

## 69. 'discussion' introduction (Wednesday, August 01, 2012)

Successful sports professionals can *earn a great deal more money than people in other important professions*. Some people think this is *fully justified while others think it is unfair*. **Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.**

It is true that the top sports people earn incredibly high salaries. Although reasons can be given to justify this, I personally believe that sports stars should be paid much less.

There are several reasons why some people support high incomes in sport. Firstly, people who reach the highest levels in any sport must be uniquely talented. For example, it is rare to find someone with the football skills of Messi or Ronaldo, and it can be argued that these players deserve salaries that reflect their abilities. Secondly, even the most talented sports professionals must undergo many years of training to develop the skills and fitness required, and this takes great commitment, dedication and passion. Finally, sports salaries are only high because audiences and fans are willing to pay to watch their favourite stars.

Conclusion (loosely paraphrasing the introduction)

In conclusion, I do not accept the argument that sports professionals deserve to be paid so much more than people who do other important jobs.

## 70. advantages and disadvantages (Wednesday, August 08, 2012)

Here are some tips to help with this kind of question:

1. Notice that the question includes the words "**do you think**". This tells you that you need to give your own opinion, as well as discussing both the advantages and disadvantages. **Put your opinion in the introduction and conclusion, and don't be afraid to use the word "I"** (e.g. I believe) to make it clear what **you** think.
2. You won't be able to write a good essay if you don't plan your ideas first. Spend 2-3 minutes noting down ideas for the advantages of leaving home before marriage, then 2-3 minutes writing notes for the disadvantages. Then decide what your opinion is, according to whether you have more advantages or disadvantages.
3. **If you can't think of any ideas, start by thinking of some examples** e.g. Did you or any of your friends leave home before getting married? Do you know anyone who lived with their parents until they got married? What were the reasons and benefits or drawbacks of each decision?

### 71.1 how to use your 40 minutes (Wednesday, August 22, 2012)

**First 10 minutes** Read the question and make sure you understand what it is asking you to do. Write a plan for a 4-paragraph essay (introduction, 2 main paragraphs, conclusion) and spend most of the 10 minutes thinking of ideas for the 2 main paragraphs.

**5 minutes** Write your introduction: 2 sentences are enough.

**20 minutes** Spend 10 minutes on each of your main body paragraphs. These are the most important part of your essay, and the key to a high score.

**Last 5 minutes** Write a quick conclusion then check your work.

### 71.2 the 10-minute plan

whether the only purpose of prisons is to punish people. ebook-topic4 in page14

**Paragraph 2: prisons do punish offenders**

Punishment makes offenders think, reflect, feel sorry, understand the consequences (that we have choices about the actions we take), suffering, revenge / justice for victims, debt to society, taking away freedom and privileges, miss family, deter people from committing crimes in future - fear of prison

**Paragraph 3: other purposes of prisons**

Reflection time, rehabilitation - help the prisoner to prepare for normal life: new skills, education, courses, qualifications, treatment - reform, reeducate, find employment, re-enter society - address the root causes of crime

### 71.3 answer all parts of the question

The role of prisons should be to punish criminals who have committed serious crimes.

Training courses and education offered to prisoners are a waste of taxpayer's money. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

I noticed that it contains two sub-topics:

1. Should the role of prisons be to punish serious criminals, not petty criminals (less serious criminals)?
2. Are training courses and education a waste of money?

use the same technique (2 sentences: topic + basic answer) to write a 'discussion and opinion' introduction.

Here's my 2-sentence introduction:

It is true that sports stars often earn huge salaries. While there are some good reasons why this is the case, I personally believe that it is wrong for these people to be paid more than other professionals.

**Note:** Notice that I wrote "loosely paraphrasing" (I paraphrased the overall idea, rather than word for word).

*In many countries nowadays, young single people no longer stay with their parents until they are married, but leave to study or work somewhere else.*

Do you think this trend has more advantages or disadvantages?

