

IELTS

Name :

Batch:

Regular Writing Lecture-4

Overview of Task 2

IELTS Writing Task 2 requires the candidates to write a composition on a specific topic. These topics are usually based on social, environmental or economic issues and concerns. These are of general nature and designed as such that the examinees need no specialized knowledge on them. The examinees are expected to produce an academic style composition, usually targeted towards educated non-specialists. In order to suit the task in the question, a certain style stated below should be followed. The questions in the IELTS test will essentially follow the types below-

- Argument
- Cause and Effect
- Comparison and Contrast
- Advantages and Disadvantages

In IELTS Writing Task 2, candidates are judged on their ability to-

- Present solution(s) to a problem
- Present and justify an opinion
- Compare and contrast evidence, opinions and implications
- Evaluate and challenge ideas, evidence or an argument.

In Task 2 of the Writing exam, candidates are judged on-

Criteria	How responses are assessed
Task Response	→ the overall development of candidate's viewpoint- clear, relevant and appropriate, supported by examples
Coherence and Cohesion	→ the overall clarity and fluency of the message → how well the candidate has organized and linked information and ideas → logical sequencing and appropriate use of linking devices between and within sentences
Lexical Resource	→ range of vocabulary candidate has used → how accurate and appropriate the vocabulary is in relation to the specific task
Grammatical range and Accuracy	the range and accurate use of grammar as seen in the candidate's writing at the sentence level

Typically, the instruction will read the following-

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:

"The instances of part time jobs have rapidly increased in recent times. Some say that it provides students with valuable experience while others say that it derails the students from studies. "

To what extent do you agree to this statement?

You should write at least 250 words.

You should use your own ideas, knowledge and experience and support your argument with examples and relevant evidence.

Let us break down the components of the question stem-

- **Time Constraint**

Spend somewhere around 40 minutes to write the essay. Break this time down even further like-

Brainstorming- 10 minutes

Writing the essay- 25 minutes

Revising- 5 minutes

- **Target Audience**

The target audience of the intended piece is an educated, non-specialist (of the subject matter) person. So, make sure that your writing is free of technical jargons. Remember, you may be a specialist, but your audience is not. Make your writing easily comprehensible to them.

- **The Topic.**

See above.

- **Word Limit**

You have to write at least 250 words on the topic meaning that writing fewer words will be penalized. There is no maximum word limit for this task, but remember, the more you write, the more prone you are to make mistakes. Being practical, try to write approximately 280 words or thereabouts.

- **Requirements**

The topic requires that you argue either in favour of or against the proposition that part time jobs are good or bad. You should provide relevant, preferably your own experiences as examples in favour of your chosen stance. Do not get confused with this thing. They require your own experiences, and you can always frame up a relevant experience as being yours.

Understanding the Essay and its Components

Let us first take an insight into the structure of Writing Task 2. The suggested format of the task will include an Introduction, a Body consisting of three paragraphs, and a Conclusion. But first, we will take a look at the topic and the concept of thesis.

The Topic

The composition for Writing Task 2, like any other composition, includes a topic that contains everything required to elaborate and explain. Normally the topic is provided in the following format-

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:

"The instances of part time jobs have rapidly increased in recent times. Some say that it provides students with valuable experience while others say that it derails the students from studies."

To what extent do you agree to this statement?

You should write at least 250 words.

You should use your own ideas, knowledge and experience and support your argument with examples and relevant evidence.

If you have a close look at the topic, you would see that it contains everything that needs to be explained. It includes the suggested time limit, the target reader of the composition, the topic itself, word limit and other requirements of the task. But the most important part of it is the bold italicized part, the topic itself. Everything else is secondary, and the topic is of primary importance.

The Thesis

Actually, the reaction of the examinees to the topic is the thesis. Take the topic provided above as an exemplary one. The topic states that part time jobs have increased in recent times. It states that although there are good sides to part time jobs, there are also its problems. The immediate following sentence asks if the examinee agrees or disagrees to this proposition. When the examinee decides in favour of going either for or against the proposition, it turns into a thesis.

On the basis of this identified thesis, the examinee has to design his or her composition. After the thesis is formed, the student should start finding out what he or she would write to support the chosen stance. Now, let us take a look at the formal structure of the composition.

Introduction

The introduction of any essay, or composition, as we say is the brief overview of what the topic states. It can include the definition of the subject, or what the topic actually means. Remember, the introduction is followed by your main writing. Hence, it is quite necessary to provide a clear picture of what you are going to write in the upcoming phases. A good introduction can take you a long way in achieving good marks in the writing task because if it is catchy, it will create a favorable first impression of you from the examiners' side. You can always provide relevant examples, or anecdotes (a short and relevant story). But if you are not good at providing any such thing, go for what the topic defines and mention what you are going to write next. This leads us to the concept of the **Thesis Statement**.

