

TOEFL Writing Section

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1 Integrated Writing

1.1 Essay 1

1.1.1 题目

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they cast doubt on the specific solutions proposed in the reading passage.

阅读材料

The Salton Sea in California is actually a salty inland lake. The level of salt in the lake's water—what scientists call its salinity—has been increasing steadily for years because the lake's water is evaporating faster than it is being replaced by rainfall or rivers. If the trend continues, the lake's water will soon become so salty that the lake will be unable to support fish and bird populations. The lake would then become essentially a dead zone. Fortunately, there are several ways to reverse the trend that is threatening the lake's health.

One option is direct removal of salt from the lake's water in special desalination facilities. Water from the lake would be pumped into the facilities and heated. This would cause the water to evaporate into steam, while salt and other materials dissolved in the water would be left behind. The steam would then be cooled down and returned to the lake as salt-free water. Gradually, the high salt levels would be reduced and the lake's overall health would be restored.

Another possible solution is to dilute the salt level in the lake with water from the ocean. Since water in the Pacific Ocean is 20 percent less salty than water in the lake, bringing ocean water into the lake would decrease the lake's salinity. The ocean water could be delivered through pipelines or canals.

Yet another solution would be to control the lake's salinity by constructing walls to divide the lake into several sections. In the smaller sections, salinity would be allowed to increase. However, in the main and largest section, salinity would be reduced and controlled by, among other things, directing all the freshwater from small rivers in the area to flow into that main section of the lake.

听力材料

It would be great if we could stop the lake's salt level from increasing and save its fish and bird populations, but the solutions you just read about aren't realistic or practical.

First—sure, taking salt out of the lake by desalination would reduce salinity, but it would present some serious problems as well. For example, as you've read, water pumped into desalination facilities evaporates and leaves behind solid materials that were dissolved in the water. Well, the solid materials that desalination facilities leave behind would pose a health risk. The materials would be mostly salt, but they would also include other types of chemicals. Some of the chemicals would be toxic, like selenium.

If the wind spreads selenium and other chemicals into the air, and people breathe them in, that would be very dangerous to people's health. Second, the idea of bringing ocean water into the lake. Again, this would reduce salinity, but, as you've read, it would require constructing pipelines or canals. The problem is that the local government may not have enough resources to pay for such major construction. The nearest shoreline of the Pacific Ocean is 100 kilometers away. Pipelines or canals are very expensive to build over such long distances.

As for the third solution—dividing the lake into sections by building a system of walls—well, that's unlikely to work for very long. That's because the Salton Sea is located in a region that experiences frequent and sometimes intense geological activity, like earthquakes. That activity would almost certainly destroy the walls separating the different sections. So while this solution might work for a short while, the walls would likely collapse the first time there's a major earthquake, and water from the special sections with high salinity will mix back in with the low-salinity water from the main section.

1.1.2 作文

我的作文

While the passage proposed three possible ways to tackle with the rising salinity of the Salton Sea, the lecture challenges three of them respectively and regards them as unrealistic.

Firstly, the lecture points out that although desalination mentioned in the passage sounds practical theoretically, that method fails to take into account some potential health risks associated with it. When the water from the lake is gathered and evaporated, the remained solid material contains not only salt, but also some toxic chemicals. The latter can be transmitted in the air via winds, and breathed in by humans to cause health problems.

Secondly, the lecture refutes the possibility of diluting the lake's salt level with ocean water by the financial constraint faced by the government. The fact is that, building pipelines and canals is resource-consuming, and the nearest ocean to the lake takes a long distance. In light of that, the government cannot afford to burden all the resources needed to implement this measure.

Thirdly, the lecture argues that building walls to divide the lake into sections is unlikely to work in the long run. The Salton Sea is located in a region with frequent geological activities, which makes the walls quite prone to collapse once an earthquake happens. Once the walls are destroyed, the water in the separated saline region will make a comeback, making all the preceding efforts in vain.

In summary, the lecture contends that the three ways proposed by the passage are impractical due to the lack of realistic concerns, in the sense that they failed to take into account the existence of toxic component in the desalination process, the financial concern in building the facilities to dilute the lake water, and the vulnerability of walls given the circumstances of active geological environment.

示例范文

The passage outlines three proposed methods to address the increasing salinity of the Salton Sea in California, while **the lecture critiques these solutions as impractical.**

The first proposed solution involves the use of desalination facilities to remove salt from the lake water. **The lecture, however, raises concerns about** the health risks associated with this process. The desalination process leaves behind solid materials, including toxic chemicals like selenium. The potential for these substances to become airborne and harmful to human health **presents a significant drawback to this method.**

The second solution suggests diluting the lake's salinity with less salty ocean water, transported through pipelines or canals. The lecture **points out** the financial impracticality of this approach, **considering** the local government's limited resources and the considerable cost of constructing long-distance pipelines or canals to the nearest shoreline of the Pacific Ocean, which is 100 kilometers away.