You have 40 minutes for task 2, so try organising your time in the following way. Please note that these are suggestions, not rules.

If you are struggling to improve your score for writing task 2, the solution might be to spend more time planning before you start writing.

With a plan like this, you should find it easier to write a great essay.

Apparently there is a model essay for this question which only addresses the second sub-topic. I think that would be a mistake; you should try to answer all parts of the question.

In this case, the two sub-topics help you because they tell you what you should write about in your two main body paragraphs. Always study the question carefully, and make sure you know exactly what it is asking you to do!

## 71.4 no surprises!

The examiners' band descriptor sheet states that a band 7 essay "**presents a clear position throughout the response**".

For this reason, it's a bad idea to save your opinion for the conclusion. **We don't like 'surprise conclusions' in English academic writing.** Instead, you should state your position in the introduction, support it in your main paragraphs, and **repeat or summarise it in the conclusion.**

## 71.5 introduction and conclusion

Look at the following introduction and conclusion for an essay about whether it is better for students to work alone or in a group:

**Introduction** People have different views about the most effective way for students to work. While there are some advantages to studying alone, I personally believe that group work is usually more productive.

**Conclusion** In conclusion, both individual and group study can be useful under different circumstances, but I generally prefer to work with others as part of a team.

A "clear position" means that **your opinion must be clear (if the question asks for it)**, and "throughout the response" means from the beginning to the end of your essay.

Notice that my 'position' is clear in the introduction, so the conclusion simply repeats my view in a different way.

## 72.1 'music' topic (Wednesday, September 26, 2012)

***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?***

It is true that **a rich variety** of musical styles can be found around the world. Music is **a vital part** of all human cultures for **a range of reasons**, and I would argue that traditional music is more important than modern, international music.

Music is something that accompanies all of us throughout our lives. As children, we are taught songs by our parents and teachers as a means of learning language, or simply as a form of enjoyment. Children delight in singing with others, and it would appear that the act of singing in a group creates a **connection** between participants, regardless of their age. Later in life, people's **musical preferences** develop, and we come to see our favourite songs as part of our **life stories**. Music both **expresses and arouses emotions** in a way that words alone cannot. In short, it is difficult to imagine life without it.

In my opinion, traditional music should be valued over the international music that has become so popular. International pop music is often catchy and fun, but it is essentially **a commercial product** that is marketed and sold by business people. Traditional music, by contrast, expresses the culture, customs and history of a country. Traditional styles, such as ...(example)..., connect us to the past and form part of our **cultural identity**. It would be a real pity if pop music became so predominant that these national styles disappeared.

In conclusion, music is **a necessary part** of **human existence**, and I believe that traditional music should be **given more importance** than international music. (261 words, band 9)

Here's a quick plan to show you how I would approach this question:

1. **Introduction:** Paraphrase the idea that many types of music are found around the world, then briefly answer both parts of the question.

2. **Paragraph** answering the first question: Explain why we need music e.g. for enjoyment, to express ideas and emotions. Give an example from your experience, and/or explain what life would be like without music.

3. **Paragraph** answering the second question: It might be easier to argue that traditional music is more important e.g. because it expresses cultural identity, customs, history. Give an example from your country, and/or explain how you would feel if traditional music disappeared.

4. **Conclusion:** Repeat / summarise your views.

## 72.2 use what you learn

When you learn a new word, collocation or phrase, it's a good idea to try using it in different contexts.

As an example, I'll choose the topic of **education**, and I'll write a couple of sentences around some of the collocations (underlined) :

*In primary schools, more importance should be given to creativity and problem solving, and these skills should be valued over memorisation and rote learning. Creativity can be fostered by exposing children to a rich variety of media, and by encouraging them to express their emotions.*

### 73.1 'housing' topic (Wednesday, October 31, 2012)

**More houses are needed in many countries to cope with increasing populations. Would it be better to build houses in existing towns and cities, or to develop new towns in rural areas?**

Here's one way that we could structure the essay:

1. Introduction: give your opinion e.g. it's better to develop new towns
2. Paragraph: explain why we shouldn't build more houses in cities
3. Paragraph: explain the benefits of building new towns
4. Conclusion: repeat / summarise your opinion

### 73.2 introduction technique

**Here's my 2-sentence introduction:** It is true that the populations of many countries are growing, and that new housing is therefore needed. In my opinion, it would be better to increase the provision of housing by creating new towns, rather than by further developing existing towns and cities.

