

LRN
COMPOSITION NOTES
Essays
C1 and C2

ESSAYS

There are two Writing Sections, **Writing Section 1**, which is based on the extract you hear in Listening Section 3, and **Writing Section 2**.

Task 1 in Writing Section 1 is obligatory. To write the task, you must **use** the notes you have taken while you are listening to Listening Section 3 the third time and any other points you wish in order to elaborate on your ideas.

In Writing Section 2, you must choose **ONLY ONE** of the three tasks given.

General Advice on Writing

1. Make sure you understand the question you are asked to discuss and cover all points asked; you will not be marked for the complexity and sophistication of your ideas, but for your well-supported ideas.
2. Before you start writing, make a quick plan of your essay; it will keep you focused.
3. For Writing Section 2, choose a topic you are most familiar with and have more vocabulary about.
4. Use complex structures but avoid writing very long sentences as you might make mistakes.
5. Avoid using vocabulary that you are not very sure of; using the wrong vocabulary will make your ideas unclear; prefer to use simpler vocabulary and balance it off with more complex structures.
6. Although you will not be marked for your handwriting and the appearance of your writing, remember that legible writing and a clean paper will make a positive impression on the examiner.
7. Make sure your punctuation is correct; wrong punctuation may make it difficult for the examiner to understand what you are saying.
8. Make sure that your spelling is correct, especially of very easy vocabulary items.
9. Avoid changing persons; if you begin with a general 'you' / 'we' / or 'they', use it throughout.
10. Avoid using contractions as an essay is a formal piece of writing.

Some Advice about Task 1: Listening and Writing

1. Task 1 is based on the extract you hear in Listening Section 3.
2. While you are listening to the extract the third time, take notes about the information given to you. You may also take notes about anything else you want or write down vocabulary you think might be useful in writing your task. You may also use the information in the multiple choice questions in Listening Section. Make sure you do not copy word this information word for word; rephrase any information given in the exercise.
3. Besides the notes you have taken, you can your own ideas if you wish to further support your points.
4. Task 1 will always be an essay so it must have all the characteristics of a successful essay, that is, it should have the structure of an essay, appropriate paragraphing with clear Topic Sentences supported with examples or ideas and a wide range of linking devices, vocabulary relevant to the topic and grammatical structures.

Your essay will be marked for

- a) Overall impression: communicate your ideas in a straightforward way
- b) Task fulfilment: answer the question(s) asked.
- c) Organisation: have proper paragraphing and cohesive devices
- d) Grammar: use a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures (complex sentences)

*Each criterion takes each own points so if one criterion is not completely fulfilled, it does not mean you will get a low score for all the other criteria.

What makes a good introduction?

In the introduction, you present the idea to be analysed and set the purpose of the essay. In order to write an effective introduction,

- read the task carefully and understand what the main question is and what the type of essay is
- decide on the major points to be discussed
- begin with information which explains the key question in the task in general terms, or rephrase the background information given in the task
- end with the main idea of your essay, your thesis
- use the appropriate linking words to move from the general or background information to your thesis

How can you successfully support your thesis in the main body?

The main body of the essay (at least two paragraphs) elaborates on your thesis. For an effective main body, you should

- read the task again carefully and understand the key question to be discussed and the type of essay you are being asked to write
- write down specific points which are relevant to the key question and which can help you stay focused on the question
- choose the points you are most familiar with
- group each point under a general idea which can be used as the topic sentence of a paragraph supporting your thesis
- write out the topic sentence for each paragraph and choose the points which can be used as examples or supportive ideas to each topic sentence
- develop one idea in each paragraph making sure you begin with the most general information and end with the most specific
- decide on the order of the paragraphs, beginning with the weakest idea and finishing with the strongest
- use the appropriate tense and register
- use appropriate linking words and devices for a smooth development from one paragraph to another and from one supportive point to another
- decide on the person you are going to use. You can either address the reader using the second person (*you*), or the third person plural (*they*)

What makes a conclusion intriguing?

The end of your essay is the last impression you make on your audience. Therefore, it is important to make the reader feel it was worth reading your essay. Make sure you

- close your essay by either summarising the main points presented in the body paragraphs or by rephrasing what has been said in the introduction
- begin with a linking phrase to indicate you are bringing your essay to an end
- do not use details presented in the essay
- finish with a final thought about your thesis

Types of Essays

There are different kinds of essays. The following are some of the most common ones you will be asked to write:

- Descriptive
- Cause and Effect
- Compare and Contrast
- Argumentative
- Problem-Solution

Make sure your essay has the proper structure.