The third solution involves constructing walls to divide the lake into sections, allowing for controlled salinity levels in the main section. **The lecture, on the other hand, highlights** the region's frequent geological activity, such as earthquakes, which could quickly destroy these walls. The vulnerability of the walls to collapse would **render this solution short-lived, as** high salinity water would eventually mix back into the main section.

In conclusion, the lecture challenges the proposed solutions in the reading by highlighting the health risks of desalination, the financial burden of constructing long pipelines or canals, and the geological instability of the region which would undermine the effectiveness of dividing the lake with walls. **These concerns cast doubt on** the practicality of the proposed methods to save the Salton Sea's ecosystem.

1.2 Essay 2

1.2.1 题目

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they cast doubt on the specific solutions proposed in the reading passage.

阅读材料

Many countries require cigarette smokers to pay particularly high taxes on their purchases of cigarettes; similar taxes are being considered for unhealthy foods. The policy of imposing high taxes on cigarettes and other unhealthy products has a number of social benefits.

First of all, the taxes discourage people from indulging in unhealthy behaviors. Raising taxes on cigarettes, for instance, leads people to buy fewer of them. Smoking has declined as taxes on tobacco have risen, showing that these taxes do work to make society healthier. It can be expected that imposing similar taxes on unhealthy food and beverages would help reduce obesity rates.

Second, taxes of this kind are financially fair. When people get sick as a result of their smoking or eating unhealthy foods, they create medical costs. It is unfair that everyone in the society—including nonsmokers and people who follow a healthy diet—should contribute equally to covering these costs. Taxing people who engage in unhealthy behaviors creates extra income that can be used to cover the medical costs. In this way, some of the financial burden is shifted from all of society to just those who choose to participate in the unhealthy activities.

Finally, the high rate of taxation on cigarettes significantly increases revenue for the government. In addition to using this tax revenue on medical assistance, governments often use the revenue for other projects that benefit public welfare, such as building stadiums or creating public parks. Even basic government-supported services like public education benefit from these taxes. Thus, the taxes on cigarettes—and the proposed taxes on unhealthy foods—benefit everyone.

听力材料

Each of the arguments about the benefits of cigarette and other such taxes can be challenged.

First, these taxes don't necessarily lead to healthier behavior. For instance, high cigarette taxes have led some smokers to buy cheaper, lower-quality cigarettes. Such cigarettes typically contain even more harmful substances than better-quality cigarettes and present even greater health risks. Similarly, imagine how some consumers might react to higher taxes on unhealthy foods. They might continue buying the unhealthy foods they prefer even if they're more expensive, and as a result have less money left to spend on healthy foods. That certainly wouldn't benefit their health.

Second, there're different ways of thinking about fairness. It might seem fair for people indulging in unhealthy behaviors to pay for the consequences of those behaviors through high taxes. But some people would argue that these taxes are unfair because they don't take into account people's incomes. If a high-earning person and a lower-earning person are addicted to cigarettes and each smokes a pack of cigarettes a day, paying the tax will be a greater expense for the low earner relative to his or her income. The same argument applies to the food taxes. So, many people believe that these taxes are not fair because they create a much greater burden for those with smaller incomes than for those with higher incomes.

Finally, the fact that governments can use this tax revenue for various projects has a downside. This income represents millions and millions of dollars, and governments become dependent on it and don't want to lose it. In consequence, the governments might not be forceful enough pursuing policies and implementing laws that might eliminate unhealthy habits altogether. For example, they're unlikely to adopt radical measures such as not allowing smoking in outdoor public areas such as parks, or even banning smoking in all outdoor areas, public or private, because they don't want to lose this income.

1.2.2 作文

我的作文

While the passage illustrates the three justifications for and benefits of government's taxing on cigarettes and consumption of unhealthy foods, the lecture challenges the points respectively.

First, as for the argument that such taxes can reduce the frequency of such unhealthy behaviors, the lecture points out that such channel is not sufficient and the taxes may even lead to more unhealthy behaviors. By levying high taxes, the prices would rise, which induces people to seek cheaper goods of lower quality, and this may leads to higher health risks. In the same logic, higher prices on those products would drain people's wallet, leaving them less money to purchase healthy ones.