### 74. parents or schools? (Wednesday, November 21, 2012)

**Here's a paragraph I wrote about this topic:**

Parents play a huge \_\_\_\_\_ in their children's lives, and shoulder more of the \_\_\_\_\_ for their upbringing than school teachers do. Before starting school, infants spend the first four or five years of their lives with their mothers and fathers. During those \_\_\_\_\_ years, parents teach their children vital skills and habits, such as the ability to speak, eat and behave. Parents are the major role \_\_\_\_\_ for young people, who copy the behaviour that they see on a daily \_\_\_\_\_ at home, and it would be wrong to expect schools to \_\_\_\_\_ a greater influence than the family.

### 75. video games (Wednesday, November 28, 2012)

*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?* ebook topic19 in page42

Many people, and children in particular, enjoy playing computer games. While I accept that these games can sometimes have a positive effect on the user, I believe that they are more likely to have a harmful impact.

On the one hand, video games can be both entertaining and educational. Users, or gamers, are transported into virtual worlds which are often more exciting and engaging than real-life pastimes. From an educational perspective, these games encourage imagination and creativity, as well as concentration, logical thinking and problem solving, all of which are useful skills outside the gaming context. Furthermore, it has been shown that computer simulation games can improve users' motor skills and help to prepare them for real-world tasks, such as flying a plane.

However, I would argue that these benefits are outweighed by the drawbacks. Gaming can be highly addictive because users are constantly given scores, new targets and frequent rewards to keep them playing. Many children now spend hours each day trying to progress through the levels of a game or to get a higher score than their friends. This type of addiction can have effects ranging from lack of sleep to problems at school, when homework is sacrificed for a few more hours on the computer or console. The rise in obesity in recent years has also been linked in part to the sedentary lifestyle and lack of exercise that often accompany gaming addiction.

In conclusion, it seems to me that the potential dangers of video games are more significant than the possible benefits. (258 words, band 9)

The first thing that I would do is think about my 4-paragraph structure.

This means that we need 2 main body paragraphs (2 main ideas). Don't worry about putting your real opinion; just try to think of the easiest opinion for a 4-paragraph essay.

As I've said before, task 2 introductions should be short and direct. You only need to write two sentences in order to do two things:

1. Introduce the topic.
2. Respond to the question, making your position clear.

who should be responsible for making children into good citizens: parents or schools?

1. role (part)
2. responsibility (burden) - singular is better than plural
3. formative (early, preschool, important, crucial etc.)
4. models
5. basis
6. exert (have)

Personally, I'd answer this question in the same way as I'd answer a 'discuss both views and give your opinion' question.

I'd write 4 paragraphs:

1. Introduce the topic, both sides of the argument, and my view.

2. Explain the benefits of video games.

3. Explain the drawbacks.

4. Summarise / repeat my overall opinion.

## 76. 'petrol price' introduction (Wednesday, December 19, 2012)

(From Cambridge IELTS book 8) ***Increasing the price of petrol is the best way to solve growing traffic and pollution problems. To what extent do you agree or disagree? What other measures do you think might be effective?***

*Traffic and pollution are growing problems in today's society. Personally, I disagree with the idea that higher petrol prices could solve these problems, and I believe that various other measures would be more constructive.*

## 77. 'ageing population' topic & problem/solution essay

***In the developed world, average life expectancy is increasing. What problems will this cause for individuals and society? Suggest some measures that could be taken to reduce the impact of ageing populations.***

### Some advice:

- Write 4 paragraphs: introduction, problems, solutions, conclusion.
- You don't need to separate ideas about individuals and ideas about society. Just mention something about both in your paragraphs.

