

Essays

• Purpose of an essay

An essay is a piece of writing in which you are asked to discuss a topic that might be controversial or relevant somehow. It usually follows a class discussion.

• Language

The language of an essay should be formal. Also, make sure that you justify all your ideas and that you use appropriate connectors to link your sentences and paragraphs.

• Structure

When writing an essay, you can choose whether to give it a title or not. This could be the same question provided in the task. As for the structure, it should have an introductory paragraph, and a conclusion at the end. The body should consist of 2 or 3 main paragraphs, depending on how you decide to structure your ideas.

• Giving your opinion

Typically, in an essay we tend to express our opinion at the end, although it is acceptable to do so at the beginning, too.

• Common topics

Some common topics to write essays about are the environment, health and fitness, work and employment, friendships and family, money, celebrities, etc.

• Sample Answer 1:

Protecting the Environment

One of the things that worries people most nowadays is the environment. In the last few decades, humans have been polluting way too much, which has had a negative effect on the environment. For this reason, we must protect it from now on.

First, we ought to start paying attention to the 3 Rs: reduce, reuse and recycle. By doing so, we will reduce the quantity of rubbish, we will not throw away so many things and we will be able to recycle most of our waste.

Second, a very good idea is to stop using cars so much and start cycling or walking a little more. For example, instead of commuting by car, we can try to do it on foot or by bike.

Finally, if we really want to change things, we should teach young pupils about the dangers of contamination and pollution. It's the only way to change the future, because they are the future citizens of the world.

In conclusion, I believe that if we do these three things, we can still prevent humans from destroying the environment.

• Useful Expressions

- Sample 1:
 - *One of the things that*
 - *In the last few decades,*
 - *For this reason,*
 - *First, / Second, / Third,*
 - *Finally,*
 - *By doing so,*
 - *For example,*
 - *In conclusion,*
- Sample 2:
 - *Nowadays,*
 - *However,*
 - *Firstly, / Secondly, / Thirdly,*
 - *Otherwise,*
 - *On the other hand,*
 - *For instance,*
 - *Finally,*
 - *take into account*
 - *On the whole,*
 - *I am of the opinion,*
 - *in order to*

- Sample 3:

- *we can all agree that*
- *First of all,*
- *It is not advisable to*
- *However,*
- *Finally,*
- *As a result,*
- *To sum up,*

• More Useful Expressions

- Linking devices:
 - *on the one hand, / on the other hand,*
 - *nevertheless*
 - *Even so,*

- *Even though*
- *However,*
- *In spite of*
- *Despite*
- *but*
- *although*
- *because of this / that*
- *Therefore,*
- *It is therefore*
- *thus*
- *As a result,*
- *As a result of this / that*
- *For this / that reason,*
- *Consequently,*
- *As a consequence,*
- Providing examples:
 - *such as*
 - *for example*
 - *for instance*
 - *like*
- Giving someone else's opinion:
 - *Some people say*
 - *Many experts claim*
 - *According to*
 - *It is said that*
 - *It is believed*
 - *It is a fact that*
 - *The truth is that*
- Concluding:
 - *In conclusion, I am of the opinion that*
 - *On the whole, I would say that*
 - *In my view,*
 - *The way I see it,*
 - *To sum up, if you ask me*

WRITING PART 2

Articles

• Purpose of an article

The goal of an article is usually to talk about a topic you like or in which you are an expert. Also, your article should aim to keep the reader engaged and, in some cases, recommend whatever it is you are talking about.

• Language

Articles are usually expected to be less formal than essays. Because they are intended to entertain, you can use more relaxed language, using contractions, phrasal verbs and more informal words. Also, it is common to use rhetorical questions and exclamation marks to keep the reader engaged or to make a point. You should address the reader directly and you can use humour where you think it's appropriate.

• Structure

Articles usually have a title. If possible, this title should be catchy so it grabs the reader's attention. Then, you should have a paragraph for each aspect you are writing about. In your conclusion, you might be expected to make a recommendation. It is a good idea to finish your article with a rhetorical question.

• Giving your opinion

An article is all about your opinion, so feel free to give it wherever you feel it's necessary. Usually, you are asked to write articles about topics you like or are familiar with, so it makes more sense for your opinions to be generally positive. An article is a very personal piece of writing, so you can use first-person sentences freely.

• Common topics

You may be asked to write articles on a variety of topics: the Internet, health and fitness, music, plays, hobbies, etc.

• Sample Task 2:

Fitness bloggers wanted!