The structure of an essay

<i>Introduction</i>	Background information Thesis statement
<i>1st Main Body Paragraph</i> <i>First supporting idea</i>	Linking Phrase, Topic Sentence: the main theme of the paragraph Supportive ideas or examples
<i>2nd Main Body Paragraph</i> <i>Second supportive idea</i>	Linking Phrase, Topic Sentence: the main theme of the paragraph Supportive ideas or examples
<i>Conclusion</i>	Linking Phrase, a Summary of the key points and/or an expression of Opinion

<p>What makes a successful essay?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the question in the rubric is answered • a thesis is stated in the introduction • the paragraphs are well organised • there is a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures • there is a variety of appropriate linking • the appropriate tenses have been used • formal language is used • the number of words is within the limit • the same person is used throughout • there are no spelling mistakes • punctuation is correct 	<p>What makes a successful paragraph?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the main idea of the paragraph is stated in the first sentence of the paragraph, the Topic Sentence • an appropriate linking phrase precedes the topic sentence, linking it with the paragraph before • the topic sentence is well supported with supportive evidence including facts, arguments or examples • there are appropriate linking phrases and cohesive devices connecting the supportive evidence • the topic sentence develops and supports the thesis stated in the introduction
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ESSAY EXPRESSIONS

Introduction phrases

- It is a well-known fact that
- It is an undeniable fact that
- It is a common belief that
- It is common knowledge that
- There has been a great deal of heated debate about
- However,
- As I see it,
- It could be argued that
- While it might be true that
- Although this argument may be sound,
- It is generally agreed that

Giving personal opinions

- In my opinion,
- I believe that
- I think that
- Personally,
- The way I see it,
- From my point of view,
- My belief is that
- Although I am in two minds

Expressing result

- Therefore / Thus
- So
- As a result,
- As a consequence,
- Consequently,
- In this case
- It is so ... that
- It is such a ... that
- For this reason

Adding similar points

- To begin/to start with
- Firstly, / Secondly,
- Not only ...but also
- Another point worth mentioning is
- What is equally important is
- Apart from this,
- Furthermore,
- In addition,
- Moreover, /Besides that, / As well as
- Finally, / Ultimately,

• Last but not least, Emphasising a point

- In fact,
- As a matter of fact,
- As regards
- It is necessary to point out that
- The most crucial point is
- What is significant is
- The focus should be on
- The key aspect of this argument is
- It is worth noting that
- Another important point/factor is that
- We cannot ignore the fact
- By and large,

Citing research

- It has been found that
- Research has shown that
- According to scientific research,

Giving the pros and the cons

- To begin/start with,
- There are both advantages and disadvantages to
- Although there are serious drawbacks/disadvantages,
- On the one hand, /On the other hand,
- By contrast, /On the contrary,
- However, /Nevertheless
- The other side of the coin, however, is that
- Another way of looking at this question is to
- Some may be in favour of
- Others, however, would argue that
- Opinions are sharply divided over this issue.
- There is no doubt that
- In spite of
- Despite the fact that
- Unfortunately,

Giving examples

- One example is
- Another one is
- For one thing, /For a start,
- In addition,

- Finally,
- At the same time
- This means
- A case in point is
- An illuminating example of
- To illustrate this point,
- For example,
- For instance,
- Take for example
- such as
- Particularly,

Supporting a point

- To some extent/degree
- It is clear that
- There are various reasons to believe
- In such cases,
- Apparently, / Admittedly
- On the one hand, / On the other hand,
- Despite the fact that / No matter how
- Contrary to common belief
- It is important that
- It is becoming increasingly important
- As a consequence,
- As a result,
- Obviously,
- Ultimately,
- It is a well known fact that
- Taking these facts into consideration,
- Another important aspect is
- Interestingly enough,
- There are many advantages to
- It is claimed that

Summing up

- To sum up,
- In short,
- In conclusion,
- All in all,
- On the whole,
- In a nutshell,
- From what has been presented, one might conclude that

Descriptive Essay

Topic

One of the factors conducive to learning is an effective teacher. Write an essay describing the characteristics of an effective teacher. Give examples to support your views. Write between 250-300 words.

Introduction	
<p>General information</p> <p><i>Presenting your thesis</i></p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p>Modern societies place great emphasis on the importance of education. <u>Although</u> learning is a constant process, not solely confined to the classroom, <i>it takes a good teacher to assume responsibility for educating the young and encouraging learning outside the school environment</i></p>
1 st Main Paragraph	
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i></p> <p>Supporting ideas</p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><i>What makes an effective teacher?</i> <u>For one thing</u>, effective teachers are those <u>who</u> have a thorough grasp of their subject and demonstrate outstanding skills and performance. There can be no transmission of knowledge to learners <u>unless</u> the teachers themselves are well versed in their subject and have effective teaching skills. That, <u>of course</u>, requires continual training and professional development. <u>It also means</u> that teachers set high educational standards, <u>not only</u> for able and well-motivated learners, <u>but also</u> for those with little interest in learning and low self-confidence. Taking each learner's needs and abilities into consideration helps teachers design their syllabus, organise learning activities and decide on assessment criteria.</p>
2 nd Main Paragraph	
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i></p> <p>Supporting ideas</p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><u>Besides</u> being able to present ideas effectively, good teachers realise that their commitment extends beyond the simple diffusion of knowledge within the classroom. Their demeanour must be one of patience and understanding, <u>thereby</u> creating a rapport with their students. With an inspiring and friendly teaching environment, personal growth and development are encouraged beyond the classroom walls. <u>As well as</u> stressing the importance of learning, committed teachers stress the importance of social values such as discipline, cooperation and mutual respect over and above competition and pride.</p>
Conclusion	
<p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><u>To sum up</u>, state-of-the-art educational facilities can certainly assist learning. <u>However</u>, it is teachers with their instructional expertise, knowledge and commitment, <u>who</u> can ensure that students <u>not only</u> acquire a sound body of knowledge, <u>but also</u> a set of values <u>which</u> can prepare them for their role as citizens.</p>

