

## OPINION ESSAY

**Task 1.** Read the essay task and answer the questions below.

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You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

***Too much emphasis is placed on testing these days.***

***The need to prepare for tests and examinations is a restriction on teachers and also exerts unnecessary pressure on young learners.***

***To what extent do you agree or disagree?***

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

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Answer the following questions based on the task:

1. How much time is recommended for the task?
2. What is the topic of the essay?
3. Do you need to give your opinion here?
4. What kind of information should be included in the response?
5. How many words are required?

**Task 2.** Fill in the blanks in the sample essay with the words and phrases from the table.

A third point	In this way	However
Conversely	To summarize	Therefore
This means	Another important issue	A key problem with most tests

Testing is a feature of most education systems but in many countries children are undergoing more tests and examinations during their school career than ever before. These are often imposed by education authorities in an attempt to raise standards.(1)\_\_\_\_\_, I believe that the results of this policy are quite often the opposite of what was intended.

(2)\_\_\_\_\_ is that teachers are required to follow a specific syllabus. (3)\_\_\_\_\_ that they are not free to develop a course to suit their students' particular needs, or to introduce different, more relevant topics. (4)\_\_\_\_\_, good teachers are prevented from using their skills and experience to benefit their students as fully as possible. Even though such strict syllabus is an advantage in terms of dealing with only test preparation, it does not take into account the individuality of a student and does not allow a teacher to apply their creativity.

(5)\_\_\_\_\_ is that tests are stressful. They introduce pressure and anxiety into children's education at a time when learning should be an exciting and enjoyable experience. Excessive testing in the early years may (6)\_\_\_\_\_ be counterproductive and actually discourage some children from continuing their studies. Of course, it is beneficial for pupils to get to know how to cope with exam anxiety as early as possible, still it seems to be more discouraging than advantageous.

(7)\_\_\_\_\_ is that tests are not equally fair to all candidates. Those with particular skills, such as the ability to memorise facts or write essays in a limited time, are likely to perform well. (8)\_\_\_\_\_, students without these skills may achieve disappointing results, no matter how hard they study or how well they know the subject. This is not the case for teachers whose work is simplified by checking multiple choice tests, but these are students with various strength and weaknesses who suffer most.

(9)\_\_\_\_\_, while it is clear that some testing needs to take place in our school system, it seems to me for all the reasons mentioned above, that too great an emphasis on exams too early, is not only unhelpful but also potentially harmful for young learners.

**Task 3.** Look at the way the sample answer is structured.

Classify what belongs to these parts of an essay:

<u>Introduction</u>	<u>Body paragraphs</u>	<u>Conclusion</u>
1)	1)	1)
2)	2)	2)
Supporting details	Background	Topic sentence (reason)
Restated opinion	Opinion	Summary

**Task 4.** Classify the following linkers into five categories:

However	Moreover	From my point of view
As a result	Consequently	On the contrary
Personally I think	Furthermore	In summary
I totally agree with	In the light of these facts	Therefore
Additionally	I am completely against	In my own perspective
All things considered	By contrast	Thus
In my opinion	I believe	I partially support
In the final analysis	Nevertheless	I do not agree with the idea that

<i>Opinion</i>	
<i>Addition</i>	
<i>Contrast</i>	
<i>Result</i>	
<i>Agree/Disagree</i>	
<i>Conclusion</i>	

**Task 5.** Make an outline to the following topic:

***A great number of people think that those with university education should get higher pay than those without, for they believe that the former have sweated and sacrificed more.***

***To what extent do you agree with this view.***

Opinion \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason 3 \_\_\_\_\_