Second, from the perspective of fairness, the lecture argues that such taxes may not be justified for various notions of fairness. For example, considering the same amount of cigarette consumption and the division of high- and low-income groups, such taxes would impose a higher burden on the low-income group in the proportion sense, which is not fair from this point of view. The same reasoning applies for the consumption of unhealthy foods.

Thirdly, although the passage contends that the revenue collected from such taxes may enable the government to embark on projects that are beneficial to the whole society, the lecture reveals its limitations. Because the government could collect large amounts of revenue out from them, this would lead to a more tax-dependent government. Therefore, it would become impossible for the government not to employ this measure but to ban the undesired behaviors from the bottom. We would continue to see people smoking in various occasions once those taxes are affordable to them, but those behaviors are not favorable by the large but unlikely to be prohibited by the government due to the financial concern.

示例范文

The passage **outlines** three benefits of imposing high taxes on cigarettes and unhealthy foods, **while the lecture challenges these points, offering alternative perspectives.**

The passage **suggests** that high taxes discourage unhealthy behaviors, **as evidenced by** the decline in smoking due to increased tobacco taxes. **However, the lecture counters this by pointing out that** such taxes may lead to the purchase of cheaper, lower-quality cigarettes, which pose even greater health risks. Similarly, higher taxes on unhealthy foods might not *deter* consumption but could result in consumers spending less on healthier alternatives.

Regarding financial fairness, the passage **argues** that taxing unhealthy behaviors shifts the medical cost burden to those who engage in them. **The lecture, however, raises the issue of income disparity, suggesting that** such taxes disproportionately affect lower-income individuals, making them relatively more burdensome than for those with higher incomes. The passage praises the revenue generated from these taxes for funding public welfare projects. **In contrast, the lecture highlights the potential negative consequence of** government dependency on this revenue. This dependency might hinder the implementation of more aggressive policies to eliminate unhealthy habits, as governments may be reluctant to lose this income source.

In summary, while the passage presents high taxes on cigarettes and unhealthy foods as beneficial for health, fairness, and public revenue, **the lecture provides a critical examination of these assumptions.** It suggests that such taxes may not necessarily promote healthier behaviors, could be regressive in terms of income, and might lead to governments prioritizing revenue over public health.

1.3 Essay 3

1.3.1 题目

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they challenge the specific points made in the reading passage.

阅读材料

Humans have long been fascinated by elephants, the largest land animal in the modern world. Social animals that live in herds, elephants are native to both Africa and Asia. Their large ears, long trunk, and long life span have made elephants one of the most captivating creatures on Earth. Our long-standing interest in elephants has led to several beliefs about surprising elephant behaviors.

Elephants Are Aware of Approaching Death

One of the popular beliefs is that when elephants become old and weak, they know that they are nearing the end of their lives. They demonstrate this by breaking away from their herds and going off alone to certain locations often found near bodies of water—so called “elephant graveyards”—to die alone. The idea that old elephants seem aware that they will die soon is supported by the discovery of many sites containing bones exclusively of elderly elephants.

Representing Objects through Art

Additionally, elephants seem to have artistic ability. Elephants can be taught to hold a paintbrush in their trunk and use it to paint on a canvas. Some elephants have been known to paint drawings that represent recognizable things: flowers, other elephants, even themselves. This talent makes elephants the only animal other than humans to produce art representing the world around them.

Fear of Mice

Finally, it has long been believed that elephants have a fear of mice. In 77 C.E., the Roman philosopher and scientist Pliny the Elder wrote that elephants are more afraid of mice, small mammals that can do elephants no harm, than of the much more dangerous animals with which elephants normally share an environment, such as lions or tigers. In a recent scientific experiment in which a herd of elephants was confronted with several mice, the elephants backed away from the mice and left the area to avoid them.

听力材料

Elephants are fascinating, but the beliefs you just read about are based on misunderstandings of elephant behavior.

First, we should not assume that old elephants are aware they will die soon just because they break away from their herds. There's a very practical reason why old elephants leave their herds. Ya see, when elephants get old enough, their teeth become worn down and they have difficulty chewing. So elderly elephants wander away from their herd to look for softer vegetation that's easier to eat. Softer vegetation is usually found near water. That's why many old elephants graze near water and eventually die there, in areas we've come to call elephant graveyards.

Second, the issue of whether elephants have artistic ability. If you watch elephants trained to paint, you'll notice that a human trainer is stroking the elephant's ears whenever the elephant moves the paintbrush. Elephant ears are very sensitive, and touching them in certain ways can be used to train the elephants to do tricks. The trainer teaches the elephant to remember certain patterns of paintbrush strokes, and then encourages the elephant to repeat the brushstrokes by touching its ears. So an elephant using a paintbrush is just painting lines it's been trained to paint. It doesn't necessarily know that the lines are supposed to represent flowers or animals.