Our fitness magazine is looking for influencers to write an article on how to stay fit when you are a college student. So if you have any cool ideas, send us an article in which you:

- Explain the type of exercise you recommend
- Recommend a healthy but cheap diet
- Give other ideas you like.

Write your article.

• Sample Answer 2:

Keep It Healthy!

Are you a busy college student? Do you struggle to keep fit and eat healthily? Don't worry! I am going to tell you exactly what you should do. Keep on reading, you will thank me later!

First of all, you must start moving your body. You could go to the gym, if you have the time. But if you're busy – you're a student, you should be busy! – don't sign up for a gym. Instead, start cycling to college and give up using elevators. You'll see how your fitness improves quickly!

Secondly, your diet is just as important. I suppose you live on a low budget, so I suggest you don't eat out much. Eating out can be unhealthy and expensive. So go to your local supermarket and buy healthy, inexpensive vegetables and fruit.

Finally, pay attention to how you sit when you are studying. Posture is super important to feel well, especially if you are a student or an office worker.

If you follow all these tips, I'm sure you will keep fit easily! And if you already tried that, let me know how you feel now.

• Useful Expressions

- Sample 1:
 - I love it!
 - One of the cool things about
 - straight away
 - Isn't that fantastic?
 - For example,
 - Imagine that
 - However,
 - the greatest thing about
 - In fact,
 - I totally recommend it to everyone!
 - In conclusion,
 - For me,
 - What about you?
- Sample 2:
 - Don't worry!
 - Keep on reading, you will thank me later!
 - First of all,
 - Instead,
 - Secondly,
 - Finally,
 - pay attention to
 - super important
 - especially if
 - If you follow all these tips, I'm sure you will

- Sample 3:

- Since I was a young boy,
- Impressive, right?
- I'd love to share my views with you.
- Although
- my favourite kind of
- but the best one is
- As for
- However,
- All in all,

- In fact
- What about you
- More Useful Expressions
 - Rhetorical questions:
 - Have you ever...?
 - Do you ever wonder...?
 - What do you think about...?
 - Are you a... like me?
 - Are you one of those people who...?
 - What would you say if I told you that...?
 - Introducing different paragraphs/ideas:
 - Firstly,
 - First,
 - In the first place,
 - The coolest thing about
 - What attracts me most
 - To begin with,
 - One thing to consider is
 - Another consideration,
 - Secondly,
 - As for
 - As to
 - Also, as regards
 - In addition,
 - In addition to that,
 - Moreover,
 - Concluding
 - In conclusion,
 - On the whole,
 - To sum up,
 - To conclude
 - All in all
 - ... you will not regret it!

WRITING PART 2

Reviews

• Purpose of a review

The purpose of any review is to talk about a topic in detail, assessing its pros and cons, and making some recommendations. Also, given its similarity to articles, reviews are expected to entertain the reader while being more informative.

• Language

Reviews tend to be quite similar to articles, so the language can be standard or even a little informal. You should address the reader directly, in the second person, and you can use humour if you think it's appropriate.

• Structure

Every review needs a title. This should be as catchy as possible, to grab the reader's attention from the beginning. In the introduction, you should introduce what you are talking about in a leisurely way, trying to entertain the reader. Each paragraph between the introduction and the conclusion should deal with a different aspect. And you should wait until the conclusion to make a recommendation.

• Giving your opinion

Just like with articles, in a review you are expected to give your opinion throughout the whole writing, although the recommendation is expected to happen at the end. A review is very personal, so you can use first-person sentences freely.

• Common topics

Review tasks usually ask you to write about restaurants, books, films, series, musical events, plays, etc.

• Sample Task 1: Restaurant Review

You have found the following advertisement online:

RESTAURANT REVIEWS WANTED!

Have you been to a great restaurant lately? If so, send us an honest review of the restaurant explaining what you liked and disliked of the place as well as its location, staff and how it looks on the inside.

We will publish the first 20 decent reviews we get!

Write a review of a restaurant.

• Sample Answer 1: Restaurant Review

Foster's Hollywood

Being a huge fan of traditional American fast food and restaurant styles, it's no wonder that my favourite restaurant in Granada is Foster's Hollywood.

Located smack in the middle of the city, this fast-food chain serves a wide variety of mouthwatering, American dishes at a reasonable price. These range from typical Tex-Mex nachos or French fries to more elaborate meals like traditional, homemade Bourbon steak. And if you're hungry, it's the perfect place to go, as their servings are absolutely huge!

