm cũng như khuyến khích từ phụ huynh

3. *Restrict the amount of time allowed for watching TV:* Giới hạn thời gian được phép xem phim

4. *Resort to drastic measures:* Dụng đến những biện pháp quyết liệt

Word count: 335

Band 8 Sample

Answer

It has been observed that watching TV becomes a dominant form of recreation over other activities that require creativity. My essay below will analyze some underlying reasons and propose some feasible solutions to this issue.

There are two major contributors to the situation where children show a tendency to spend time watching TV rather than creative activities. The first explanation is that telecasts have been growing in number as well as quality, which greatly appeals to children at young age. Compared to the past when most TV channels were in black and white, or viewers could only switch to a limited number of programs, nowadays hundreds of channels with **high-resolution graphics** are available on TV. It is therefore understandable why children choose watching channels like Cartoon Network over other activities. The second reason is **the lack of care as well as encouragement from parents**. Busy life has pushed modern parents away from their kids, and they hardly have time to play with their children or encourage them to do some healthier activities like painting. Children, as a consequence, turn to watching TV during their spare time.

Measures should be taken in order to reduce the time children use to watch TV. Parents' guidance are essential since they are closest to their own children and it is easier for parents to **restrict the amount of time allowed for watching TV**. Although schools and teachers can also play a part, fathers and mothers would be far more persuasive and could **resort to drastic measures** such as corporal punishments if needed. Also of great importance is that they should spare more time playing with and encouraging their kids to take part in creative activities. In fact, with enough encouragement, children would feel motivated and cared for, hence more time spent on active exercises.

In conclusion, several factors are cited as causes for children's propensity for adopting a passive habit of watching TV more than ever before, and children should be guided and encouraged to do more creative work.

SOCIAL

Nowadays, it seems that people tend to waste a great amount of food.

Why do you think this is happening? And how can we solve this problem?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **Have a thorough plan of what they are going to buy:** *Có kê hoạch cẩn thận về những gì họ định mua*

2. **Vague ideas of what meals or foodstuffs they might consume:** *Ý tưởng mờ nhạt về bữa ăn hay thức ăn mà họ định tiêu thụ*

3. **Poor choices for their diet:** *Những lựa chọn tệ cho chế độ ăn của họ*

4. **Saves a lot of unnecessary food:** *Tiết kiệm rất nhiều thực phẩm không cần thiết*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

These days, people are buying a lot of food which ends up being thrown away. The essay below will analyze some major reasons for this situation, and measures to tackle this problem will be presented.

There are two main explanations why food is being wasted. One of the reasons food is thrown away is because consumers fail to **have a thorough plan of what they are going to buy** before they shop. Commonly, many people only have **vague ideas of what meals or foodstuffs they might consume** over the next few days, and this often leads to their shopping carts full of products they might never use. Secondly, food wastage can occur when people make **poor choices for their diet**. Huge quantities of food remaining unused might be a sign that consumers' diets are going undesirably.

Some measures are suggested to mitigate the situation. One effective solution is to make a list of ingredients and foodstuffs that one is going to purchase before she goes shopping. This way helps consumers to have time to prepare and decide wisely what products should be bought, which eventually **saves a lot of unnecessary food**. Furthermore, people should do careful research on reasonable diets in advance of going to food stores so that they can know what ingredients are best for their state of health.

In conclusion, poor planning for meals and unwise choices of diet mainly contribute to the amount of unused food at the moment, and thorough preparation is key to avoid further food wastage.

Word count: 253

Government

TOPIC: 16-7-2016

In many countries, government spent a large amount of money on improving internet access.

Why is it happening and do you think it is the most appropriate use of government money?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *A huge proportion of national budget:* Một phần lớn ngân sách nhà nước

2. *To dispense educational services and general knowledge about all aspects of life:* đem đến những dịch vụ giáo dục và kiến thức chung về tất cả các khía cạnh của cuộc sống

3. *To pour their money into improving the Internet:* Đổ tiền vào nâng cấp Internet

4. *To be equivalent to the enormous amount of governmental funding:* Cân xứng với khối lượng kinh phí khổng lồ từ chính phủ

5. *To be used to the absence of the Internet:* Quen với việc không có Internet

Band 8 Sample

Answer

A huge proportion of national budget is allocated for providing people with easier access to the Internet. There are several reasons for such spending and, in my view, this is not the most suitable way to use state money.