Third, Pliny [pliny] the Elder and others are misinterpreting the reaction of elephants to mice. Elephants that react fearfully to mice aren't reacting to the mice themselves, but to the fact that the mice are unfamiliar to them. Being cautious about unfamiliar animals is a natural instinct. But elephants that live in environments where mice are common, like elephants in zoos, don't react with fear to the mice. Clearly, once elephants become familiar with mice and realize that they don't pose a threat, they don't mind them.

1.3.2 作文

我的作文

While the passage illustrates three beliefs about elephant behaviors, all of which are challenged by the lecture respectively and considered misunderstandings of certain behavioral responses of elephants.

The passage raises the belief that elephants are aware of their death from the evidence that bones of elderly elephants are found exclusively near bodies of water. The lecture disputes, however, that such discovery is not sufficient to reach the conclusion. Instead, the elderly elephants behave in this way for practical reasons. As they age, their teeth wear out, making it more difficult to chew the foods. As a result, they will seek for soft vegetables easy to chew, most of which are near waters, the destiny of the elderly in the end. The second belief of elephants mentioned in the passage is that, they are able to represent objects through art. Elephants are believed to use the paintbrush to finish a painting that contains recognizable things. But the lecture proposed an opposite view on it. In fact, the paintings fulfilled by elephants are made possible by humans' stroking their ears, the most sensitive organ able to guide the paintbrush on the trunk to move in specific ways. By making advantage of such patterns, the elephants' behaviors are indeed manipulated in a way to have meanings, despite the fact that the actions themselves are not sensible to the elephants.

The last belief of elephants is the fear of mice. However, the lecture casts doubt on it and regard it as a misinterpretation to elephants' reaction to mice. In contrast to pure fear to mice, the fact is that elephants react to unfamiliar animals, which is part of their natural instinct. In places where mice are relatively rare, elephants would inevitably show fears towards the unfamiliar creature; while in other places where mice are more common to show up, no fear is exhibited.

示例范文

The reading passage presents three common beliefs about elephants, **which the lecture challenges as** misunderstandings of their behavior.

The first belief is that elephants are aware of their impending death. The reading suggests that elderly elephants leave their herds to die alone near bodies of water, which has led to the concept of "elephant graveyards." **However, the lecture refutes this notion, explaining that** old elephants seek out softer vegetation due to worn-down teeth, which is often found near water sources. This natural behavior, rather than a conscious awareness of death, leads to the discovery of elderly elephant bones in these areas.

The second belief is that elephants possess artistic abilities, **as evidenced by** their seemingly intentional paintings. The lecture, however, **reveals** that these actions are the result of human training. Trainers use tactile cues by stroking the sensitive ears of elephants to guide them through specific brushstrokes. The lecture implies that the elephants are not creating art with an understanding of representation but are following learned patterns.

Lastly, the reading passage **perpetuates the myth that** elephants have an innate fear of mice, a belief dating back to Pliny the Elder. **The lecture challenges this, suggesting that** elephants' reactions to mice are due to unfamiliarity rather than fear. Elephants in environments where mice are common, such as zoos, do not exhibit fear, indicating that once they are familiar with mice, they no longer react negatively. In summary, the lecture provides alternative explanations for the behaviors attributed to elephants in the reading passage. **It suggests that** the behaviors are **not** indicative of self-awareness of death, artistic talent, or fear of mice, **but rather** are responses to practical needs, training, and natural instincts towards unfamiliar creatures.

1.4 Essay 4

1.4.1 题目

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they challenge the specific points made in the reading passage.

阅读材料

Like many creatures, humpback whales migrate long distances for feeding and mating purposes. How animals manage to migrate long distances is often puzzling. In the case of humpback whales, we may have found the answer: they may be navigating by the stars, much as early human sailors did. What we know about humpback whales makes this a distinct possibility.

First, humpback whales seem to be intelligent enough to use stars to navigate by. Whales' brains have a high degree of complexity, a common determiner of intelligence. This suggests that the whales' brain power far exceeds that of most other animals. The whales' well-developed cognitive ability seems to provide a sound basis for the ability to use a complex, abstract system of sensory stimuli such as the night sky for orientation.

Second, humpback whales migrate in straight lines. Animals can maintain movement in a straight direction for long distances only if they orient themselves by some external objects or forces. Many birds and other terrestrial creatures, for example, use physical landmarks to help them stay on track as they migrate. Whales, which swim in the open ocean, cannot rely on land features; they could, however, rely on stars at night to provide them with external signs by which to maintain direction over long distances.