It is true that people in industrialised nations can expect to live longer than ever before. Although there will undoubtedly be some negative consequences of this trend, societies can take steps to mitigate these potential problems.

As people live longer and the populations of developed countries grow older, several related problems can be anticipated. The main issue is that there will obviously be more people of retirement age who will be eligible to receive a pension. The proportion of younger, working adults will be smaller, and governments will therefore receive less money in taxes in relation to the size of the population. In other words, an ageing population will mean a greater tax burden for working adults. Further pressures will include a rise in the demand for healthcare, and the fact young adults will increasingly have to look after their elderly relatives.

There are several actions that governments could take to solve the problems described above. Firstly, a simple solution would be to increase the retirement age for working adults, perhaps from 65 to 70. Nowadays, people of this age tend to be healthy enough to continue a productive working life. A second measure would be for governments to encourage immigration in order to increase the number of working adults who pay taxes. Finally, money from national budgets will need to be taken from other areas and spent on vital healthcare, accommodation and transport facilities for the rising numbers of older citizens.

In conclusion, various measures can be taken to tackle the problems that are certain to arise as the populations of countries grow older. (265 words, band 9)

## 78.1 'money' topic

***After leaving school or university, young people should choose a job or career that they love, rather than one that pays the best salary. To what extent do you agree with this statement?***

Don't attempt this question without spending some time planning first:

1. Decide on your overall point of view: agree or disagree (or maybe 'partly agree').
2. Plan your 4-paragraph essay structure: what will each paragraph be about?
3. Note some ideas for each main paragraph: think about how you will explain your ideas in detail, and what real-life examples you could use.

My students wrote the introduction below. Notice that it addresses all parts of the question so that the examiner knows exactly what our position is.

PS. Don't waste time writing a longer introduction than this. The main body paragraphs are much more important!

### Some ideas:

Problems: - an increase in the number of retired people who will receive a pension  
- a smaller proportion of young adults = smaller working populations  
- a greater tax burden on working adults  
- demand for healthcare will rise  
- young adults will have to look after elderly relatives

Solutions: - people may have to retire later; the state pension age will rise  
- medical advances and health programmes might allow elderly people to stay healthy and work for longer  
- people should be encouraged to have more children  
- governments could encourage immigration (in order to increase the number of younger adults)

## 78.2 agree or disagree? (Wednesday, March 06, 2013)

When the question asks whether you agree or disagree, you can either express a strong opinion (completely agree or disagree) or you can express a balanced opinion (partly agree, or agree to a certain extent).

### 1) Introduction for a strong opinion

Some people make their career choices according to what they enjoy doing, whereas others place more importance on earning a high salary. Personally, I support the view that job satisfaction and a sense of fulfillment are much more important than money.

### 2) Introduction for a balanced opinion

Some people make their career choices according to what they enjoy doing, whereas others place more importance on earning a high salary. Personally, I believe that both criteria should be given equal consideration.

## 78.3 opinion, not discussion (Wednesday, March 13, 2013)

If the question asks whether you agree or disagree, it is asking for your opinion. You should express your opinion in the introduction, and support it in the rest of the essay.

**Don't structure an "opinion" essay like this:**

1. Introduction
2. Paragraph supporting the opposite opinion
3. Paragraph supporting my opinion
4. Conclusion

The problem with this essay structure is that paragraph 2 is not consistent with my opinion. This is a "discussion" essay structure!

## 79. firstly, secondly, finally

*Some people prefer to spend their lives doing the same things and avoiding change. Others, however, think that change is always a good thing. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.*

I think this is a good way to organise a paragraph. However, it's best not to use the same structure twice in one essay. Compare the two paragraphs below. How did I structure the second one to avoid repeating "Firstly, Secondly, Finally"?