A **Thesis Statement** is probably the most important part of an Introductory Paragraph. As we mentioned earlier, your introduction should give a clear picture of what you are going to write next. **The Thesis Statement incorporates all the ideas, or points that are going to form the body of your composition in one sentence. Thesis Statement is a proposition of a subject to be described, a scenario to be narrated and an opinion to be supported.** It necessarily evolves from a point of description/narration/argument embedded within the topic statement in the question paper. The concept of thesis statements will be elaborated later.

Body

Once the introduction is formed well, the rest of the writing becomes a lot easier. The part that follows the introduction is the body of the composition. The body should consist of some **three paragraphs**, all having separate themes. **Every sentence in a particular paragraph must be directly related to its individual theme.** Hence, during the period of brainstorming, **students should find out at least three points/themes**, basing on which the body will be formed. As we explained earlier, the thesis statement must comprise of all the points that form the body. All these things must be kept in mind while designing the body of the composition. Each of the body paragraphs consists of several sentences that are arranged in a logical way to strengthen and develop a main idea. **Try to develop each paragraph adequately. This may be done through the use of examples, explanations, details, logical references, and making comparisons or contrast.**

The body is the most important of all the parts of the essay. The actual findings and thoughts generated by you are elaborated in the body of the composition. So, in order to design a good body part, every single preceding process- starting from brainstorming to writing the introduction and forming the thesis statement should be done with intense care and thought. Being able to do so will certainly add much value to the quality of your composition.

- **Structuring the Body**

The whole body, in our opinion, should consist of three-four paragraphs, with all individual paragraphs having separate and individual themes. Consider the example provided in the introduction. The topic was, ***"The instances of part time jobs have rapidly increased in recent times. Some say that it provides students with valuable experience while others say that it derails the students from studies. To what extent do you agree to this statement?"*** Now, let us consider an examinee who agrees to this proposition, which means that he is in favour of part time jobs. So, his focus should be on proving that part time jobs are good and hence, they are beneficial to the person as a whole. In order to strengthen his arguments, he may think of the following three points- **Part time jobs allow the person to obtain valuable work experiences, which are excellent for a resume, they may provide networking possibilities and set a child on a rewarding lifetime career path and that they provide constructive use of free time.** So, this person has to prepare three separate paragraphs basing on the stated three findings. Each paragraph should elaborate one sub-topic (finding), which would be strengthened further by relevant logics. Same would be the case for examinees writing against the proposition.

Never undermine the importance of putting examples to strengthen your logics and arguments. A relevant example is a lot better in clarifying your point of view rather than several pages of theoretical explanation. Nothing else can satisfy the clarification purpose better than examples. So, whenever you write a body paragraph, try to put at least one relevant example to back up your logic. For example, while favouring the point of part times jobs being good, you can provide one example, either real-life or hypothetical, of a part time job that you did and how it helped you in your own life.

Some may argue regarding the number of body paragraphs. In many cases, students are unable to write three body paragraphs because of fewer findings, and in some cases, three paragraphs are seemed less in number. Our logic for three paragraphs is, in order to comply with the time constraint and word limits of the composition, three well written body paragraphs should go a lot further than poorly written thirty. Moreover, three body paragraphs can be deemed as quite standard in terms of IELTS. Then again, students vary in terms of understanding and thought generation; so, do not consider the three paragraph thing as any concrete guideline, rather, it is just an instruction.

Conclusion

After the body, comes the conclusion- the main purpose of which is to sum up the whole piece of writing. Make sure that you include no new points in the conclusion, because, as we mentioned in the previous sentence, when you are writing a conclusion, you are just summing up whatever was written earlier. Now, if you think that summing up the previous points is merely copying them and pasting in the conclusion, you are horribly mistaken. You would sum up the earlier writing for sure, but this has to be done with good care. Do not use the exact sentences that you used before, rather rephrase them in an appropriate manner so that the structure and formation of the sentences appear different.

Often, we make mistakes while designing the conclusion. One of those happens because of our failure to maintain close collaboration with the earlier writing. This is largely due to mistakenly introducing newer points that were not explained in the earlier phases, i.e. - body of the composition. So, **inculcation of new points or ideas is strictly prohibited in the conclusion.** Moreover, always make sure to include your justified viewpoints, if there is any, in the conclusion. For example, if you are against part time jobs and believe they do us more harm than good, make sure to include this stance in the last paragraph. Otherwise, the writing will not be deemed as complete.

A good conclusion serves several purposes. It indicates-

- The end of your essay.
- Summarizes your final thoughts and assessments on the essay topic.
- Weighs up the points in the essay and strengthens the thesis statement.