The government understand how the Internet benefits the lives of their citizens and also the limitation of access to the network in a number of places across their countries. The Internet has proven powerful in dispensing educational services and general knowledge about all aspects of life, not to mention the fact that it could facilitate communication even between continents. There is no arguing why governments pay much heed to the development of the network, just as to boost the overall quality of life for their people. Additionally, perhaps the inaccessibility of the Internet in many areas, especially disadvantaged ones for which mountainous villages in Vietnam could be brought up as a prime example, has the government draw a conclusion to pour their money into improving the Internet.

Much as those analyzed points above, I still believe large financial spending on such a field could, sometimes, be seen as unproductive or even counter-productive. In fact, only half of the world population has Internet connection; and even if the government were able to expand the network, it would be, I believe, hardly reachable for the rest of the world for the time being. The result would not be equivalent to the enormous amount of governmental funding. Instead, there are some other areas that authorities could invest in as a pre-requisite complement before supplying a widespread network. Constructing schools and sending qualified teachers to areas that are used to the absence of the Internet and are unaware of the benefits it might offer could be more promising.

In conclusion, there are two main explanations for governments' special attention to improving the Internet access; and I think this is not the most optimal way to spend money.

Word count: 322

TOPIC: 30-7-2016

Many people say the gap between rich and poor people is wider, as rich people become richer and poor people grow poorer.

What problems could this situation cause and what measures can be done to address those problems?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **The two classes of society:** *2 tầng lớp xã hội*

2. **To live on the breadline:** *Sống nghèo đói*

3. **Income inequality:** *Bất bình đẳng thu nhập*

4. **The breeding ground for social unrest and political instability:** *Là nơi sản sinh ra rối loạn xã hội và bất ổn chính trị*

5. **The onset of social anarchy:** *Sự bắt đầu của sự hỗn độn trong xã hội*

6. **To resort to violence and opt for the life of criminals:** *Tìm đến bạo lực và lựa chọn con đường tội phạm*

7. **To reduce the amount of income inequality in society:** *Giảm lượng bất bình đẳng thu nhập trong xã hội*

8. **To place much importance on individual competence to determine the amount of money one might earn:** *Nhấn mạnh vào khả năng cá nhân để quyết định số tiền mà một người sẽ nhận*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

As the world progresses, the gap between the **two classes of society** is widened because the rich become wealthier while the poor are **living on the breadline**. Such **income inequality** could lead to several problems, and some suggestions to improve this situation will be analyzed in the following essay.

Wealth concentration within a handful of individuals and institutions might result in two major issues. Firstly, the rich-poor gap could be **the breeding ground for social unrest and political instability**. The poor might perceive that the rich is the principal force of hindrance to their occupational and service opportunities. This might be the precursor to discontentment, which potentially is **the onset of social anarchy**. Secondly, as poverty restricts the capacity of the underprivileged to access services and other life-sustaining matters such as education, employment and medicine, they might **resort to violence and opt for the life of criminals.**

There are several initiatives to reduce economic inequality, including progressive taxation and minimum salary legislation. Higher taxes should be levied on the rich, which could **reduce the amount of income inequality in society**. On the other hand, governments could use this money to supply free goods and services for those who struggle to make a living. Also of great importance is the increase in the minimum earnings of the poorest workers. Although it cannot be denied that the current system **places much importance on individual competence to determine the amount of money one might earn**, unskilled workforce who usually are from the lower class should be, still, provided enough to live sufficiently.

In conclusion, chaos and the acceleration of crime rates are the two severe repercussions of the unequal distribution of wealth; and governments could impose heavy taxes on the rich and heighten the minimum amount of salary for the disadvantaged.

Word count: 298

TOPIC: 4-8-2016

In many countries, people now wear Western clothes (suits, jeans) rather than traditional clothing.

Why? Is this a positive or negative development?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **Influential cultures:** *Những nền văn hóa có ảnh hưởng lớn*
2. **The notion of modernism in terms of dressing:** *Ý niệm về cách ăn mặc hiện đại*
3. **Reshapes fashion patterns of the indigenous:** *Định hình lại cách ăn mặc của người bản xứ*
4. **The age of globalization:** *Thời đại toàn cầu hóa*
5. **Underestimate the value and meaning of their traditional clothes:** *Coi thường giá trị và ý nghĩa của quần áo truyền thống*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

In many parts of the world, many people prefer Western fashion styles than their traditional clothes. The underlying reasons for this are varied; and this could be seen as both negative and positive.

There are two main explanations for the popularity of suits and jeans even in non-Western countries across different continents. Firstly, Western clothing has become widely known for the recent advent of the mass media like TV or global newspapers. In fact, **influential cultures**, especially **the notion of modernism in terms of dressing**, from the West has become dominant in other nations. Secondly, the transcontinental expansion of powerful Western-based corporations is another contributor to the preference for this so-called modern dressing style. Those organizations usually require their local staff to wear dress shirts and pants to work, which gradually **reshapes fashion patterns of the indigenous**.