First main paragraph: There are good reasons why some people **feel the need to make significant changes to their lives from time to time**. Firstly, any new situation that a person encounters can be an opportunity to learn and grow as a person. A new job, for instance, might present challenges that push the person to adapt, acquire new knowledge, or add to their skill set. Secondly, a change can represent a break with the past and an old routine which has become boring and predictable. Finally, as well as making life more fun and interesting, new experiences can be good for our physical and mental health.

Second main paragraph: On the other hand, it is understandable why people might avoid change. Whenever people are forced to change their lifestyles, jobs or even to move house, they are likely to experience stress and worry as they try to adapt to the new situation. By contrast, we feel comfortable and confident when we stay with what we know. The decision to persist with a course of action or stick to one chosen path often leads to greater success in life. For example, by staying in the same job for many years, a person can become an expert in his or her field, which will lead to better opportunities for promotions and career progression.

Think of it this way: your task when you answer an "agree or disagree" question is to persuade the reader that your view is right. Each paragraph should defend your opinion.

**Note:** You can write about both sides of the argument if you say that you "partly agree". Go to [this lesson](#) to see some suggestions for essay structures. see page23

**Task:** Analyse this paragraph carefully. What can you learn from it in terms of structure, ideas, vocabulary and grammar?

1. Topic sentence
2. Firstly
3. Example
4. Secondly
5. Finally

A few people have asked me whether using "firstly, secondly, finally" to organise a paragraph is too **easy**.

Some simple alternatives to "firstly, secondly, finally" could be:

1. The main reason why I believe... is... / Another argument is... / Also,...
2. One problem is that... / Furthermore,... / Another drawback is that...
3. From a business perspective,... / In terms of education,... / From a social point of view,...

## 80.1 succinct introductions (Wednesday, April 10, 2013)

**Marriages are bigger and more expensive nowadays than in the past. Why is this the case? Is it a positive or negative development?**

First, we can introduce the topic by paraphrasing the question statement:

*It is true that weddings have become more costly and extravagant in recent years.*

Second, I need a short, simple answer to both parts of the question:

*There are several reasons for this, and in my view it is a negative trend.*

If I put the two sentences together, I have a really succinct\* introduction:

*It is true that weddings have become more costly and extravagant in recent years. There are several reasons for this, and in my view it is a negative trend.*

## 80.2 'marriages' topic (Wednesday, April 17, 2013)

Marriages have become bigger and more expensive for three main reasons. Firstly, people in developed countries are wealthier than their ancestors were in the past. They therefore have more money to spend on weddings, which are seen as one of life's most important and unforgettable occasions. Secondly, in today's globalized world, people see photos of celebrity weddings and want to copy them. For example, when Prince William got married here in England, the ceremony was shown on television and many people were influenced by what they saw. Finally, the wedding industry has grown, and many companies have an interest in selling products and services to us, using persuasive marketing techniques.

## 81. when to give your opinion (Wednesday, May 08, 2013)

Do the following questions ask for your opinion or not?

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree?
2. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages.
3. Discuss both views and give your opinion.
4. Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?
5. Is this a positive or negative development?
6. What are the benefits and drawbacks?

## 82.1 'language learning' topic

**Some experts believe that it is better for children to begin learning a foreign language at primary school rather than secondary school. Do the advantages of this outweigh the disadvantages?** (Cambridge9)

Here's our plan for a 4-paragraph essay:

1. Introduction: Topic = best age to learn a foreign language. Our opinion = better to learn at primary school age.
2. Disadvantages of learning languages at primary age: other subjects are more important at that age (maths, mother tongue language, science), learning a new language is confusing and wastes time, could delay development of child's first language.
3. Advantages of learning languages at primary age: young children learn faster, they are less self-conscious or shy, they pick up the pronunciation better, they enjoy copying and learning through games, nowadays languages are just as important as maths etc.
4. Conclusion: repeat / summarise our answer.