Isolating the Point of Argument/Description

The examinees, first and foremost, should identify the point of argument/description/narration, with respect to the nature of the topic. We interchangeably refer to the point of argument/description/narration as the focal point. With focal point, we mean the central or main idea of the topic. Remember, the whole composition has to be driven along the focal point, and if you fail to isolate or identify the focal points, the whole writing would possibly go off-track. Often, the examinees fail to identify and focus on this thing and consequently, write a piece that revolves nowhere near around the required point. Take a look at the following examples-

Example:

- **Descriptive Composition:**

'Stress in modern life is increasing. What do you think are the main causes of this? What possible solutions can you suggest?'

If an examinee writes a piece on the stated topic that focuses on proving that stress in modern life is increasing, he/she will surely get a below average score, because the topic has already stated that stress

is increasing in modern life. There is no further need to revolve around this point. Rather, the person should emphasize on writing about the main causes of stress and solutions to it, and this way, he/she would surely achieve a good score, because these are the focal points of the topic.

Let us clarify it even further. There are two parts of this topic. It consists of a general statement, and two focal points. The first part, 'Stress in modern life is increasing' is the general/factual statement. This part requires no further explanation from the examinee because the topic clearly states that it is a fact. The following are the two main parts- the causes of stress and solutions to it- are essentially the main focal points. Hence, the examinees must design their writing on the basis of the focal points and emphasize less on the factual statement. Failure in doing so will certainly have disastrous effects.

- **Argumentative Composition:**

'The traffic situation in Dhaka has been constantly deteriorating. For the betterment of the situation, rickshaws should be banned from Dhaka City. To what extent do you agree to this statement?'

If you have understood the previous example, you can surely isolate the focal point of the stated topic. First, try to identify the focal point by yourself, and then read the following part.

'The traffic situation in Dhaka has been constantly deteriorating', is the factual statement of the given topic. So, consider it as the secondary and less important point. The part which is left is the focal point. So, here you have to focus more on arguing whether rickshaw should be banned from Dhaka city or not. It is the point of argument and your writing should be driven on this track.

What happens if isolation of focal points is faulty? The writing loses its track and mistakenly, due to identifying wrong focal points, students focus more on factual parts and ignore the most important points. So, correct identification of focal points is of utmost importance. Take the stated topic as an example. As a prospective solution, the factual statement of the topic requires that rickshaws should be banned from Dhaka City. Now, your task is to think and explain whether banning rickshaws should help towards the betterment of the traffic situation. You would either go for or against the proposition of banning rickshaws. How well you justify your stance will be the determinant of your score.

Thought Development

What do we do when we confront a question that has no universal answer, or cannot be memorized? We think for some time, collect the bits and pieces generated from that thought, put those together, restructure those ideas and finally start answering the question. This is the exact process that should be used for writing a composition for IELTS Writing Task 2.

Normally, the thought development process comprises of two separate streams of tasks. They are Brainstorming and Outlining.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is actually the process of generating ideas that are relevant to the task requirements. As we said earlier, whenever we think of practically anything, a stream of thoughts and ideas come rushing in our minds. This is what we refer to as **brainstorming**. To be more precise, in a simplistic view, brainstorming is nothing but the actual process of thinking. But general thinking cannot be referred to as brainstorming because in the brainstorming phase, we just gather the relevant ideas and ignore the irrelevant ones.

After the relevant ideas are generated, the following phase would be to outline the ideas. Think of the following scenario.

Technique 1 (W/H questions):

This is a fairly simple but very limited method to conjure up ideas. By limited we mean, it opens up not a much diversified array of ideas. Still, following the principle "something is better than nothing," it is helpful for novice writers.

The process is to apply all basic questions to the point of argument/description/narration like "who, why, when, what, which, how" etc. Then, with each answer evolving for the W/H questions, at least one idea, or thought, can be deduced. Look at the following example:

Part times have become the most common development in our workplace nowadays. At the same time, they are potentially the biggest paradox. On one hand, they do provide much needed experience to the person involved, thereby enriching his/her resume. On the other hand however, they do also mean that for students, this employment may place constraints on his/her study and sleep time, thereby increasing absenteeism and less school involvement. I believe that they are good as a whole and should stay in the workplace.

The point of argument here is whether or not Rickshaws should prevail in our cities. So, let us ask some W/H questions to the main point, Rickshaws, and plot our answers.

Who are involved with Part time jobs?

- Students - depend on it for their pocket money, source of temporary income and experience.
- People seeking work- depend on it there is probably a dearth of full time employment or when they cannot find any other alternative.

Who are affected by Part time jobs?

- Students and unemployed people – offers a source of income
- Organizations – part time employees entail lower costs, they have flexible schedules and these are good for any organization

What are the benefits of Part time jobs?

- Offers work experience
- Allows the person to nurture good work habits
- Provide constructive use of free time

What are the problems of Part time jobs?

