

IELTS Sample Essays

These IELTS sample essays have been categorised in a way that makes it easy for you to see how certain essay question types require you to provide certain responses to ensure the question is fully answered.

Specifically these are:

Agree / Disagree

Negative/Positive Development

Discuss Two Opinions

Causes and Effects

Causes and Solutions

Problems and Solutions

Advantages and Disadvantages

Do advantages outweigh disadvantages

Two Part Question Types

Agree / Disagree Type Questions

In these types of question you are given one opinion and you then have to state the extent to which you agree or disagree with that opinion:

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

According to a recent study, the more time people use the Internet, the less time they spend with real human beings. Some people say that instead of seeing the Internet as a way of opening up new communication possibilities world- wide, we

should be concerned about the effect this is having on social interaction.

How far do you agree with this opinion?

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

Write at least 250 words.

Internet Essay - Model Answer

It is evident that, at present, people are spending a considerable amount of time on the Internet, and thus spending less time with real people. I strongly agree that although this use of the Internet has greatly increased the level of communication available, it has also had detrimental effects on the amount and type of social interaction that takes place.

The benefits of the Internet in terms of increased communication are clear, with people connected across the globe. In the past, communication was only possible by phone or mail, which entailed time and expense. It also usually meant just keeping in contact with those people already known to you. With the internet, this has changed dramatically. Email and social networking sites such as Facebook and MSN have created online communities that are global in scale, and they have fostered communication between people and countries that we would not have thought possible in the not too distant past.

That said, there is no doubt in my mind that this has had negative impacts on social interaction. People, especially the younger generation, spend hours of their time online, chatting and on forums. Although this can be beneficial, it is certainly not the same as real interaction with human beings and does not involve the

same skills. It is important that children have and maintain real friendships in order to develop their own interpersonal skills. Not only this, it can also have negative effects on local communities if people are spending most of their time communicating online and not mixing in their neighbourhoods, and possibly lead to feelings of isolation for those individuals who do not have a 'real' person to turn to in times of need.

To conclude, I believe that the internet has undoubtedly been beneficial, but there are good reasons to be concerned about social interaction in our societies. It is therefore important that we maintain a balance between our online life and our contact with real human beings.

Positive/Negative Development Essay

Scientists say that in the future humanity will speak the same language. Do you think this is a positive or negative social development?

This type of question is asking for *your* opinion (Do you think...) write about the point of views of you, instead of other people.

You can answer this type of question in 3 ways: (1) You believe that it is a positive development. (2) You believe that it is a negative development. (3) You reckon that it is both positive and negative.

You should make your opinion clear in the introduction, support it with good ideas in the main body, and repeat / summarise it in the conclusion.

The increasing use of some languages has led to a prospect that the world may speak one language in the future. While this has several advantages, I believe that it is an overall negative trend.

On the one hand, it is true that having a universal language may remove communication barriers among people in the world. When the world speaks the same language, this would result in fewer misunderstandings caused by people using different languages to convey their thoughts. The benefits of a universal dialect may reverberate across the globe, as people could work for overseas companies, travel to exotic places or live in a foreign country without encountering any significant difficulties in communication. In this way, a predominant language may bridge the gap between diverse groups of people and form a global village where individuals can live in harmony with each other.

On the other hand, I contend that the above positive impacts are negated by potential problems. Primarily, if one language were spoken by all people, this would cause the loss of cultural diversity that makes human society interesting. When a language is marginalized, a whole way of life may disappear with it, which includes history, customs and social etiquette. For example, the widespread use of English has put some minor and indigenous languages in Africa on the verge of extinction. Without proactive actions to preserve those languages, society might witness the disappearance of the whole culture that has evolved over the course of human history.

In conclusion, although a universal language may have several benefits, I firmly hold the view that the drawbacks are more significant.

Discuss Two Opinions Type Questions

In this essay question type you are given two opinions, and you have to discuss both of these and then give your own view:

Some people believe the aim of university education is to help graduates get better jobs. Others believe there are much wider benefits of university education for both individuals and society.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

These days, more and more people are making the choice to go to university. While some people are of the opinion that the only purpose of a university education is to improve job prospects, others think that society and the individual benefit in much broader ways. Both the views shall be discussed in the essay further

It is certainly true that one of the main aims of university is to secure a better job. The majority of people want to improve their future career prospects and attending university is one of the best ways to do this as it increases a person's marketable skills and attractiveness to potential employers. In addition, further education is very expensive for many people, so most would not consider it if it would not provide them with a more secure future and a higher standard of living. Thus job prospects are very important.

However, there are other benefits for individuals and society. Firstly, the independence of living away from home is a benefit because it helps the students develop better social skills and improve as a

person. A case in point is that many students will have to leave their families, live in halls of residence and meet new friends. As a result, their maturity and confidence will grow enabling them to live more fulfilling lives. Secondly, society will gain from the contribution that the graduates can make to the economy. We are living in a very competitive world, so countries need educated people in order to compete and prosper.

To conclude, I believe that although a main aim of university education is to get the best job, there are clearly further benefits. If we continue to promote and encourage university attendance, it will lead to a better future for individuals and society.