This choice of fashion could do both harm and good. On the positive side, it helps people integrate into the global working environment, which is essential in **the age of globalization** where different cultures cross. On the other hand, if such preference became excessively prevalent, there would be a good reason for the worry of cultural assimilation. Some people, the young generation in particular, might **underestimate the value and meaning of their traditional clothes**, the Ao Dai in Vietnam for example.

In conclusion, the widespread adoption of Western clothing could be attributable to the mass media and the appearance of a handful of national companies; and this phenomenon is positive and negative at the same time.

Word count: 253

TOPIC: 27-8-2016

With the rapid advancement of communication technology, eg smart phones, tablets and other mobile devices, some people believe that the disadvantages outweigh the advantages. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Empowered people to conveniently keep in touch with friends and relatives*: Giúp con người có thể giữ liên lạc với bạn bè và người thân một cách tiện lợi

2. *The ability to effectively interact with each other*: Khả năng tương tác hiệu quả với nhau

3. *Refrain from using new appealing applications and games*: Kiềm chế sử dụng những ứng dụng và trò chơi thú vị

4. *Too engrossed in their games*: quá đắm chìm vào việc chơi game

Band 8 Sample

Answer

Recently, the advent and popularity of cutting-edge communication technology has unfolded the possibility of connecting people from different places around the world, which engenders public opposing ideas of whether the drawbacks of such devices would eclipse the benefits. In my opinion, I completely agree with that statement.

Still, there are certainly several values that new lines of mobile phones and tablets bring to users. Firstly, those are considered a powerful facilitator of communication. In fact, many breakthroughs in the industry of technology, such as the introduction of I-phone, have **empowered people to conveniently keep in touch with friends and relatives** regardless of geographic adversities. Secondly, such technological development is a threshold of a new world where people are connected in a global network, which provides them with opportunities to meet people of diverse backgrounds and personalities. Compared to the past, modern people now could easily get to know people, even trans-continentally, with only a small device such as a cell phone.

However, I suppose that the repercussions of this advancement should be paid more attention to. As people rely too much on tablets or mobile phones, there would be a high chance of them losing **the ability to effectively interact with each other** in real life. More dangerously, addiction and aggression might be the price that people had to pay if they did not **refrain from using new appealing applications and games**. Unfortunately, many incidents resulting in a few casualties have been reported when players are **too engrossed in their games**, especially after the release of Pokemon-Go. This might be a strong basis for the belief that those devices would do more harm than good.

In conclusion, I believe that the downsides of contemporary technological development might be more significant than the benefits.

Word count: 293

TOPIC: 10-9-2016

Some people think studying from the past offers no benefits to today's life, while others believe that history is a valuable source of information for us.

Discuss both views and give our own opinion.

<u>Useful vocabulary:</u>

1. ***brings no relevant values to the present or future:*** *Không đem lại giá trị thực tiễn cho hiện tại và tương lai*

2. ***no guarantee of the accuracy of information obtained:*** *Không có gì đảm bảo về sự chính xác của thông tin*

3. ***thorough insights into their own culture and how their country has evolved:*** *Kiến thức cụ thể về văn hóa và nước nhà đã tiến hóa như thế nào*

4. ***develop their patriotism and pride:*** *Phát triển lòng yêu nước và sự tự hào*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

There are different opinions about the role of history in our present life. While a lot of people insist that there would be nothing to gain from doing research on what happened in the past, I suppose history does teach us precious lessons.

On the one hand, I understand why some people think it is pointless to learn from the past. First, history is the field that is rarely used in people's lives, and therefore, they would rather pay attention to science or technology than focus on something that **brings no relevant values to the present or future**. Second, each historical event is interpreted differently based on different facts and perspectives, so there is **no guarantee of the accuracy of information obtained**. If, in many cases, historical documents were falsified, it would cause tremendous damage to people's culture and religion.

On the other hand, I would argue that studying from past events is essential for two principal reasons. History helps young people have **thorough insights into their own culture and how their country has evolved.** This is particularly true in case of Vietnam. The youth need to understand how their ancestors defended the nation against intruders throughout many dynasties and maintain a sovereign and free country, which would **develop their patriotism and pride**. Furthermore, history depicts the mistakes made in the past, hence helping people to avoid similar ones in the future.

In conclusion, acquiring knowledge about historical events, although redundant according to some, seems to be of great value to me.

Word count: 252

Research has shown that overeating is as harmful as smoking. Therefore, the advertising of certain food products should be banned in the same way as the advertising of cigarettes is banned.