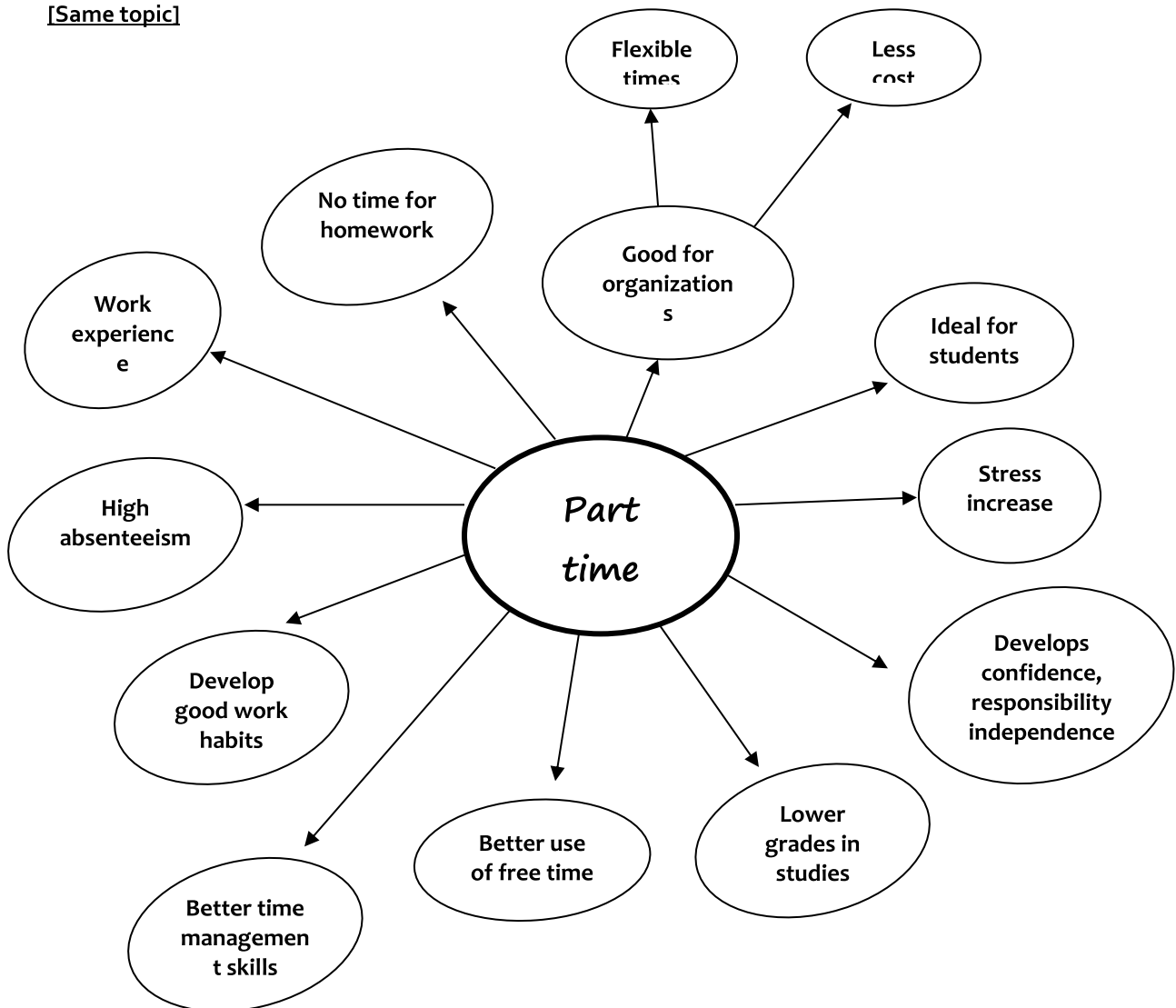
- Less time for homework
- Higher rates of absenteeism and less school involvement
- Increased stress

Now the ideas obtained here may be used as individual ideas, or thoughts, in the essay.

Technique 2 (Clustering/ Spider diagrams):

Basic idea of Clustering is to write the main point of the topic at hand in the middle of an empty space on paper, look at it, and jot down all that pops up in the head in connection to it. Consider the following example.

[Same topic]



This is the best technique of Brainstorming, because it offers a very versatile or wide ranged, assortment of ideas. It is also ideal to increase your Brainstorming power. A simple exercise can be designed by putting the main oval, containing the main point of an essay topic, in the middle of an empty sheet of paper, and then trying to fill up the page with as many clusters as possible with each cluster/oval containing a distinct thought regarding the topic.

Sorting Ideas

Once the ideas are generated, the next step is to sort all the ideas and put these pieces together. Through Brainstorming, the relevant ideas are generated. But if you do not sort all those points and try to assemble them together, your writing possibly may go off-track. So, sorting the ideas is of utmost importance.

