Notes on IELTS essay writing:

Every paragraph comprises three main parts:

1. Topic sentence
2. Main body
3. Concluding sentence (optional)

Topic sentence must be neither too broad nor too specific. It could be at the beginning or the end or even implied in the paragraph but the first form is the clearest one.

You can use categories such as place, time, quality, similarity, differences, number, cause, effect for specification.

Ex:

Soccer has become (increasingly popular) (in the United States) (in the last 10 years)

Compared with earth, the moon is an unusual geological specimen.

Television comedy shows are undermining America’s social values.

Special marks usage:

if this budget was spent on (for instance) **on the job training**

This is where the Internet, in fact, can play a useful part: to

**supplement** and add to **knowledge**

Main body: consists of support sentences to clarify the topic sentence.

Some ways to write them:

1. Examples
2. Details
3. Anecdotes
4. Facts
5. Statistics

All of them should support the topic sentence either directly or indirectly.

Note: avoid using personal statements. Essays should be written in an academic impersonal style. So you should avoid using some words:

No: terrible, shocking, disgusting or wonderful, fantastic, brilliant

Yes: regrettable, worrying, inadvisable or admirable, helpful, invaluable

You should never use contractions (e.g. don’t, won’t etc.) or exclamation (!) marks

Sometimes the topics specify certain constraints like: both short and long term effects

Explain the benefits of the solution you give

Create a plan for your essay (in contrast with task 1):

Refer to Cambridge essay PDF book for more info.

Achieving high band scores requires wide range of grammar. Thereby you should be able to use complex structures (e.g. by creating a complex sentence by connecting two simple ones)

Remember that you will improve your score by giving a balanced response (ie not saying ‘I

totally agree/disagree’ but saying ‘I partly agree/disagree, because . . .’)

Remember the importance of having a

balanced conclusion (an opinion with ‘as long as . . . or ‘provided that . . .’ or similar) after the small

concession paragraph.

Make sure to check out complex grammar structure pdf.

Some words and collocations:

On the one hand/on the other hand

Firstly, Furthermore, finally, as a last point

music as one of a wide range of secondary skills, ranking below literacy and sitting alongside sports

By contrast, conversely, turning to …,

The stronger argument is in favor of …

The main cause is, another factor could be,

The most serious impact, another possible effect, third major effect

This leads us to the second …

A Driving force behind sth

Foremost, whereby

They say, with some merit, …

Those who favor … (proponents)

A second point in favor is that

Turning to possible remedies/solutions/counter-measures

Is a case in point

By and large, (everything considered)

A further effect is

There are people who assert that…

I can’t align thoroughly with either group

I have some reservations about both positions

Counter-argument

Added to this is … (moreover)

Incriminating

Trawling

to detain culprits

potential trouble-makers

fundamental breach of civil liberties

convictions/conviction rates

informants and leads

on the grounds of (regarding)

to build it into their system

moreover/ what is more

goes to the heart of

Regarding whether police should be locally hired,

there is a case to be made on both sides of the debate.

In such situations, the

argument goes, the police need to

A second objection is that

Expressing personal opinions:

* In my opinion, …
* Personally, I think that …
* It seems to me that ...
* I must admit that …
* I believe/suppose that ...
* I cannot deny that …
* As I see it, …
* As far as I'm concerned, …
* I would argue that ...
* I'd like to point out that …
* In my experience, ...

**Very strong opinions:**

* I am sure that …
* I am convinced that ...
* I am certain that ...

*Example*: I would argue that computers are rather beneficial for kids.

Proving your arguments

* to attest, ...
* to prove, ...
* this (fact) is attested/proven by ...
* this (fact) is evidenced by ...
* this (fact) is testified by ...
* this (fact) is endorsed/supported by...
* this (evidence) establishes that ...

*Example*: Consuming moderate amounts of sweets can be good for health. This is evidenced by a number of cases when people improved their health conditions by eating chocolate.

Expressing general point of view:

* It is (generally) claimed that …
* It is (generally) said that …
* It is (generally) thought that ...
* It is (generally) considered that ...
* A common opinion is that ...
* A popular belief is that ...

*Example*: It is considered that rigorous diets are very unhealthy.

Outlining facts

* The fact is that …
* It is obvious that …
* It is clear that …
* There is no doubt that …
* This proves that …

*Example*: It is obvious that deforestation has no positive effects.

Generalizing

* Generally speaking, ...
* On the whole, ...
* Typically, ...
* By and large ...

*Example*: Generally speaking, smoking is a bad habit.

Giving examples

* For example, ...
* For instance, ...
* A good illustration of this is ...
* Evidence for this is provided by ...
* We can see this when ...

*Example*: A lot of wild animals are endangered. Evidence for this is proved by decreasing number of species.

Concluding

* To summarize, ...
* In conclusion, ...
* Overall, ...
* On balance, ...
* Taking everything into consideration, ...