Do you agree or disagree?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **A detriment to people's health conditions:** *Điều gây hại cho sức khỏe con người*

2. **Excessive food intake:** *Lượng thức ăn vào quá nhiều*

3. **Numerous health-related problems:** *Nhiều vấn đề liên quan đến sức khỏe*

4. **Approach prospective customers:** *Tiếp cận khách hàng tiềm năng*

5. **Their profit declines as a result of this prohibition policy:** *Lợi nhuận giảm vì cấm sách này*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

It is claimed that overeating causes similar damage to human health just like smoking, so it is necessary to implement prohibition of advertisements for both some food products and smoking. In my opinion, the former view is well-founded, yet the latter seems to be rather unreasonable.

It is totally understandable that consuming an unnecessarily large amount of food is **a detriment to people's health conditions** just like smoking is. In fact, **excessive food intake** increases body fat, potentially resulting in obesity. In recent years, the number of obese people has been constantly growing at an unprecedented rate in consequence of overeating. Furthermore, consuming unhealthy food such as fast food or processed food on regular basis also brings about **numerous health-related problems** such as blood pressure or high cholesterol. Issues regarding people's state of health caused by eating too much are for sure comparable with those caused by smoking, lung cancer for example.

However, I do not think it is an effective solution to forbid advertisements for several particular foodstuffs. It is unfair to manufacturers because advertising is their main measure to **approach prospective customers** and to introduce their new products in the market. Without publicity materials, many food manufacturers would experience crises as **their profit declines as a result of this prohibition policy**. Furthermore, it is a disadvantage to consumers because they will not be informed about products they want to buy. It is true that advertising encourages people to purchase things but it only plays a small part in the amount of food intake which is mainly determined by consumers themselves.

In conclusion, I agree that the way overeating harms human health is similar to smoking, whereas it seems to me that advertising of food products should not be banned.

Word count: 291

Environment

TOPIC: 24-9-2016

Fossil fuel is the main source of energy. In some countries, the use of alternative sources of energy is encouraged.

To what extent do you think is it a positive or negative development?

Useful vocabulary:

1. ***The current rate of exploitation:*** *Tốc độ khai thác hiện nay*

2. ***Energy scarcity:*** *Khan hiếm năng lượng*

3. ***The future development of the human race:*** *Sự phát triển trong tương lai của loài người*

4. ***Environmental degradation:*** *Sự thoái hóa của môi trường*

5. ***The combustion of fossil fuels:*** *Sự đốt cháy năng lượng hóa thạch*

6. ***An unlimited amount of inexpensive energy:*** *Một lượng bất tận năng lượng rẻ*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

Governments across continents have turned their attention to more sustainable sources of energy as alternatives to fossil fuels. In my opinion, this could be seen as a progress for the following reasons.

First, there is no arguing that producing energy from buried dead organisms lacks sustainability, which means such production could not guarantee the survival of humans in the long term. In fact, the consumption of energy generated from fossil fuels tends to accelerate in direct correlation with the growth of the world population. With **the current rate of exploitation**, this valuable resource would dwindle away in no time, leaving no other choices than seeking additional reserves such as nuclear power or hydroelectricity. This is a safe solution to the fear of **energy scarcity** and ensures **the future development of the human race**.

Second, dependence on fossil fuel for worldwide energy supply would cause **environmental degradation** while using solar power, for example, is considered an ultimate choice of energy conservation. **The combustion of fossil fuels** is the culprit of greenhouse gas emission and other air pollutants, leading to tremendous damage to the environment. Such suffering of the Earth could not be justified by the growing need of humans. By contrast, this would never be the case when it comes to other alternatives as mentioned above. If governments continue to invest in exploiting those new sources, there will be **an unlimited amount of inexpensive energy** on the long run.

In conclusion, I believe that the use of other potential energy sources to replace fossil fuel is obviously an important step forward.

Word count: 260

Some people think that men and women have different qualities. Therefore, some certain jobs are suitable for men and some jobs are suitable for women.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Useful vocabulary:

1. **Disparities in the types of job compatible for males or females:** *sự phân biệt trong loại công việc tương thích với đàn ông và phụ nữ*
2. **Distinct physical and mental strengths:** *Những điểm mạnh khác biệt về thể chất và tinh thần*
3. **The distribution of the types of jobs among the two sexes:** *Sự phân bố các loại công việc giữa những người khác giới*
4. **Occupational compatibility regarding gender:** *Sự tương thích nghề nghiệp dựa trên giới tính*
5. **Great versatility in various jobs:** *Khả năng có thể đảm nhiệm tốt nhiều loại công việc*
6. **Both brains and brawn:** *Cả trí não lẫn thể chất*
7. **Gender-specific career pursuit:** *Sự theo đuổi nghề nghiệp tùy theo giới tính (tạm dịch…)*
8. **The aforementioned disparity in job selection:** *Sự phân biệt trong việc chọn lựa ngành nghề vừa đề cập đến ở trên*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

It is thought that there are **disparities in the types of job compatible for males or females** owing to their **distinct physical and mental strengths.** Although occupational suitability based on gender is justifiable to some degree, reality, in my opinion, has proven otherwise.