Third, humpback whales exhibit an unusual behavior: they are sometimes observed floating straight up for minutes at a time, their heads above the water as though they were looking upward. The behavior is known as spy-hopping, and it is very rare among marine animals. One explanation for the function of spy-hopping is that the whales are looking at the stars, which are providing them with information to navigate by.

听力材料

The theory that humpback whales use the stars to navigate the open seas is a fascinating one. But the evidence supporting the theory is not very convincing.

First, there doesn't seem to be any real connection between intelligence and an animal's ability to use stars for navigation. You know, there are other animals that use stars to navigate. Some birds have this ability—like ducks, for example. Now, the general cognitive ability of ducks is only average—they are not highly intelligent. The fact that the ducks evolved the ability to use stars for navigation does not seem to have much of a connection to their overall intelligence. It's just an instinct they were born with, not a sign of intelligence. So, the fact that humpback whales happen to be intelligent does not make them particularly likely to use stars for navigation. The two things just don't seem to be connected.

Second, there may be a different explanation for the humpback whales' ability to navigate in straight lines. Remember that for animals to be able to do this, they have to sense some external object or force. Well, the external force the whales could be sensing is Earth's magnetic field. Humpback whales have a substance in their brains called biomagnetite.

Generally, the presence of biomagnetite in an animal's body makes that animal sensitive to Earth's magnetic field. The fact that there's biomagnetite in the brains of humpback whales suggests that they orient themselves by the magnetic field rather than the stars when they migrate.

Third, spy-hopping probably has nothing to do with looking at stars. Spy-hopping is rare, but there are other animals that exhibit it. Some sharks do it for example. But sharks don't migrate or look at stars. Sharks spy-hop to look for animals they want to hunt. And another thing: humpback whales often spy-hop during the day when no stars can be seen. So to suggest that the function of spy-hopping is to look at stars is pure speculation.

1.4.2 作文

我的作文

The passage raises a belief that humpback whales are navigated by stars and illustrated three reasons in support of that. However, the points are considered unconvincing by the lecture.

According to the passage, humpback whales' developed cognitive ability enable them to use stars to navigate by. However, such argument is challenged by the lecture in that there is no connection between cognitive ability and using stars for navigation. Some animals that possess only average level of intelligence, like ducks, also use stars as clues for navigation. This counter example reveals that navigating using stars is an instinct rather than a sign of intelligence, and it cannot be concluded that the more intelligent a specific kind of animal is, like the humpback whales, the more likely they are to use stars for navigation.

Secondly, the passage asserts that the fact that humpback whales migrate in straight lines provides clues for their being navigated by stars. The lecture casts doubt on this, suggesting that there could be alternative explanations. Chances are that humpback whales are following cues of the earth's magnetic field, to which the humpback whales' biomagnetic ties are sensitive. Therefore, the humpback whales' migrating in straight lines might come as a result of being oriented by the earth's magnetic field.

Lastly, the spy-hopping of humpback whales is said to be another evidence, which allows them to look at the stars to gather related information. This claim is disputed by the lecture, however, that the spy-hopping has nothing to do with finding clues from the stars. Spy-hopping is also exhibited in other animals like sharks that do not migrate, but use it to look for animals to hunt. Another challenge to the point made by the passage is that, humpback whales do spy-hopping in the daytime, which invalidates the claim to pure speculation.

示例范文

The reading passage suggests that humpback whales navigate by the stars, **but the lecture presents counterarguments that challenge this theory.**

The reading **posits** that the cognitive abilities of humpback whales enable them to use stars for navigation. **The lecture, however, disputes this by highlighting that** intelligence does not necessarily correlate with the ability to navigate by stars, **citing ducks as an example of** an average intelligence species that can also navigate by stars.

The reading **implies** that the straight-line migration of humpback whales supports the star navigation theory. **The lecture, in contrast, proposes that** the whales might be using the Earth's magnetic field for orientation, **supported by** the presence of biomagnetite in their brains.

Lastly, the reading interprets spy-hopping as a behavior related to star navigation. **The lecture counters this by pointing out that** spy-hopping is not exclusive to whales and is not necessarily for observing stars, as evidenced by the daytime occurrences of this behavior in humpback whales.

In conclusion, the lecture challenges the theory that humpback whales use stars for navigation by presenting alternative explanations for their behaviors. It suggests that intelligence, straight-line migration, and spy-hopping do not necessarily indicate the use of stars for navigation.

