

IELTS Writing Task 2 #192

How to write an advantages and disadvantages essay

Very often in the IELTS exam, you will have to write an essay called an 'advantages and disadvantages' essay. This is where you have to write about the good and bad points of a common situation.

Here is a typical question:

What are the advantages and disadvantages of leaving your country to live or study abroad?

- write an introduction to the topic
- think of two advantages to the situation and provide clear examples
- think of two disadvantages and write about these with good support
- write a short conclusion giving your overall opinion

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

Compare the advantages and disadvantages of three of the following ways of learning a foreign language.

State which you consider to be the most effective.

- ***studying on your own***
- ***taking lessons with a private tutor***
- ***taking lessons as part of a class***
- ***taking lessons online***
- ***going to live in a country where the language is spoken***
Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

Sample answer

The question of how to learn a foreign language has become increasingly important in recent years as business has become more international. Although there are a number of effective ways, I am convinced that living in a country where that language is spoken is the most efficient way of learning.

Traditionally, people have learned languages as part of a large group in a classroom. This has the advantage of providing many opportunities to practise what you learn with a number of different people. In addition, the fees for this form of education are usually reasonable, since a large number of people are taught at once. However, the size of the group means that more demands are placed on the teacher's time. Students may not get the individual attention they require to improve.

The amount of individual attention you receive is certainly an advantage of working with a private tutor. Also, the student can work at a pace which is comfortable for them. On the other hand, working with a private tutor can lack the social element, which is crucial in learning to communicate well in a foreign language. It can also prove to be beyond the means of many people.

By far the most natural way to acquire a language is to go where it is spoken. Not only is every social interaction a chance to practise, but you are also exposed to the real, living language. As well as that, you are able to acquire a natural accent by imitating the people around you. This is not to say, of course, that there are not drawbacks. Many people suffer from culture shock away from home, and it can be very difficult to integrate into a foreign culture.

In conclusion, I would argue that the advantages of going to another country to learn far outweigh the disadvantages, making it the best option.

(312 words)