On the one hand, it would be absurd to ignore the fact that jobs which require tremendous physical strength and agility such as mining feature male labor. Women, meanwhile, are assumed to be better at tasks that take great patience as well as skills to perform like household chores. In fact, a majority of men and women could not exchange their preferred fields of expertise, which is a strong reason for the distribution of **the types of jobs among the two sexes.**

On the other hand, I still believe there should not be any specific rules for **occupational compatibility regarding gender.** A lot of men are growing more interested in taking responsibilities for childcare and housework which are typically considered feminine. Women, by contrast, are showing **great versatility in various jobs,** even those demanding **both brains and brawn.** Female gymnasts have been increasing in number; and nobody can deny that mental and physical perseverance are fundamental for gymnastics. In addition, women's social status has been improved thanks to the success of world-class businesswomen and politicians, Hillary Clinton for example. This is a plain proof against the belief of **gender-specific career pursuit.**

In conclusion, while there is still some truth to **the aforementioned disparity in job selection,** I think men and women are now equal in terms of such an aspect.

Word count: 263

Some people think that everyone has the right to have access to university education, and that governments should make it free for all students no matter what financial background they have.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion.

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Acquire tertiary degrees: Lấy bằng đại học*

2. *Equal in intelligence and scholastic capability: Giống nhau về trí tuệ cũng như khả năng học vấn*

3. *Providing free tertiary education: Cung cấp giáo dục đại học miễn phí*

4. *Exerts a fairly significant impact on how each student interacts with teachers and their peers: Có ảnh hưởng khá đáng kể đến việc từng học sinh tương tác với nhau cũng như với thầy cô như thế nào.*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

It is thought that studying at university is everyone's right, and all tuition fees should be fully paid by the government. The former view is reasonable, however, I disagree that the government should take responsibility for students' university education fees.

I believe every student is entitled to go to college to **acquire tertiary degrees**. It is because, from my point of view, knowledge gained at university should be freely imparted to everyone. Furthermore, all students, although different in financial backgrounds, are **equal in intelligence and scholastic capability**, hence equal opportunities to gain admittance to university.

However, the government are under no obligation to take care of university attenders' education costs. **Providing free tertiary education** might either push the government to the verge of bankruptcy or levy higher taxes on citizens because the costs for the government to maintain facilities or employ qualified teachers are certainly exorbitant. Additionally, education quality would also suffer owing to the increased number of students in one class, which prevents teachers from giving out thorough care for everyone. In fact, class size also **exerts a fairly significant impact on how each student interacts with teachers and their peers**. If there are too many members in one class, they will be afraid to ask questions, for example, which leads to their poor performance at university.

In conclusion, while I agree that it is everyone's right to pursue tertiary education, it seems to me that the government should not fully pay for study costs. So far, there have been ample opportunities for scholarships or exemptions; and I think that is the best method to support students.

Word count: 268

TOPIC: 5-11-2016

Some people believe that living in big cities is becoming more difficult. Others believe that it is getting easier.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

<u>Useful vocabulary:</u>

1. **Not only population explosion but also migration from the countryside:** *Không chỉ bùng nổ dân số mà còn di cư từ nông thôn*

2. **Public transportation overload:** *Hiện trạng quả tải phương tiện giao thông công cộng*

3. **Adequate employment opportunities:** *Đầy đủ cơ hội nghề nghiệp*

4. **Find a decent profession equivalent to their qualifications and competence:** *Tìm được một ngành tốt xứng với bằng cấp và khả năng*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

It is often argued that life in major urban areas has become much of a challenge. Although there is some truth to that statement, I think qualities of life in cities have made it easier for residents in terms of educational opportunities and career prospects.

On the one hand, there are two principal reasons why some people find it difficult to live in a metropolis. First, space of living is becoming more and more limited in many major cities, such as London. Such overcrowding, which can be attributable to **not only population explosion but also migration from the countryside**, makes it uncomfortable for residents in many terms, **public transportation overload** for example. Second, crime rates have been accelerating for the past few years in urban areas; and this is a tremendous detriment to the life and safety of city dwellers.