Take the previously stated topic to understand it. After you brainstorm and generate the relevant ideas, try to sort them up and select the track on which to drive your writing. If you notice carefully, in the Visio-brainstorm picture provided earlier, we generated ideas both for and against the utilities and usefulness of rickshaws. Your task in this phase is to sort all the points, if possible, in a table and see which side (for or against) weighs more.

Do not confuse yourselves with for and against the propositions. The topic was whether part time jobs are good or not. So, the unfavourable points towards part time jobs should be placed against the proposition and the favourable points should go for the topic.

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>
Obtain valuable work experiences, which are excellent for a resume.	Less time for homework.
May provide networking possibilities.	Higher rates of absenteeism and less school involvement.
Provide constructive use of free time.	Development of negative views of work itself.
Develops confidence, sense of responsibility and independence.	Lower grades in academics.
Learn time management skills and work habits.	Increased stress.

In this phase, sorting was done with the key points only. But the additional points generated from the key point should also be kept in mind.

Taking Sides

Once you have sorted out all the ideas, then it is the time to decide which side you should support. This decision has to stem from the look of the table containing the sorted out points. The most logical view should be to select the side that weighs more than the other. But there are many instances where this selection may prove to be faulty. For clarification, one side may weigh much but have weaker arguments. Or, the side weighing much may have little or no example to clarify the stance. So, taking a side must be preceded with a good amount of thinking. When you know that you can clarify a stance better than the other, take that side.

Always remember, the primary focus of this task is to see how good the examinees are at explaining and elaborating their stance. So, select the side that has stronger logics and which can be backed up with relevant examples. This is purely a matter of judgment and your task will be evaluated on the basis of the strength of your verdict. Make a good decision and you would be rewarded accordingly.

Use of Anti-Logics

The use of anti-logics can be done in contingencies. Anti-logics are the inverse of logics. This is of utmost importance, since the piece you submit has to have an understanding of not only why you decided to choose a particular stance, but also should say/ acknowledge why you did not select the other stance. Also, often, there are situations where you may find that you have nothing to write about, but there are still some words to be written in order to comply with the word limits. In such a case, you can take help of anti-logics. Then again, there is a possibility that the examiner may not understand which side you have chosen to defend. So, when you are using anti-logics in an argumentative composition, make sure that you make the piece comparative in nature. After you have made all the explanations, make a decision regarding the strongest stance and conclude that you pursue in favour of that particular stance.

Thesis Statement

- **Defining Thesis Statement**

A Thesis Statement is probably the most important part of an Introductory Paragraph. As we mentioned earlier, your introduction should give a clear picture of what you are going to write next. The Thesis Statement incorporates all the ideas, or points that are going to form the body of your composition in one sentence. Thesis Statement is a proposition of a subject to be described, a scenario to be narrated and opinion to be supported. It necessarily evolves from a point of description/narration/argument embedded within the topic statement in the question paper.

- **Placing Thesis Statements**

A thesis statement is a sentence usually at the end of the introductory paragraph, which tells us about its content and points used throughout the essay, as well as the writer's viewpoint. Remember, this statement comprises of all the points, ideas or themes of the body of the composition. So, inserting thesis statements at the end of the introduction ensures that it is at the closest possible place of the body, and the body stems directly from this statement.

- **Applying Thesis Statements**

For example, if the topic asks for your opinion on banning rickshaws from Dhaka City, you may decide that it will be a very good idea. To support your point, you may think of some predicaments that are caused by rickshaws; such as- Rickshaws create traffic congestion, they do not follow discipline and they are a very slow mode of transportation. As you are going to explain these things in the body of the composition, in your thesis statement for this topic, you must bring about all these negative aspects of rickshaws, essentially within one sentence. Conversely, if you decide against banning rickshaws, you may justify it being a cheap mode of transportation, helpful for small distances and causing no environmental pollution. Here again, this thesis statement will include all these aspects and has to be formed within one sentence.

- **Characteristics of Thesis Statement**

Following are the characteristics of a good thesis statement-

1. The thesis statement must be clear.
2. It has to be decisive.
3. It should be comprehensive.
4. It must be independent from the question stem.

All these characteristics should be present in a thesis statement. Read the following-

A good thesis statement on the topic, 'Rickshaw should be banned from Dhaka City' can be, "As rickshaws are slow, are the primary reasons of traffic congestion and not capable of satisfying long distance travelling, I believe that rickshaws should be banned from Dhaka city" - which is **supportive (for)** of presented opinion.

"Rickshaws have become parts of our daily lives, and in a congested city like Dhaka, they can prove to be the most handy form of transportation than any other vehicle, which is why I strongly oppose the proposition of banning rickshaws from the city of Dhaka"- can be an appropriate thesis statement **against** this topic.

Exercises:

E For the following topics, develop your thought, and design appropriate thesis statements.