Cause Type Questions

There are a variety of 'cause type' essay questions. In these you first have to give the reasons why something has happened, in other words the causes, but then discuss a different aspect of it, such as the effects, solutions or the extent to whether it is a positive or negative development:

This causes and effects essay has been organized into two body paragraphs.

The first discussing the reasons, and the second discussing the effects on health and society.

In many parts of the world today there is a profitable market for products which lighten or whiten people's skin.

Outline the reasons for using such products and discuss what effects they have in terms of health and society.

In many countries, particularly places like Asia, skin whitening products are incredibly popular and provide huge profits for the companies involved in their sale. The main reason of using skin

care products is attraction towards white tone skin while the effects that it can have on the skin shall be discussed in the essay further.

The principal reason that people use skin whitening products is because whiter skin is seen to be more desirable than darker skin. To understand why, we need to firstly look at history. In ancient times, those people of a higher status tended to stay indoors, whilst people of a lower status worked outside, usually farming. As a result, those people who were indoors had much lighter skin, which means that whiter skin is now associated with having a higher status than dark skin. Another reason, which is partly related to this, is the desire for the 'Western' look. For example, plastic surgery to create western eyelids and noses is common in Asia, and the white skin is part of this. These beliefs and images are also perpetuated in the media, with adverts showing people with white skin as more successful and attractive.

However, despite the fact that having whiter skin may improve a person's self-esteem, these products can have negative effects. Regarding health, there are reports that people are harming their skin permanently as some products bought over the counter have prescription-strength ingredients. For instance, some contain steroids or toxins which can severely damage the skin and other parts of the body. In terms of society, there are also detrimental effects. Such behaviour perpetuates the belief that 'white' is better than 'black', and thus those with darker skin may experience discrimination.

In conclusion, people use whitening products due to the fact that white skin, usually through the media, is portrayed as more desirable. However, steps should be taken to change this image as the drawbacks of this are clear, with potentially dangerous consequences for people's future health and society as a whole.

Problems & Solutions Type Questions

In these type of questions, instead of discussing the causes of a problem, you need to discuss the problems related to a particular issue in society, and then suggest what can be to solve these problems:

Body 1: Problems

Body 2: Solutions

Overpopulation of urban areas has led to numerous problems.

Identify one or two serious ones and suggest ways that governments and individuals can tackle these problems.

Many countries of the world are currently experiencing problems caused by rapidly growing populations in urban areas. The effects of overpopulation are accelerating alarmingly and thus, it has become crucial to identify these problems and determine ways to tackle them. Both the problems as well as solutions shall be discussed in the essay further.

Overpopulation can lead to overcrowding and poor quality housing in many large cities. Poorly heated or damp housing could cause significant health problems, resulting in illness, such as bronchitis or pneumonia. Another serious consequence of overcrowding is arising crime rate as poor living conditions may lead young people in particular to take desperate measures and turn to crime or drugs.

In terms of solutions, I believe the government should be largely responsible. Firstly, it is vital that the state provides essential housing and healthcare for all its citizens. Secondly, setting up community projects to help foster more community spirit and help keep young people off the street is a good idea. For example, youth clubs or evening classes for teenagers would keep them occupied. Finally, more effective policing of inner city areas would also be beneficial.

Naturally, individuals should also try to address these problems. One way is to put pressure on the government to ensure they tackle the problems by, for instance, forming action groups to lobby the government and request intervention and adequate funding. They could also form Neighbourhood Watch areas to try and help reduce the high levels of crime.

To summarise, it is clear that the problems caused by overpopulation in urban areas are very serious. Yet if governments and individuals share a collective responsibility, then it may well become possible to offer some solutions.

Cause and Solutions Essay

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

Levels of youth crime are increasing rapidly in most cities around the world.

What are the reasons for this, and suggest some solutions.

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

Write at least 250 words.

Sample IELTS Writing - Model Answer

Over the last few decades, many cities around the world have seen alarming increase in the levels of youth crime. The major problem

could be poor parenting while it's possible solutions can be discussed in the essay further.

The first reason is connected with the family. In order for a child to grow up in a balanced way, it is very important that he or she is nurtured well by his or her parents. However, these days, it is often the case that children are neglected. This may be because of the fact that many parents in cities now both have to work so are often not around to give their children support when needed. Another factor is the increasing levels of poverty around the world. We have seen with globalization the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, and this inevitably means that those who are poorer will have to resort to illegal means to get what others have. Of course, this will include the children in the poorer families.

However, there are ways to tackle such problems. Firstly, one of the ways to combat the problem is to have stricter punishments. Although, as discussed above, it can be outside factors that lead to crime, it is still important to have severe punishments to deter teenagers from crime. All too often, because they are young, the courts are too lenient. Parents also have to take more responsibility for their children's actions. They too should be punished if their children commit crime.

To sum up, several factors have led to increases in youth crime, but measures are available to tackle this problem.

Do advantages outweigh disadvantages essay

These days, many people have their own computer and telephone, so it is quite easy for them to do their job at home.