## 82.2 find the good vocabulary

It is true that there are some disadvantages to learning a foreign language at primary school age. The main problem is that young children need to study other subjects which can be considered as more important than a second language. The core subjects in most primary schools are the mother tongue language, mathematics and science, and it can be argued that lessons in a new language take valuable study time away from these key disciplines, as well as causing confusion in the young learners. In particular, some people might worry that lessons in the new language could delay the development of a child's first language.

\*(succinct: clear, precise expression in few words)

After writing the introduction, we need to write a paragraph about the first question (why is this the case?). Here's something I wrote with my students:

**Task:** Analyse the paragraph: Does it answer the question, how is it structured, and what "less common" vocabulary is used?

**Answers:**

- Numbers 2 and 6 are discussion questions. Discuss both sides of the issue, but don't give an opinion about which side you agree with.

- Numbers 1 and 5 are opinion questions. Give your opinion and support it. If you have a strong opinion, you don't need to mention the other side of the argument.

- Numbers 3 and 4 can be called discussion + opinion questions.

Discuss both sides and make your opinion clear too.

**Which words or phrases in the following paragraph might be considered 'band 7 or higher'?**



### 83. Argument & discussion

Many people ask me about the difference between an 'argument' (opinion) essay and a 'discussion' essay. Here's an easy way to think about the difference. The question should make it very clear what it wants you to do.

If it asks you to "discuss", you should **write about both sides or two views**.

If the question **asks whether you "agree or disagree"**, it's asking for **your view**.

For this type of question, **give your opinion in the introduction and support it in the rest of the essay**. Develop an argument that persuades the reader to agree with you.

### 84. Children's upbringing

On the one hand, I agree that some **children from less wealthy backgrounds** might **be in a better position to face adult life**. Children whose parents have less money learn to fight, struggle and solve problems on a daily **basis**. They are forced to rely on **themselves** because they have less financial help from parents and cannot get what they want as soon as they want it. For example, **poorer children may have to wait until a birthday to receive a toy or game that they have asked for, and this encourages them to learn patience**. These children will also **learn the importance of managing money and the value of hard work, which will be vital skills in later life**.

### 85. 'disagree' essay plan

Introduction Topic - who decide what is taught in schools?

Answer - I disagree. Authorities should continue to make these decisions.

Paragraph 2 - decisions about subjects

**Authorities (government) decide what subjects and skills are needed in society/economy.**

Main subjects, optional subjects, exams etc.

**Teachers's job is to deliver good teaching**

Paragraph 3 - standardisation

**Authorities's role to ensure quality of schooling throughout the country; measure, compare schools** If teachers decided -  
**too much variation in standards and qualifications.**

### 86. 'artists' essay

People have different views about **the funding of creative artists**. While some people disagree with the idea of **government support for artists**, I believe that **money for art projects should come from both governments and other sources**.

Some **art projects** definitely require help from **the state**. In **the UK**, there are many **works of art** in public spaces, such as streets or squares in **city centres**. In **Liverpool**, for example, there are several new **statues and sculptures** in the docks area of the city, **which** has been redeveloped recently. **These artworks** represent culture, heritage and history. **They** serve to educate people about the city, and act as landmarks or talking points for visitors and tourists. Governments and local councils should pay creative artists to produce **this kind of art**, because without **their** funding our cities would be much less interesting and attractive.

On the other hand, I can understand the view **taken by many people that artists should not expect the state to fund their work**. **Most** musicians and **the majority of** painters **make a living by performing or selling their artistic creations to fans or collectors**; they would not expect to **receive any help from their governments**. **Industry sponsorships can be another useful source of revenue for creative artists**. For example, media companies like **the mobile giant Apple** are often willing to **pay huge fees to inspirational designers who work on their advertising campaigns, product packaging, and even the appearance of their electronic devices**. Finally, some artists may be lucky enough to **receive donations** from wealthy individuals.

In conclusion, there are good reasons why artists should **rely on alternative sources of financial support**, but in my opinion government help is **sometimes necessary**.

When you argue, you are trying to persuade the other person to agree with your point of view. You might even get angry!