On the other hand, I would side with those who suppose living in cities is easier than ever before. To begin with, access to higher quality education has been largely dispensed, resulting in skilled workforce. In fact, more institutions and schools have come into being recently, with teachers carefully trained and facilities greatly modernized, to provide students with the best education. Furthermore, the non-stop progress of the economy is the foundation of **adequate employment opportunities**. Despite significant competitiveness in the job market, people can still **find a decent profession equivalent to their qualifications and competence**, making their lives less stressful.

In conclusion, it seems to me that it is more comfortable to live in a big city owing to advanced education systems and more employment opportunities.

Word count: 266

TOPIC: 26-11-2016

Advertisements are becoming more and more common in everyday life.

Is it a positive or negative development?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Details about newly launched products*: Thông tin chi tiết về những sản phẩm mới được công bố

2. *Commercialize their commodities*: Thương mại hóa sản phẩm

3. *Publicity materials*: Nghĩa là những thứ giúp cho một sản phẩm mới được người khác biết đến (tạm dịch)

4. *Approach prospective customers*: Tiếp cận với khách hàng tiềm năng

5. *To be bombarded with all kinds of advertisements*: Bị "bỏ bom" bởi đủ các thể loại quảng cáo

6. *Information overload*: Quá tải thông tin

7. *Stimulate people to purchase products that are being advertised*: Kích thích mọi người mua hàng hóa đang được quảng cáo.

Band 8 Sample

The development of businesses has given rise to the growing number of advertisements that can be seen anywhere, on streets or in the media. In my opinion, this phenomenon could be both positive and negative.

On the one hand, advertising has brought a number of benefits for not only consumers but also businesses. Certainly, advertising provides **details about newly launched products**, which is important for consumers who are still unaware of such products. In fact, improving quality alone would be less effective if producers failed to **commercialize their commodities**. Furthermore, companies, entrepreneurs for example, spend a great deal of money on **publicity materials** in order to **approach prospective customers**. This, in return, generates higher profit and enhances those companies' competitiveness in the market.

On the other hand, the surge in quantities of commercials exerts several undesirable impacts on customers. First, instead of being well-informed about a new line of product, people are **being bombarded with all kinds of advertisements**. Those can be either deceptive or annoying; and such **information overload** has become a nuisance to many people, particularly when their favorite telecasts are constantly interrupted by irrelevant promotions. Second, advertising encourages people to purchase what they do not really need. Images of celebrities are used in many extravagant commercials, especially cosmetics, to **stimulate people to purchase products that are being advertised**. However, in reality, most of those products are of little use to buyers.

In conclusion, advertisements of various types have become prevalent in modern society; and this is, in my view, advantageous and detrimental as well.

Word count: 261

TOPIC: 3-12-2016

International travel has many advantages to both travelers and the country visited.

Do you think advantages outweigh disadvantages?

Useful vocabulary:

1. *Travel expenses: Chi phí du lịch*

2. *Famous tourist destinations: Điểm đến du lịch nổi tiếng*

3. *Complicated and tedious prerequisite procedures: Công đoạn bắt buộc nhàm chán và phức tạp*

4. *Lay much pressure on local people: Đặt nhiều áp lực lên người dân trong vùng*

5. *A detriment to domestic travel: Ngăn cản du lịch trong nước*

6. *Costs of hotel rooms and other services: Giá cả của phòng khách sạn và những loại dịch vụ khác*

7. *Numbers of fascinating experiences of exotic cuisine and culture: Nhiều trải nghiệm thú vị về thực phẩm và văn hóa xa lạ*

8. *Enhance tourism industries: Phát triển ngành du lịch*

Band 8 Sample

Answer

Travelling abroad certainly exerts several positive influences on tourists as well as the host country. Although there are still drawbacks of international travel, I think its values are more significant.

On the one hand, the downsides of welcoming foreign visitors are varied. Regarding tourists themselves, **travel expenses** in **famous tourist destinations**, Venice for example, are expensive, and there are many **complicated and tedious prerequisite procedures** such as visa application or plane ticket reservation. As for the countries that play host to international tourists, the rise in costs of living may **lay much pressure on local people** and be **a detriment to domestic travel**. This is because the growth in the number of tourists from abroad would encourage **costs of hotel rooms and other services** to increase. People in the neighborhood and domestic visitors would suffer in comparison.