1.5 总结

第一段亮出阅读材料和听力材料的关系，后三段分段列出阅读材料的观点以及听力材料是如何反驳的，如有时间在最后一段做一个总结。

- 第一段：
 - 阅读材料列举了什么内容： **The passage outlines three proposed [methods/beliefs/reasons] to [address/explain] ...,**
 - 听力材料的反驳：
 - * while the lecture **critiques** these methods **as impractical.**
 - * while the lecture **challenges these points**, offering alternative perspectives.
 - * but the lecture **presents counterarguments** that challenge this theory.
 - * which the lecture **challenges as misunderstandings** of their behavior.
- 主体段
 - 描述阅读材料的观点和逻辑链：
 - * 正面表达观点的词： suggest, argue, reveal, propose, posit, imply, point out, highlight, ...
 - 描述听力材料的观点和逻辑链：
 - * **The lecture, however, raises concerns about**
 - * **The lecture, on the other hand, highlights**
 - * **The lecture, however, disputes this by highlighting that**
 - * **However, the lecture counters this by pointing out that**
 - * **The lecture, however, raises the issue of income disparity, suggesting that**
 - * **In contrast, the lecture highlights the potential negative consequence of**
 - * **However, the lecture refutes this notion, explaining that**
 - * **The lecture challenges this, suggesting that**
- 总结段：
 - In conclusion, the lecture [challenges the theory] that [the passage's stance].
 - It suggests that [the lecture's stance].

2 Academic Discussion

2.1 Discussion 1

2.1.1 题目

Your professor is teaching a class on political science. Write a post responding to the professor's question. In your response, you should

- express and support your personal opinion
- make a contribution to the discussion in your own words

An effective response will contain at least 100 words.

Professor

Today we're going to discuss whether the government should tax unhealthy products, such as sugary drinks and junk food. On one hand, taxing these products could discourage people from consuming them and reduce health problems. On the other hand, some argue that such taxes unfairly target lower-income families who may rely on these products as affordable sources of food. If you had to choose, would you support or oppose taxing unhealthy products? Why?

Sam

I support the idea of taxing unhealthy products. These products are often high in sugar, salt, and fat, which can lead to serious health problems such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. As you said, by taxing these products, the government can discourage people from consuming them and resolve some of these health issues. Moreover, the revenue generated from such taxes can be used to fund advertising campaigns that promote healthy eating habits. Advertising campaigns that encourage healthy lifestyles can have a major impact on the overall wellbeing of society in the long run.

Tanya

I disagree. I believe that such taxes are unfair to families that don't have a lot of money. Wealthy people will not care about the taxes and their habits won't change. Additionally, if these taxes are implemented some people might try to save money by purchasing lower-quality products that are cheaper in the first place. That means they could suffer even more health problems. In time, we might become even more unhealthy. There are better solutions to this problem than new taxes.

2.1.2 作文

我的作文

While this topic is challenging and is value-dependent, I hold the same stance with Sam. I appreciate him pointing out that the sin tax can not only refrain people from consuming tons of unhealthy products, but also collect revenues for advertising campaigns that promotes healthy lifestyle. Apart from that, I'd like to add that those revenues can also be used for redistribution, which is in favor of the poor. Admittedly, Tanya's point makes sense, but in the meantime we should realize that the tax on unhealthy goods acts as a way to correct people's internality, in the sense that people tend to underestimate the negative effect of current indulgence and overestimate the urge to consume immediately. This reasoning helps justify the tax. Moreover, as is supplemented by Sam, such revenue collected from tax can be used to benefit the poor.

示例范文

I **strongly advocate for** the imposition of taxes on unhealthy products. I **completely align with Sam's belief that** such taxes could significantly reduce the prevalence of major health issues in society. **Additionally, I propose that** a portion of the revenue generated from these taxes should be directed towards health and nutrition research and development. This could include funding for studies that investigate the impact of unhealthy foods, the development of healthier food alternatives, and the discovery of new strategies to promote better dietary habits across different population segments. Investing in this research could yield long-term solutions and insights crucial for tackling dietary-related health problems.

Tanya **raised a concern about** the possibility of individuals opting for lower-quality goods as a cost-saving measure, but she **overlooked the potential for** government interventions such as subsidies, incentives, or support programs aimed at making healthier food options more accessible and affordable. By implementing these measures alongside the unhealthy food tax, it ensures that nutritious alternatives are available, preventing people from turning to inferior quality products.

To sum up, I am a firm proponent of taxing unhealthy products.

2.2 Discussion 2

2.2.1 题目

Your professor is teaching a class on political science. Write a post responding to the professor's question. In your response, you should

- express and support your personal opinion
- make a contribution to the discussion in your own words

An effective response will contain at least 100 words.

