

7 WRITING Opinion-led essays

SPEAKING

1 You are going to read a short essay about cars. First, work in pairs and discuss the questions.

- What kind of car do you / the people in your family have?
- Do you have a favourite kind of car?
- What is the traffic like where you live?
- Do you use the car much? To go where?

WRITING

2 Look at the essay title below. Write three reasons why people might agree with the statement in the title and three reasons why people might disagree.

'Cars are no longer the best means of transport.' How far do you agree with this statement?

Cars are good because ...	Cars aren't good because ...
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

3 Work in pairs and compare your ideas. Then discuss how far you agree with each of the reasons you thought of.

4 Read the essay. Does the writer think the same as you?

The number of cars on our roads has increased a lot over the last twenty years. Traffic is getting worse and worse every year and we are slowly running out of oil. As such, it is worth asking if cars are still the best way to travel. ¹ _____, I do not believe they are.

There are several reasons why cars remain so widely used. ² _____, they allow one to get directly from A to B. ³ _____, people feel comfortable in their cars and ⁴ _____, the car industry is a large employer and has influence with the government.

5 Complete the essay with these words.

obviously	However	Otherwise	Secondly
Firstly	thirdly	In conclusion	Personally

6 The list below contains six pieces of advice for writing essays. Find examples in the essay of where the writer follows each piece of advice.

DOS AND DON'TS FOR OPINION-LED ESSAYS

- 1 Show you know why the question is being asked by giving examples of current trends or problems connected to it.
- 2 Make your own opinion clear in your introduction.
- 3 Allow space for points of view you disagree with and explain why you disagree with them.
- 4 Use paragraphs.
- 5 Avoid using *you*. Use impersonal forms like *people* or *one*.
- 6 Do not use contractions like *it'll* or *that'd*. Use full forms instead.

GRAMMAR

Describing trends

We usually begin introductions to opinion-led essays by describing trends or problems connected to the title. This helps to show the reader we understand why this question is important. To describe trends, we often use a 'double' comparative.

*Traffic is getting **worse and worse** every year.*

*Cycling is becoming **more and more popular**.*

***More and more people** are moving out of the city.*

***Fewer and fewer people** have driven to work as a result of the congestion charge.*

⁵ _____, in the long term we ⁶ _____ need to find alternatives to the car. ⁷ _____, we will end up unable to move round our cities, as our streets become full of traffic. Road deaths will increase and there will be terrible environmental damage. It is time to limit car use and to encourage greater use of public transport and bicycles.

⁸ _____, while car users may want to continue using their vehicles, other options must be explored more fully.