On the other hand, I suppose the benefits of international travel would eclipse those analyzed disadvantages. First, travelers can have **numbers of fascinating experiences of exotic cuisine and culture**, and they get to see places they have not seen before. A typical example of this is when tourists from other countries come to Vietnam, they would have the opportunity to use chopsticks, enjoy traditional meals and go sightseeing in the countryside. Second, the increased number of foreign people coming to visit another country would evidently **enhance tourism industries**, contributing greatly to the wealth of that country. If tourists enjoy their trips, they will recommend the destination to their friends or perhaps they will come back in the future.

In conclusion, it appears to me that the merits of international tourism are more notable than its drawbacks.

Word count: 272

ENTERTAINMENT
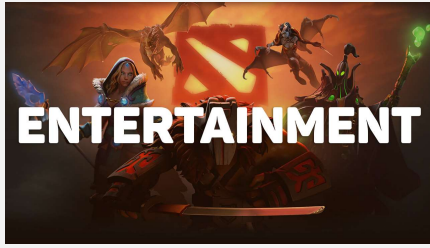
<u>TOPIC: 17-12-2016</u>

Some people think that young people can learn useful skills by playing electronic and computer games. Others argue that people who play electronic and computer games are wasting their time.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

<u>Useful vocabulary:</u>

1. *Sharpen some important skills:* Mài giũa một số kĩ năng quan trọng

2. *Cultivate their creativity and problem solving skills:* Phát triển sự sáng tạo và khả năng giải quyết vấn đề

3. *Tremendous focus and extremely fast reflexes:* Sự tập trung cao độ và phản xạ cực nhanh

4. *This form of entertainment is a grave detriment:* Loại hình giải trí này là sự gây hại

5. *Players are exposed to them on a frequent basis:* Người chơi tiếp xúc với game thường xuyên

6. *Healthy, educational and less time-consuming options:* Những sự lựa chọn lành mạnh, mang tính giáo dục và ít tốn thời gian hơn

Band 8.0 sample

Answer

There have been arguments over the possible impacts that computer and electronic games might on the young. Although there is some truth to the belief that playing games on computers and other electronic devices enhances certain skills, I would side with those who think playing such games is a waste of time.

On the one hand, there are several reasons why some people consider video games as a tool to **sharpen some important skills.** First, many games, such as science or puzzle games, stimulate young players' brains and sensitivity, which gives those players an opportunity to **cultivate their creativity and problem solving skills**. Second, people argue that shooting games, like Counter Strike, require **tremendous focus and extremely fast reflexes** to complete stages in those games. With reflexes and concentration capability improved, players can demonstrate more effectively daily task which specifically require those enhanced skills.

On the other hand, I would argue that spending time on video games is a waste regardless of the possibility of skill development they might offer. Young people are supposed to study properly either at school or at home, to which **this form of entertainment is a grave detriment**. Those types of games are fun; however, they are addictive at the same time. An excessive amount of time would be used for games if **players are exposed to them on a frequent basis**. This, consequently, results in the reduction of time for study, which should be people's top priority at their age. Furthermore, skills sharpened by computer and electronic games can also be acquired by a number of other **healthy, educational and less time-consuming options**, such as reading books or participating in sport clubs.

In conclusion, it seems to me that having a few skills enhanced by playing video games cannot justify the fact that it is a waste of time.

Word count: 305 words

Lời kết

Các samples này được viết theo 1 format nhất định để mọi người có thể dễ dàng theo dõi. Tất cả ideas cũng như từ vựng và cấu trúc câu có thể được tự do copy vào bài khi luyện tập hoặc đi thi thật. Học viên tuyệt đối không nên sao chép nguyên văn vì có thể bị Examiners phát hiện và sẽ bị tính điểm 0.

Đã có rất nhiều học viên (tại ZIM hoặc tự học) đã luyện theo các bài mẫu của ZIM và đạt kết quả cao, thậm chí có những học viên đặc biệt đã đạt 7.5 – 8.0 Writing. Bạn có thể là người tiếp theo đấy.

Chúc các sĩ tử IELTS học tốt, thi tốt, điểm cao!

HARD-WORK ALWAYS PAYS OFF

CHAPTER 7

Essay topics to practice at home

1: In some cultures the old age is more valued, while in some cultures youth is more valued.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

2: Some people believe that the government spends too much money on developing space exploration technology. There are many others financial needs that the government should address instead.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

3. Some people think children should obey the rules their parents and teachers set and listen to them, but others think less control will help children to deal with their future adult life.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion?

4. Some people argue that teaching children of different abilities together benefits all of them. Others believe that intelligent children should be taught separately and given special treatment.

Discuss both views and how do you think about it?

5. Many people believe that teachers should take the responsibility for the students to judge what is right and wrong and behave well, others feel that teachers should only teach academic subjects.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

6. Some people have great ambitions in life, others don't.

Do you think ambition is important to succeed in life?