When you discuss, you consider different points of view, and nobody gets angry.

Note: you can **have a strong view or a balanced view** - it's your choice.

Children **who are brought up in families** that do not **have large amounts of money** are better prepared to deal with **the problems of adult life** than children brought up by **wealthy parents**. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

**The subjects** that children are taught in schools **are decided by central authorities**. Some people say that **teachers, not politicians, should be responsible for this task**. To what extent you agree or disagree with this opinion?

**Note:** I don't think you need to plan your conclusion.

Some people think that **governments should give financial support to creative artists** such as painters and musicians. Others believe that **creative artists should be funded by alternative sources**. **Discuss** both views and give your own opinion.

(Linking isn't just about using words like 'firstly', 'furthermore' and 'moreover'. There are more sophisticated ways to hold a paragraph together.)

1. Use **these, this** to refer to the idea in the previous sentence.
2. Use pronouns like **which, they** to refer to nouns you have already used. (e.g. they = artworks)
3. Repeat a key word (**art**) throughout the paragraph.
4. Repeat a key idea (**art projects**) in different ways. Develop an idea from 'general' to 'specific', (**the state, the UK**) showing variety of vocabulary which is developed in greater detail

## 87. main paragraph methods

**A sense of competition is necessary for success in life, and should therefore be encouraged.** || Competition **motivates** children to **get good grades at school** or **become better at sports**, while **adults compete to climb the career ladder**. || In a job interview, for example, candidates compete to show that they are **the most qualified, hard-working and competent person for the post**.

Some art projects **definitely** require help from the state. || In the UK, there are many **works of art in public spaces**, such as **streets or squares in city centres**. In Liverpool, for example, there are **several new statues and sculptures in the docks area of the city, which has been redeveloped recently**. These **artworks represent culture, heritage and history**. They **serve to educate people about the city, and act as landmarks or talking points for visitors and tourists**. || **Governments and local councils** should pay creative artists to produce this kind of art, because without their funding our cities would be much less interesting and attractive.

## 88. 'technology' essay

**(Cambridge 8 Test2)** *Nowadays the way many people interact with each other has changed because of technology.*

***In what ways has technology affected the types of relationships that people make? Has this been a positive or negative development?***

It is true that new technologies have **had an influence on communication between people**. Technology has **affected relationships in various ways**, and in my opinion there are both positive and negative effects.

Technology has had an **impact on relationships in business, education and social life**. **Firstly**, telephones and the Internet **allow business people in different countries to interact without ever meeting each other**. **Secondly**, **services like Skype** create new possibilities for relationships between students and teachers. For example, a student can now take video lessons with a teacher in a different city or country. **Finally**, many people use social networks, like Facebook, to make new friends and find people who share common interests, and they interact through their computers rather than face to face.

**On the one hand**, these developments can be extremely positive. Cooperation between people in different countries was much more difficult when communication was limited to written letters or telegrams. Nowadays, interactions by email, phone or video are almost as good as face-to-face meetings, and many of us benefit from these interactions, either in work or social contexts. **On the other hand**, the availability of new communication technologies can also have the result of isolating people and discouraging real interaction. For example, many young people choose to make friends online rather than mixing with their peers in the real world, and these 'virtual' relationships are a poor substitute for real friendships.

In conclusion, technology has certainly revolutionised communication between people, but not all of the outcomes of this revolution have been positive. (257 words, band 9)

I always tell my students to choose a method and stick to it. For main paragraphs, I teach them two easy ways to organise their ideas:

**1. Idea, explain, example:** If you have one main idea, this easy format will help you to build a good paragraph. A good way to write main body paragraphs is this: **Start with the main idea of the paragraph, explain it in more detail, then give an example.**

A variation on this format is "**idea, example, explain**".

**2. Firstly, secondly, finally:** If you have two or three ideas, just use this format. Miss the "finally" if you only have two ideas, and remember that you can use alternative words for the same structure (e.g. The main reason, another reason, also, furthermore).