Does working at home have more advantages or more disadvantages?

In this essay you have the following task:

Does working at home have more advantages or disadvantages?

This suggests that there are both pros and cons of working from home as you are asked which there are more of.

So in your answer to this working from home essay it's better to discuss both but write more about the side that you think there are more of so that the essay content reflects your opinion.

Try then to think of one reason for one side of the argument and two for the other side.

Have more control of time (advantage)

Loneliness (disadvantage)

Less influence in the company (disadvantage)

So in this case, the writer thinks of course that there are more disadvantages and this should be clearly stated when you give your opinion in the introduction and / or conclusion.

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

These days, many people have their own computer and telephone, so it is quite easy for them to do their job at home.

Does working at home have more advantages or more disadvantages?

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

Write at least 250 words.

In the present age it is common for people to work from home because of advances in technology. On balance, I would argue that this has more negative impacts than positive.

One advantage of working from home is the freedom it provides. Home workers can organise their work around their home life as they can stop or start work as they please, and thus if, for example, they have children, they can easily arrange to take them and pick them up from school. They can also undertake any other tasks that they need to do during the day, such as doing the laundry or shopping, and then finish work later. Overall then, employees have more control over their lives.

Despite these positive factors, however, there are a number of disadvantages. The first of these is the fact that those who work at home nearly all the time will not be mixing with colleagues. When people are at work, they are always surrounded by others, but at home, an employee is likely to be alone most the time. This may lead to feelings of loneliness due to a lack of interaction.

Another drawback is the fact that one may have less influence in the company. It is often the case that important decisions arise on the spur of the moment as unexpected issues arise. If an employee

is not there, others may have to step in. If this occurs on a regular basis, the employees contribution to the company may decline, meaning a higher probability of getting overlooked for things such as promotion.

In conclusion, although there are positives and negatives related to working from home, there are more negative impacts. Employees should therefore consider carefully whether working from home is the best choice.

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

In order to solve traffic problems, governments should tax private car owners heavily and use the money to improve public transportation.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of such a solution?

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

Write at least 250 words.

You are asked to discuss the **advantages** and **disadvantages** of introducing such a policy to tackle the issue.

This question is very clear, and it does not specifically ask you for an opinion.

You just need to look at both sides of the issue.

The logical way to answer it would be to discuss each side in a different paragraph.

Traffic Problems Essay - Model Answer

Traffic congestion in many cities around the world is severe. One possible solution to this problem is to impose heavy taxes on car drivers and use this money to make public transport better. Both the benefits as well as drawbacks shall be discussed in the essay further.

One of the first benefits of such a measure is that the heavy taxes would discourage car owners from using their cars because it would become very expensive to drive. This would mean that they would begin to make use of public transport instead, thus reducing traffic problems and pollution as well. Another benefit would be that much more use would be made of public transport if it was improved. It is often the case that public transport in cities is very poor. For example, we often see old buses and trains that people would rather not use. High taxes would generate enough money to make the necessary changes.

Nevertheless, there are drawbacks to such a solution. First and foremost, this would be a heavy burden on the car drivers. At present, taxes are already high for a lot of people, and so further taxes would only mean less money at the end of the month for most people who may have no choice but to drive every day. In addition, this type of tax would likely be set at a fixed amount. This would mean that it would hit those with less money harder, whilst the rich could likely afford it. It is therefore not a fair tax.

To conclude, this solution is worth considering to improve the current situation, but there are advantages and disadvantages of introducing such a policy.

Two Part question Essay

It is basically an **opinion essay**, as you have to give your opinion on protecting old buildings.

However, it does not ask you whether you agree or disagree.

There are two parts to this essay question so you must answer both.

Essay on Old Buildings

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

Many old buildings protected by law are part of a nation's history. Some people think they should be knocked down and replaced by new ones.

How important is it to maintain old buildings?

Should history stand in the way of progress?

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

Write at least 250 words.

Model Answer

Most nations around the world have at least some, or possibly many, old buildings such as temples, churches and houses in their cities, villages and surrounding areas which have historical significance. In my opinion, it is very important to maintain these, but this does not mean progress should stop.

Preserving certain old buildings is important for several reasons. Firstly, these structures provide an insight into the history of our countries, showing us how people many centuries ago lived their lives. Without them, we could only learn by books, and it would undoubtedly be sad if this were the only way to see them. Many of these buildings are also very beautiful. Take for example the many religious buildings such as churches and temples that we see around the world. Not only this, but on a more practical level, many of these buildings provide important income to a country as many tourists visit them in great numbers.

However, this certainly does not mean that modernization should be discouraged. I believe that old buildings can be protected in tandem with progress. For example, in many circumstances we see old historic buildings being renovated whilst maintaining their original character, and being used for modern purposes. Also, in no way does history hinder progress, and in fact it is the opposite. By studying and learning about our history, we understand more about the world we live in, and this helps us to build a better future.

To conclude, I believe that it is very important to protect and preserve old buildings as we can learn about our history as can others from other countries. Such knowledge can also help us to understand how to modernize our countries in the best way.