- 1. Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:**
As public safety is of the highest importance, it is often necessary to test new products on animals. It is better for a few animals to suffer than for human life to be placed at risk by untested products.
- 2. Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:**
If countries are serious about solving traffic problems, they should tax private cars very heavily and use the money to provide free or very cheap rail travel.
- 3. Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:**
The quality of health care a person receives should not depend on the size of their bank balance. The government is responsible for providing a high level of health care for all its citizens.
- 4. Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:**
Women should give up their jobs and go back to their traditional role of home maker in order to reduce world unemployment.
- 5. Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:**
One solution to the decline in moral values in today's world would be for men and women to return to their traditional roles.
- 6. Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:** Women will play an increasingly important role in the workplace of the future.
- 7. Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:**
The internet will bring about a new freedom of innovation and so narrow the technology gap between developed and developing countries.
- 8. Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:**
A country's first duty to its citizens is to protect them. Therefore it is logical that defence should take up a significant proportion of the national budget.
- 9. Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:**
Too much education is dangerous. If people receive more education than they need to function in their job, it only breeds dissatisfaction.
- 10. Present a written argument or case to an educated non-specialist audience on the following topic:**
The idea of going overseas for university study is an exciting prospect for many people. But while it may offer some advantages, it is probably better to stay home because of the difficulties a student inevitably encounters living and studying in a different culture.

Writing Paragraphs

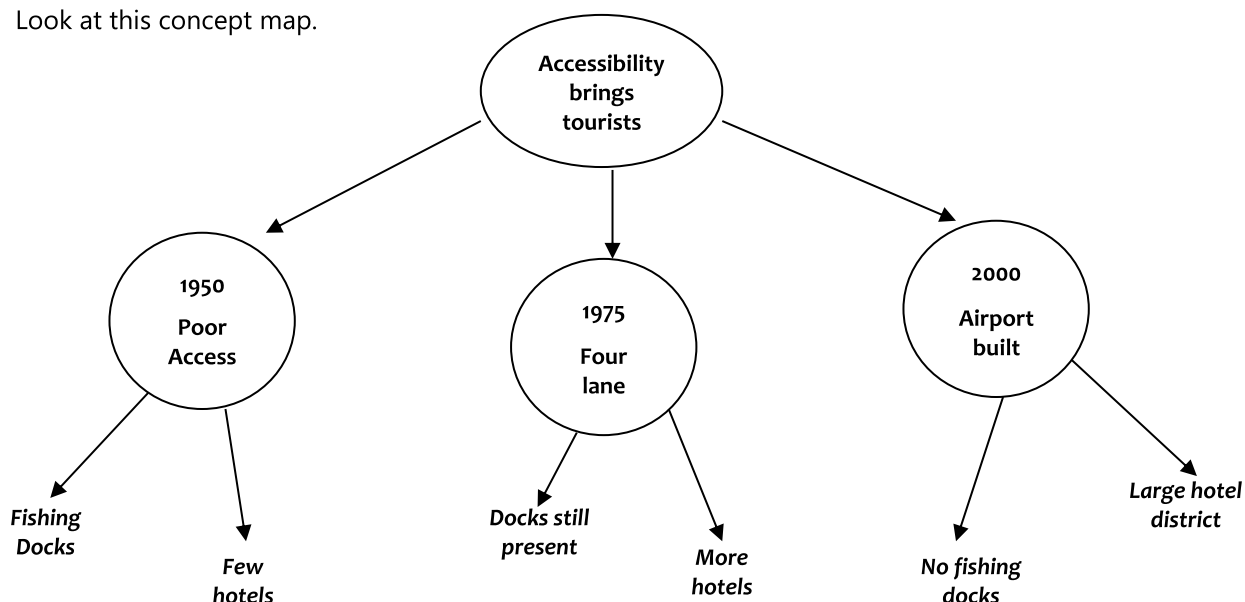
In the last section, you learned to write your thesis statement. The thesis statement is meant to portray what the essay is all about. An essay is made up of paragraphs. Each paragraph has a topic sentence and supporting details.

A topic sentence tells what each paragraph is about. It can come at the start of a paragraph, in the middle, or at the end. It can introduce a paragraph or it can summarize a paragraph.

When you made your concept map, you wrote two or three general ideas in words or phrases. Turn those general ideas into a sentence and you have a topic sentence for a paragraph. It is important to write a good topic sentence. It helps the reader follow your line of thinking. It makes your intentions clear.

In your concept map, you had lines coming from the general idea (the topic sentence). These lines are your supporting details. You must support your general ideas with specific details. This too helps a reader to understand your intentions. A topic sentence with supporting details gives your essay clarity.

Look at this concept map.



Read the paragraph below for the general idea "four-lane road."

By 1975, a new four-lane highway had brought changes to Palm Grove. It was still a fishing village but it appears that the new road made it easier for tourists to get there. Several new hotels had been built along the beach.