Another cool thing about this place is its magnificent decor. If you're a film buff, you will quickly fall in love with this place, since all the walls are covered in famous movie posters! Apart from that, it's got a spacious dining hall, super friendly staff and an outdoor terrace which is absolutely fantastic on summer nights!

The only negative thing I can say is that it is right next to a gym, which sometimes makes me feel guilty for eating so much!

Nevertheless, Foster's Hollywood offers delicious meals in an unbeatable atmosphere, so you should definitely give it a try. I promise you won't regret it!

- adventurous
- (un)believable
- breath-taking
- exhilarating
- hilarious
- witty
- a page-turner
- a tearjerker
- a laugh-a-minute
- I couldn't put it down
- a slow start
- a gripping climax

- Restaurant reviews:

- The food:
 - a wide variety of mouth-watering starters/ main courses/ deserts
 - I ordered ... accompanied by a side dish of ...
 - the main course consisted of
 - to be starving hungry / to be dying of hunger
 - poor quality
 - stodgy / bland/ tasty/ delicious/ exquisite/ processed food
 - home-made / take-away / ready meal
 - large selection of ...

- The staff:

- head chef
- waiters
- staff
- service
- attentive/ friendly/ charming/ helpful/ caring
- forgettable/ acceptable
- can hardly get a smile/ inattentive / slow/ disappointing

- The atmosphere / decor:

- location
- setting
- attractive setting
- decor

- magnificent decor / modern/ antique/ cosy / minimalist / attractive
- spacious / spotless
- dull/ dusty/ filthy
- indoor / outdoor
- The price:
 - reasonably priced / cheap / inexpensive
 - worth the money / good value for money
 - expensive / overpriced / not worth the money / pricy
 - poor value for money
 - book in advance
 - always fully booked

- Recommending:

- This book/film/restaurant would be absolutely perfect for
- I would have no hesitation in recommending this book/film/restaurant to
- In conclusion, I recommend this book/film/restaurant to anyone who
- I would highly / strongly recommend...
- I strongly advise you to...
- Everyone should try it / give it a try
- ... not to be missed!
- I certainly wouldn't recommend...
- I strongly advise you against / not to...
- You should probably give ... a miss.

WRITING PART 2

Letters & Emails

• Purpose of a letter or email

The purpose of the letter or email will depend on each task. Some tasks ask you to provide your friend with some important information, while others will ask you to apply for a job, complain about something or ask for information.

• Language

The language depends entirely on the type of task, but in general you should use an informal style only if you are writing to a friend or close relative. Otherwise, you should stick to more formal language, which happens in letters of inquiry, application or complaint.

• Structure

All letters or emails should have a similar structure. You need an opening and closing formula, an introductory and closing paragraph, and a body consisting of as many paragraphs as ideas you are asked to discuss.

• Common topics

Many letters or emails to friends and relatives include giving advice on a certain subject like visiting your town or keeping fit, or maybe some tips on how to deal with a problem. As for formal letters and emails, they usually ask you to apply for a job or a volunteering programme, or to complain about something or ask for information. Sometimes these topics may appear in combination.

WRITING PART 2 Letters & Emails

• Sample Task 2: Letter of Application
You have seen the following advertisement in a newspaper:

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are the National Diabetes Organisation and we are organising a camp for diabetic children. We need volunteers to work with us during the camp.

- Your responsibilities will include:
- Teaching children about diabetes
 - Playing games with them
- Also, you should speak several languages because it's an international camp.

Write a letter applying to become a volunteer.

• Sample Answer 2: Letter of Application

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing with regard to the advertisement posted in yesterday's newspaper about the camp for diabetic children. I would like to take part as a volunteer, if it is possible.

As you can see in my résumé, I completed a degree in nursing, so I am qualified to teach children about it. Besides, I suffer from diabetes, so I am quite familiar with this illness and how to deal with it.

Furthermore, I have some experience organising entertaining events for children, as I worked at a regular camp for children last summer. For this reason, I am capable of organising and playing fun games with children.

Finally, I must say that I can speak 3 languages, since I have spent some time abroad, in England and Germany. Therefore, apart from Spanish, I am fluent in English and German.

Can I ask about the duration of the camp? What is the daily timetable?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

José

- Sample Task 3: Email of Application and Inquiry
You have come across the following advertisement online:

FITNESS SUMMER CAMP

Do you need to get fit in a short period of time? Do you have experience exercising but want to learn even more? Come and join our fitness summer camp. It will be a great experience and you will return home feeling better than ever and knowing much more about healthy lifestyles.

