

Unitatea de Învățare Nr. 7

ESSAYS 2 – OPINION ESSAYS

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1. UNIT OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you will become familiar with the structure and specific phrases used in 'opinion' essays. You will also be able to identify good and bad points in writing these types of essays, how to avoid making mistakes and how to write your own coherent opinion essays using your own ideas and creativity. The Assessment Test will identify your good and bad points in writing essays.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Structure and specific phrases

This piece of writing is a discursive essay in which you present your own opinions on certain topics.

Structure

- **Introduction:** you introduce the topic and state your opinion clearly;
- **Main body:** in at least two paragraphs you present different viewpoints with their justification;
- **Conclusion:** you restate your opinion using different words / phrases.

Specific Phrases

For giving opinions

In my opinion ...

In my view ...

To my mind ...

I agree with

I don't agree with

I strongly think / believe / feel ...

As far as I am concerned ...

I am totally in favour of ...

I am totally against ...

I couldn't agree more with / that ...

I couldn't disagree more than that / with ...

It seems to me ...

U7: Essays II - Opinion essays

To list points:

first / firstly / first of all / to begin with / in the first place, etc

To add further points:

moreover, furthermore, what is more, in addition to, besides, not to mention the fact that, another reason would be, etc.

To express contrasting viewpoints:

As opposed to the above-stated ideas, it is argued that, people argue that, opponents of this view argue that, etc.

To give examples:

for instance, such as, for example, especially, etc.

To draw conclusions:

All in all, As a conclusion, To sum up, All things considered, etc.

☺ **Let's have fun!**

Q: 'What begins with T, ends with T and has T in it?'

A: 'A teapot.'

2.2 Useful tips

- Be organized;
- Structure and list your own points beforehand;
- Use the appropriate linking words;
- Each paragraph should deal with a different viewpoint;
- Each paragraph should contain a topic sentence followed by justifications, reasons, examples, etc;
- Use the formal style (avoid colloquialisms, short forms, idioms, personal examples, etc);
- Use the present tense;
- State your opinion in the first paragraph;

- State your opinion in the last paragraph using different words or phrases;
- Support your own opinion with justifications.

stop and think



Exercise 1

Read the following information and answer the questions. You are asked to write an essay giving your opinion and supporting reasons on the following statement: *Computers will rule the world.*

- Where can you find this type of essay?
- Which style are you going to use?
- Which of the following are you going to write about?
 - a. the progress of high technology;
 - b. description of different brands of computers;
 - c. relationship between people and computers;
 - d. man's contribution to the progress of information technology;
 - e. man's superiority over computers;
 - f. supporting examples;
 - g. opposing views and justifications.

1 =

2 =

3 =

3. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

drills ?

Exercise 2

Match the viewpoints with the reasons below:

Television is a good alternative to reading newspapers.

View points	Reasons
1. information is vital	a. the combination of image and sound arouses people's interest
2. television has a greater impact on viewers	b. everybody has at least one TV set at home
3. television creates the opportunity of getting an objective image of the situations	c. everybody should be informed
4. television has become a component of everybody's lifestyle	d. you simply change channels and get a different viewpoint on the same situation

1 =; 2 =; 3 =; 4 =

☺ **Let's have fun!**

Murphy's Laws

Having baths makes the phone ring.

drills ?

Exercise 3

Fill in the table below using words and phrases from the list below.

while, whereas, also, for instance, first, in particular, to start with, however, similarly, moreover, apart from this, let alone, in the first place, lastly, secondly, on the one hand, on the other hand, apart from this, all in all, nonetheless, therefore, such as, in conclusion, in addition, because, all things considered

1. To list points
2. To add more points
3. To present contrasting viewpoints
4. To present examples
5. To draw conclusions

☺ **Let's have fun!**

Murphy's Laws

Those who can, do. Those who can't, teach.

reading

Exercise 4

Read the following essay and label the paragraphs below with the following headings. Then group the paragraphs under the three main components: *Introduction*; *Main body*; *Conclusion*.

topic and opinion, restate opinion, opposing viewpoints, first viewpoint and examples, second viewpoint and examples

Rich People are Happier

Paragraph 1

Everybody wishes they were richer. Why? In my opinion, rich people are the happiest people in the world.

Paragraph 2

Firstly, rich people can afford anything they dream of. For instance, they can go on luxurious cruises. They can buy a villa, a mansion or an expensive flat on an exotic island. Moreover, they can enjoy life to the maximum, by simply investing their money and going on a never-ending holiday.

Paragraph 3

In addition to this, having money means power. Rich people can lead the world, make fundamental decisions and become leaders.

Paragraph 4

On the other hand, it is argued that having too much money can become a burden. For instance, rich people are never sure if their friends are true or not. What is more, rich people can become obsessed with making more money, or they can become the victims of terrorists, burglars or robbers.

Paragraph 5

All in all, though, I believe that being rich is worth all the risks and that rich people live a glamorous life. That is the sort of life we all would like to experience at least one day.

Paragraph 1:

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Paragraph 2:

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Paragraph 3:

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Paragraph 4:

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Paragraph 5:

.....

Introduction:

Main body:

Conclusion:

Exercise 5

Write the missing words or phrases in the essay below.

It is good to be one child in the family

Nowadays, many families choose to have one single child. I strongly (1) that this is a very wise decision because in those families, a single child is happier and better looked after.

In the (2) place, everybody in the family tries to give that child all their attention and love. For (3), they spend more time with the child. They give him / her more presents, or they could buy him / her new clothes more often.

What is (4), parents with a single child can afford sending the child to better schools, to sports or arts clubs or even on expensive trips.

Nevertheless, there are those who argue that being a single child is not good at all. They (5) that a single child may feel lonely, may become selfish or may have a weak personality, depending too much on somebody else.

To (6), I do believe that being a single child is better than having to share all your parents' love, attention and money with somebody else.

Believe it or not!

More than one third of Britain's Prime Ministers went to the same college. Eton College.

drills ?

Exercise 6

Match the beginnings with the endings. Identify the topic for each of the essays they are taken from.

Beginnings

1. *Nowadays, computers seem an essential tool. In my opinion, they can also jeopardize human relationships.*
2. *I strongly believe that smoking should be banned in all public places.*
3. *Having a pet can develop your child's personality from an early age.*
4. *I personally believe that people should cut down on eating fast food.*

Endings

- A. *To sum up, saturated oil can only harm one's health.*
- B. *Perhaps we should reconsider the benefits of high technology and come back to our traditional routine.*
- C. *All things considered, having a pet makes your child more responsible and caring.*
- D. *Another solution would be persuading people around us to quit this habit.*

1 =; 2 =; 3 =; 4 =

Topic 1 =

Topic 2 =

Topic 3 =

Topic 4 =

Exercise 7

Provide synonyms to the words / phrases below.

1. firstly =
2. in addition =
3. to sum up =
4. I believe =
5. people argue =
6. however =
7. for example =

Exercise 8

Provide antonyms to the words and phrases below:

1. to agree
2. to believe
3. on the one hand
4. similarly
5. to begin with
6. firstly
7. justified

1=.....; 2=.....; 3=.....; 4=.....; 5=.....; 6=.....; 7=.....

writing 

Exercise 9

Write an opinion essay on the following topic: *Television increases violence.*

Use the appropriate linking words and structure your essay in the following way:

Introduction: 1 paragraph – subject + opinion

Main body: 3 paragraphs (one paragraph – first viewpoint, one paragraph – second viewpoint, one paragraph – contrasting viewpoint)

Conclusion: 1 paragraph – restate opinion

Use 140 - 190 words.

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