Topic Sentence: By 1975, a new four-lane highway had brought changes to Palm Grove.

Supporting details: It was easier for tourists to get there. Several new hotels had been built.

Exercise:

E

Read the following paragraphs. Write the topic sentence and the supporting details.

A computer is a useful tool for school work. Computers make it very easy to keep notes and write up school projects. Reference books on computer CPUs make it convenient for children to research their school projects. In addition, the Internet makes research on any subject possible from the comfort of

one's own home. Children can do all this work independently, without asking their parents to take them to the library or buy expensive reference books for them.

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting Details: _____

E It isn't difficult to find out which programs are on TV at any given time. Most newspapers publish a schedule of TV programs every day. Also, anyone who watches TV regularly knows which programs she likes and which she doesn't like. She knows what kinds of programs each different channel tend to have. It is easy for everyone to avoid violent programs if they want to.

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting Details: _____

E The best thing about TV is that there is a variety of programs. There are news programs for serious people. There are films and cartoons for people who want to be entertained. The variety of TV programs needs to be protected, even if that means allowing some of them to show violence.

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting Details: _____

E Physical education classes teach children important skills that they need in life. They teach children how to work together on a team. They teach children how to set a goal and work to achieve it. They teach children about the importance of looking after their health.

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting Details: _____

Useful Language Patterns

Expressing Views

Your key ideas will form the basis of your argument. Often they can simply be stated as facts, but if you want to personalize your argument, the following structures can help you reinforce what is your opinion or show that you are giving general opinion.

I would like to say that	People argue that
I think that	Some people think/say that
As far as I understand/ know,	It is understood that
I firmly believe/ trust that	It is generally accepted that
In my knowledge,	

Another way of putting forward an argument without being too dogmatic is to admit that there are arguments that differ from your own. **Linking words** and **expressions** such as **while**, **although**, **despite the fact that** are useful in doing this. Also, **adverbs** such as **admittedly**, **certainly**, etc. can be used. Look at the following argument for and against some well-known topics:

Topic	For	Against
(a) TV and children	Educational programmes – safe “baby sitting	Adverts targeted at children - too much violence
(b) Women working versus staying at home	Children benefit from nurseries and day-care	Young children need to be with their mothers
(c) Too many cars in cities	Build more roads	More car users

Refuting An Argument

This is a forceful way of expressing an argument and is done by rejecting an argument that you do not agree with. The following are examples of structures that can be used to reject an argument:

<i>I am unconvinced that</i>	<i>It is hard to accept that</i>	<i>It is unjustifiable to say that</i>
<i>I don't believe that</i>	<i>There is little evidence to support the</i>	

Defining/Explaining

Defining is particularly useful when you want to make your argument clearer or when you are using terms that may have many possible interpretations. The structures below can be helpful in doing this:

<i>By ..., I mean</i>	<i>In other words,</i>	<i>To be more precise,</i>
<i>By this I mean</i>	<i>That is to say,</i>	<i>Here I'm (not) referring to</i>

Providing Support

There are many ways in which you can link your main and supporting arguments and your choice will depend upon:

- **the type of support** - is it an example, a further argument, an anecdote, etc?
- **the style of writing**- are you predicting something, making a comparison, etc?
- **the nature of the argument** - is it a very personal argument or a general one?

The following structures are closely connected with giving support but many of the other structures covered in this section can also be used.

For example,	Indeed,	If this is/were the case,	In my experience,
For instance,	In fact,	Firstly,	Let me illustrate
A good example of this is	Of course,	Naturally,	

Remember that it is important to try and vary the words and structures you use.

Classification

Classification organizes your writing around the grouping or classification of things. You write about how things are similar to one another. Following are some useful words for classification:

aspects	important
attributes	insignificant
bases	kinds of
basic kinds of	main kinds of
categories	methods
characteristics	minor
classes	mutually exclusive
classifications	opposing
classify	opposite
contradictory	origins
contrasting	parts
dissimilar	primary, secondary
distinguishable	qualities
divide	significant
divided into _ classes	similar
factors	sources
falls into	types of
fundamental	unimportant

Definition

You can write a simple definition of an object like a mobile phone in one sentence. To define a more abstract term like virtue, you may need several sentences, perhaps several paragraphs. Following are some useful words of definition, in addition to the ones provided in the Mentors' Writing & Reading Book:

aspect	explain
category	explanation
characteristic	from
clarification	in other words
clarify	kind
class	method
condition	paraphrase
define	type
definition	

Comparison and Contrast

You can define an object or describe a person by comparing or contrasting the object with something else. You can define a pear by comparing it with a peach or contrasting it with a banana. This is a very useful tool to organize your material. Following is a list of useful words for comparison and contrast:

<u>Comparison</u>	<u>Contrast</u>
almost the same as	different from
common with	differ from

correspond to	even so
in the same way	however
just as	in contrast to
like, alike	in opposition to
resemblance	less than
resemble	more than
similar to	otherwise
similarly	slower than, etc.
to be parallel to	still

Cause and Effect

A cause and effect relationship is a very useful organizational style. Something happens because something else happened. "I turned on the air conditioner and the room became cooler."