Write an email to find out more about the camp. In your email, you should:

- explain why you would benefit from this camp
- ask for more information about the diet and accommodation

- Sample Answer 3: Email of Inquiry

To whom it may concern,

My name is Lindsay and I am writing regarding your fitness summer camp. I am really interested in joining in and becoming fit during the summer.

Since I was a child, I have always been a sporty person. I have done many different sports, from golf to running or kayaking. So I am quite familiar with exercising in general. However, a couple of years ago I suffered a knee injury and have not been able to do any sport since then. But now I am fully recovered and I am ready to become fit again. And your camp is a perfect opportunity for me.

Also, I am writing to enquire about several aspects of the camp. Firstly, I would like to have more information about the diet we would follow at the camp. I am a vegetarian, so I would appreciate a variety of vegetarian dishes. Furthermore, what is the accommodation like? Will we sleep in huts or tents? If you could answer these questions, I would be really grateful.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Dave

WRITING PART 2

Report

- Purpose of a report

Reports are usually written to analyse a previous experience you have had, like a trip, or a place you have recently visited. They tend to look at something that has passed, which you have to analyse and then make some recommendations for improvement.

- Language

The language of a report is expected to be formal and objective. For this reason, you should avoid including yourself or your views in most of your sentences. However, you must give your opinion in the conclusion or recommendations paragraph.

- Structure

The report is the only piece of writing which has a title and subheadings. Each paragraph should have a subheading which summarises its main topic. Also, the introduction can always be "Introduction" and the conclusion, "Conclusion" or "Recommendations".

- Giving your opinion

There are two main ways to give your opinion in a report. You can give it at the end of each paragraph, saying how you would solve or improve each aspect. Or you can give leave it until the final paragraph, where you can summarise how you would solve or improve each aspect.

- Common topics

Some common topics for reports include talking about visits to museums, local businesses, trips and excursions, important events, etc.

- Sample Task 1:

The gym you work for has been losing members recently and would like to know why they are leaving. The gym manager has asked you to write a report about why these customers are leaving. In your report you should specify what the problems are and should give recommendations for improvement.

- Sample Answer 1:

Improving Our Gym

Introduction

The aim of this report is to explain the main reasons why members are leaving the gym. After interviewing some clients, we have identified some serious problems.

Limited opening hours

Some members have complained that the gym opens a little late for them. For this reason, workers cannot exercise before going to work. If the gym opened at 7 a.m., clients could exercise easily before going to work.

The changing rooms

Many of the lockers are broken so customers cannot leave their belongings in a safe place. Also, some of the showers are not working properly so members have to queue before having a shower. In order to solve this, I suggest replacing all lockers and showers immediately.

Lack of parking spaces

Some previous members have joined gyms which have a parking lot. Although we cannot build a parking lot, we can offer a parking area for bicycles. As a result, this might encourage members to use their bikes to come to the gym.

Conclusion

To sum up, I believe that if we take care of these problems, members will be happier and will decide to stay with us.

• Useful Expressions

- Sample 1:
 - The aim of this report is to
 - After interviewing some..., we have identified some serious problems.
 - Some members have complained that
 - For this reason,
 - Also,
 - In order to solve this, I suggest
 - immediately
 - Although
 - As a result,
 - To sum up, I believe that if we take care of these problems,
- Sample 2:
 - The purpose of this report is to outline..., and to make recommendations....
 - However, ..., so...
 - It is thought that
 - This is not a good thing because
 - Many students complained about..., because
 - In order to solve the problems above, I recommend taking some measures.
 - Firstly,
 - Secondly,
 - Finally,
 - If we do these things,

- Sample 3:

- The aim of this report is to assess... and decide whether
- All the students... agreed that the best part of it was
- It displayed
- As a result,
- Another interesting
- Although..., most of us
- We believe that there is a lack of
- Also,
- Despite..., I recommend this visit
- interesting and educational

- More Useful Expressions
 - Starting your report:
 - The aim of this report is to
 - As requested, I am writing this report to
 - This report aims to outline/assess
 - The purpose behind this report is to
 - Purpose, result and consequence:
 - As a result (of this),
 - This has resulted in
 - As a consequence,
 - Therefore
 - It is therefore necessary to
 - For this reason,
 - because of
 - in order to
 - in order for
 - so that
 - so
 - Recommending:
 - I suggest/recommend
 - I would like to suggest/recommend
 - I therefore suggest
 - I advise you (not) to
 - I believe it would be beneficial
 - It would be advisable to
 - You may wish/want to consider
 - If you wish to..., you should
 - If we wish to..., we ought to