Professor

In class today, we are going to talk about grading students. Before you come to class, I want you to think about whether grades are beneficial. On one hand, they provide a way to measure students' progress. On the other hand, some argue that grades are too focused on performance and don't provide an accurate picture of a student's overall academic abilities. If you had to choose, would you say that students should be given grades or not? Why?

Lila

I think that students should not be given grades. Grades create a needlessly competitive environment and can make students feel like they are only valued for their academic performance. This can be harmful to their mental health and can discourage them. Instead of giving specific grades, teachers should provide personal feedback that helps students understand what they need to improve and how they can do so. I think that approach leads to more academic success in the long run.

Jake

I disagree. I believe that grades are the only way for students to understand how well they are doing and the only way to motivate them to work harder. Without grades, there would be no way to measure their progress or to identify areas where they need to improve. Moreover, grades prepare students for the real world where they will be judged based on their performance. The only way for adults to advance in their careers is to consistently perform well and grading children prepares them for that.

2.2.2 作文

我的作文

When it comes to whether or not we should adopt grades, I strongly agree with Jake. I appreciate his point on the grades' role of evaluation on performance and getting students well-prepared for the real world. Additionally, it is noteworthy that grades provides incentives, both carrots and sticks to students. Student who engage themselves in mastering a subject deserve a decent grade for all the effort they have put into, and those who do not take it seriously should get punished for that.

Admittedly, as Lila said, grades may lead to competition and twisted goals of students. But that's definitely not the sufficient reason to deny the functions of grades from the bottom and abandon such system. Instead, we should focus on refining the grading system to make it more comprehensive in the sense that students are allowed to flourish in various areas and get full credits for their efforts and innovations.

示例范文

From my perspective, students should be given grades. Grades, when accompanied by constructive feedback, offer valuable insights into a student's performance. This feedback is crucial for learning and development, as it guides students in understanding their mistakes and learning from them. It also provides a roadmap for both students and teachers to focus their efforts more effectively. By highlighting strengths and weaknesses, grades combined with feedback can significantly enhance a student's learning experience.

While it's true that grades can foster competition, this isn't inherently negative. Competition, when framed positively, can motivate students to strive for excellence and can prepare them for real-world scenarios where performance is often measured against peers. The key is to balance this with collaborative learning opportunities that emphasize teamwork and collective achievement, showing that individual success does not have to come at the expense of others.

In summary, assigning grades to students does more good than harm.

2.3 Discussion 3

2.3.1 题目

Your professor is teaching a class on political science. Write a post responding to the professor's question. In your response, you should

- express and support your personal opinion
- make a contribution to the discussion in your own words

An effective response will contain at least 100 words.

Professor

Today, we're going to discuss the impact of social media on society. On one hand, social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have connected people from all over the world. However, there are concerns about the negative effects of social media, such as the spread of misinformation, the rise of cyberbullying, and addiction to social media use. What do you think? Does social media cause more harm than good?

Sarah

I think that social media has caused more harm than good. While it's true that social media platforms have connected people in unprecedented ways, they have also caused real harm to individuals and societies. Additionally, social media platforms have been linked to mental health problems such as anxiety and depression, particularly among young people. This is probably because they allow people to anonymously bully and harass other users.

Mark

I disagree with Sara. I think that social media has mostly improved society. For instance, it has given a voice to people that previously were ignored. Moreover, it has provided a platform for political activism that has led to positive change. And, of course, social media has made it easy for everyone to stay connected to family and friends who are far away. In the past we had to make expensive phone calls to contact our loved ones, now we can talk to them and send them pictures for free on social networks. While there are negative aspects of social media, they are far outweighed by the benefits.

2.3.2 作文

我的作文

While the conclusion depends on the values individuals hold for the stances that they take, I strongly agree with Mark on this issue. Social media has made it more convenient than ever before to make connections with people around us, and made many of the impossible possible. Additionally, I'd like to say that such convenience provided by social media can facilitate the development of our modern world, in the sense that it lowers the cost of communication and promotes the efficiency of collaborative working.

Admittedly, we have to acknowledge the downside that hatred may creep and spread via social media, as suggested by Sarah. However, we can do much more than leave the demon alone. We can foster a network in which hostility is defended away and warmth is embraced. Moreover, we may build a community to show care for those in disadvantage. By doing so we may circumvent the bad and amplify the good.

In conclusion, I believe that the social media do more good than harm.