Cause and effect is similar to chronological order. First something happens followed by something else. But in cause and effect, there is a definite relationship between the two. Following are some useful words for cause and effect.

accordingly	have an effect on
as a result	hence
because	owing to
because of	reason for
consequently	since
due to	so
for this reason	therefore
	thus

Useful Concluding Expressions

therefore	hence	thus	so	accordingly	in consequence
consequently	proves that	as a result	for this reason	/for these reasons	it follows that
we may infer		which shows that	which means that		
which entails that		which implies that	which points to the conclusion that		

Useful Expressions for Supporting Details

since	for	as	as indicated
because	for the reason that	by	
the reason is that	as shown by	may be inferred from	
follows from		in view of the fact that	

Avoiding Absolute Statement

To reduce the size of the group:

a few	some	many	most (countable items)
a little	some	much	most (non-countable items)

To reduce the number of times something occurs:

often	frequently
sometimes	occasionally

Topic-

In many countries there is a shortage of suitable people for essential jobs.

What do you think are the causes of this problem and what measures could be taken to solve it?

Sample Response-

Many countries have a staff shortage in medicine and other fields requiring a great deal of training. At the same time, there may be a lack of unskilled and semi-skilled workers, like cleaners or drivers.

The gap in skilled professions is partly due to time and money: the training for a nurse or doctor takes several years and is very expensive. These are features that do not bode well for people coming from the developing world, since interests in this part of the world, is more reliant on short term benefits, rather than the lengthy wait that ensues after enrolling in protracted and extended courses. Future needs cannot be predicted very accurately, so it is hard to ensure that enough people are trained. Many individuals and countries simply cannot afford the training.

Some governments have tackled this problem by determining what subjects students should study. This ensures that enough lawyers, teachers and so on are trained. One drawback, however, is that it ignores the differences in people's motivation and aptitude, and may mean that people will have to settle for jobs that they are just not made for- for example, someone who might have been an excellent dentist has become a mediocre accountant instead.

A shortage may also result from variation in the cost of living, in my country, only a handful of the public sector employees, such as police officers, can afford accommodation in the most affluent regions, resulting in ever-increasing staff shortages in those areas. The problem can be alleviated, though only to a limited extent, by subsidizing housing for certain workers.

As the level of education rises, fewer people are willing to take on menial work. The unpleasantness of such work could be recognized through high wages, although this would require a transformation of the country's economy, as a whole.

To conclude, shortages are probably inevitable, although fields and geographical areas where they occur are likely to change from time to time.

Approximately 325 words

REMEMBER

THIS SAMPLE RESPONSE IS ONE OF SEVERAL SATISFACTORY WAYS TO ANSWER THE QUESTION. OTHER SAMPLES WHICH RESPOND TO THE WRITING TASK WOULD ALSO BE ACCEPTABLE.

Topic-

Celebrities make a very good living out of media attention and have chosen to live in the public spotlight. They have no right to complain when they feel the media are intruding on their privacy. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Sample Response-

Being famous should not mean that you give up all right to a private life. Although a lot depends on the reason a person is actually famous, everyone should be able to enjoy a certain amount of privacy in their lives.

I believe it is useful to draw a distinction between those who have sought a career in the public eye and those who have not. Prominent performers in film, television and music, for example, have clearly chosen a career path that potentially leads to fame. In fact, for many of them, becoming as widely known as possible is a key ambition. Since they have invited the public to focus their attention on them, they should not be too surprised and perplexed to find that people are interested in gossip or scandal about their private lives. Public attention is rarely something that you can turn on and off at one's will. Having said that, even those who seek fame still deserve the protection of the law and the media should be prevented from harassing them.

Other public figures, on the other hand, have not chosen to be famous. Members of royal families are born into fame, as are the children of celebrities. Ordinary people in the news often become well-known through no fault of their own. It is my opinion that the media have no right to intrude into these people's private lives. I would even go so far as to say that I support an extension of the law to guarantee the privacy for these people. The media should be prevented from reporting on things that should only be private matters.

As the media continue to become more and more powerful and stretched in their reach in the different spheres of the society, so the question of privacy becomes more imperative. Everyone deserves a private life, although perhaps some deserve it more than others.

Approximately 315 words

REMEMBER

THIS SAMPLE RESPONSE IS ONE OF SEVERAL SATISFACTORY WAYS TO ANSWER THE QUESTION. OTHER SAMPLES WHICH RESPOND TO THE WRITING TASK WOULD ALSO BE ACCEPTABLE.