Is it a positive or a negative quality to have?

7. Many people believe that the world's most urgent problems can only be solved by international collaboration.

Do you agree or disagree?

8. Some people believe that some unpaid community service should be a compulsory part of high school programmes (e.g. working in a charity, improving the relationship of neighbourhood or teaching sports to children)

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

9. Some people think the best way of reducing crime is to give longer prison sentences. Others, however, think there are other better ways to reduce crime.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

10. University students always focus on one specialist subject, but some people think universities should encourage their students to study a range of subjects in addition to their own subject.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

11. Some people think that robots are very important to human's future development. Others think that they are dangerous and have negative effects on society.

Discuss both opinions and give your personal view.

12. Happiness is considered very important in life.

Why is it difficult to define?

What factors are important in achieving happiness?

13. We have entered a throw-away society and fill the environment with rubbish.

What are the causes and what are your solutions?

14. People continue to commit crimes even after being punished for it.

Why do you think this happens?

How can crime be stopped?

15. Some people say that governments should spend money on measures to save languages that are used by few speakers, while others believe it's a waste of financial resources.

Discuss both views and give your opinion?

16. The number of people who watch foreign films is much more than people who watch local films.

Describe the reasons and should the government provide financial support to the local film industries?

17. Television has had a significant influence on the culture of many societies.

To what extent do you think it has positively or negatively affected cultural development?

18. Most of the schools are planning to replace sports and exercise classes with more academic sessions.

What is your opinion on this change?

How will this change affect children's life in your view?

19. Some people think zoos are cruel and all the zoos should be closed. However, some people think zoos are useful to protect the rare animals.

Discuss both these views and give your opinion?

20. Many people believe that university students should pay tuition fees in full themselves, because they gain education for their own benefit and not for the society.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

21. Detailed description of crimes on newspaper and TV can have bad consequences on society, so this kind of information should be restricted on media.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

22. Some people think planning future is a waste of time and people should focus on the present.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

23. Some people believe that governments should make investment in building public libraries in every town, while others think it is a waste of money because we have access to information via Internet.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

24. Some people think the main benefit of international cooperation is in protection of the environment, while others think that the main benefit is in the world business.

Discuss both views and give your opinion?

25. Professional workers like doctors, nurses and teachers make a greater contribution to society and so should be paid more than sports and entertainment personalities.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

26. Some people think that politicians have the greatest influence on the world. Other people, however, believe that scientists have the greatest influence.

Discuss both of views and give your opinion.

27. Individual greed and selfishness has been the basis of the modern society. Some people think that we must return to the older and more traditional values of respect for the family and the local community in order to create a better world to live in.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

28. The increase in food production owes much to fertilizers and better machinery, but some people think that it has a negative impact on human health and community.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

29. In today's world of advanced science and technology, we still greatly value our artists such as musicians, painters and writers.

What can arts tell us about life that science and technology cannot?

30. Some people believe that the range of technology available to individuals today is increasing the gap between the poor people and the rich people, while some others say this has an opposite effect.

Discuss both views and give your opinion

31. Some countries and individuals try to deal with the problem of animal extinction. Others think it is more important to deal with problems of human beings.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

32. Nowadays many parents are sending their kids abroad to acquire good education. Discuss the advantages and the disadvantages of this trend.

Give your own opinion.

33. In some countries boarding schools are getting more popular.

Is it a positive or negative development?

What are the reasons behind it?

34. Sports help to a greater extent to build peace in world.

Do you agree or disagree?

35. Nowadays, children play less with others and this has an impact on their development.

What are the reasons for this?

Does it have a good or a bad effect on children?

36. Consumers are faced with increasing numbers of advertisements from competing companies.

To what extent do you think are consumers influenced by advertisements?

What measures can be taken to protect them.

37. There are an increasing number of anti-social behaviors in recent years; People generally believe that the society is to blame.

What do you think the causes are and who is responsible for this?

38. Some people claim that public museums and art galleries will not be needed because people can see historical objects and works of art by using a computer.

Do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

39. Some people think it is necessary to use animals for testing medicines intended for human use. Others, however, think it is cruel to do that.

Discuss both of these views and give you own opinion.

40. News media are important in modern society.

Why are they so important?

Are their influences generally positive or negative?

Final words

This book is written in appreciation for the non-stop support from many IELTS Learners across the country and also as a thank-you gift for those who cannot afford IELTS offline courses for financial or geographic issues. I do hope that this small gift would bring great help to my students, friends and people who wish to get a high score in the IELTS exam.

Final words

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