示例范文

I am deeply convinced of the vast benefits that social media brings to the table. **I fully agree with** Mark's view that social media has the power to uplift voices that have traditionally been ignored, offering them a platform for expression. Beyond this, social media serves as a cost-effective and efficient way for businesses to engage with their audience, showcase their products or services, and expand their market reach. The influence of user-generated content, such as reviews and personal narratives, is pivotal in guiding consumer decisions, thereby building trust and loyalty towards a brand. This vibrant, interactive space allows businesses to flourish and adapt within the constantly evolving digital landscape.

While Sarah highlighted the impact of social media on youth mental health, **she overlooked the possibility of** mitigating these issues. Implementing more rigorous policies and reporting systems is crucial. Fostering digital literacy and empathy among users, raising awareness of the consequences of online behavior, and offering mental health support resources can help cultivate a more secure and supportive online community.

In summary, **my firm belief is that** the advantages offered by social media are significant.

2.4 Discussion 4

2.4.1 题目

Your professor is teaching a class on political science. Write a post responding to the professor's question. In your response, you should

- express and support your personal opinion
- make a contribution to the discussion in your own words

An effective response will contain at least 100 words.

Professor

A new story about Artificial Intelligence (AI) is in the news almost every day. And, of course, companies are spending an enormous amount of money to develop new technologies related to AI. Before next class, I want you to consider the following question: Is AI a dangerous technology that, overall, will be harmful to society, or is it a powerful tool that will improve the lives of people?

Megan

Personally, I think AI is a threat to society. As AI technology advances, many jobs may become automated, leaving people without work and that will certainly increase income inequality. Additionally, there's the risk that AI systems could be programmed with biases or used to discriminate against certain groups. We need to be careful and ensure that AI is developed in an ethical and responsible way. Since we can't guarantee that right now, I think it is best to slow down when it comes to this kind of technology.

David

I disagree with Megan. **I'm of the opinion that** AI is a tool for progress. It has the potential to solve many of the world's problems, from climate change to disease. Additionally, AI can help us make better decisions by analyzing vast amounts of data and identifying patterns that humans may miss. **That said**, I agree with Megan that we must ensure that AI is developed and used in a responsible way that benefits society as a whole.

2.4.2 作文

我的作文

When it comes to the evaluation of AI's pros and cons, I hold the same stance with David that AI is beneficial to the humankind if used with a responsible and cautious way. Apart from that, I'd like to add that AI's help not only takes the form of assisting people in solving problems, but makes us armed with adequate knowledge so that we are freed from tedious information-gathering jobs to work with more advanced questions.

Admittedly, AI seemingly imposes threats on some employers whose jobs might be automated by AI in the future. However, I'd like to point out that AI brings more opportunities than threats. Some jobs would inevitably be replaced, but what comes next is the advancement of the society, meaning more jobs created and more material opulence people would possess.

In conclusion, I believe that AI is a good technology that we should make good use of.

示例范文

I wholeheartedly believe in the significant benefits of AI. **I am fully in agreement with David's perspective that** AI holds the promise to help us tackle the vast array of urgent challenges our society faces today. **I would also add that** AI's capability to automate routine and monotonous tasks can dramatically enhance productivity and foster innovation. By assuming responsibility for these repetitive duties, AI frees up human capital to concentrate on tasks that demand creativity, critical thinking, and complex problem-solving abilities.

The risk of AI systems inheriting or amplifying human biases is a significant concern. **However, this challenge also presents an opportunity to** consciously design AI systems that are fair, transparent, and accountable. By involving diverse teams in AI development and employing ethical guidelines that prioritize inclusivity, AI can be designed to avoid biases rather than *perpetuate* them. Rigorous testing and continuous monitoring can further ensure AI systems treat all users equitably.

In summary, AI is a powerful tool that will *enhance* people's lives.

2.5 总结

总共三段。第一段亮明观点，第二段照顾对立观点，第三段极简总结。

- 第一段
 - 亮出观点: I wholeheartedly believe that [your one-sentence stance on the topic].
 - 二选一站队: I am fully in agreement with [one of the two students]'s perspective that [paraphrase the opinion concisely].
 - 作出补充: I would also add that [supplementary argument; usually articulate your stance from another perspective].
 - (如可以或有必要, 鉴于对立观点对部分表述加以限制)
- 第二段
 - 承认对立观点的部分正确性 (可能是描述对应的事实):
 - * While [the other student] highlighted the [downside] of ..., [the other student] overlooked the [upside] of ...
 - * The risk of [what the opposite side believes] is a significant concern. However, this [downside] also presents an opportunity to ...
 - 完成让步论证 (篇幅不要大于第一段)
- 第三段: In summary, (I firmly believe that) [reiterate your stance concisely].