Cause and Effect Essay

Topic

Most people nowadays are obsessed with their careers and making money and, as a result, they deprive themselves of the benefits of leisure time. In your opinion, why is this and what are the consequences of not having enough leisure time? Give examples to support your ideas.

Introduction	
<p>General information <i>Presenting your thesis</i> <u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><u>Most of us</u> envisage a life of comfort. We decide on a career <u>that</u> we hope will ensure us financial independence and success. <i>The path many of us choose to follow, <u>however</u>, imposes great demands on us <u>and</u> forces us into a stressful work routine, devoid of any pleasure <u>which</u> leisure time might offer.</i></p>
1 st Main Paragraph	
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i> Supporting ideas <u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><i><u>Nowadays</u> it is difficult to make ends meet in a very competitive world, <u>let alone</u> balance long hours of work with leisure.</i> The ever-increasing cost of living forces us to work more and more and, <u>unfortunately</u>, what is enough today may be far too little tomorrow. <u>As a result</u>, our persistence in trying to fulfil our desire to have more than just enough does not allow us to indulge in free time activities.</p>
2 nd Main Paragraph	
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i> Supporting ideas <u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><i><u>Subsequently</u>, various problems may occur due to our lack of free time. <u>Being</u> able to buy material things creates the illusion that we have become successful, <u>but what</u> we are actually doing is alienating ourselves from others. <u>It is not necessary to point out</u> that a heavy work load keeps us away from our loved ones and isolates us. <u>When</u> we suddenly realise that we have been using all our time making money, it might be too late to find emotional support to fight loneliness. <u>Moreover</u>, our never- ending striving to earn more puts a great strain on us. Stress-related diseases <u>such as</u> heart diseases and depression have, <u>according to</u> medical statistics, become prevalent in modern societies <u>due to</u> this phenomenon.</i></p>
Conclusion	
<p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><i><u>To sum up</u>, <u>although</u> we cannot ignore the importance of money, we should think of all the positive effects leisure time can have on our physical and mental well-being and our personal life. Having time to do a sport, enjoy a hobby or spend time with loved ones, <u>therefore</u>, is not self-indulgence, <u>but rather</u>, of vital importance for the welfare of us all.</i></p>

Compare and Contrast Essays

Topic

Automation in the workplace is thought to be a mixed blessing. In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages of automation? Give examples to support your ideas

Introduction	
<p>General information</p> <p><i>Presenting your thesis</i></p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p>Technological advances in all fields have introduced automation and mechanisation into all aspects of our lives. <i>Irrespective of which perspective we observe it from, automation in the workplace has both advantages and disadvantages.</i></p>
1 st Main Paragraph	
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i></p> <p>Supporting ideas</p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p>All industrialised nations have witnessed the benefits of automation. <u>First of all</u>, automated machinery has simplified work and increased production. <u>As a consequence</u>, there has been a reduction in labour hours, <u>which in turn</u> has resulted in more free time for the worker. <u>Moreover</u>, increased production entails higher productivity bonuses and improved pension benefits. <u>In addition</u>, mass production has contributed to the lowering of costs of products. <u>So</u>, televisions, telephones and cars, to name <u>just a few</u>, are now available to more people. <u>Finally</u>, the introduction of computers has also had a great impact on a variety of fields. It has augmented teaching methods and facilitated learning, aided surgical procedures using robots, improved communication systems through satellites and made transport faster and safer.</p>
2 st Main Paragraph	
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i></p> <p>Supporting ideas</p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><i>However, automation has also produced negative effects. One of its most serious repercussions is that of unemployment.</i> Many unskilled or semiskilled labourers have been made redundant <u>since</u> their skills have been replaced by machines. <u>Although</u> there are still some areas which have not been automated and may possibly be able to absorb a number of these redundant workers, soon <u>even</u> these areas will be saturated. <u>Besides</u> unemployment, another negative effect of automation is alienation. Workers doing repetitive and tedious work on the assembly line feel bored and estranged. Symptoms of alienation <u>such as</u> alcoholism, drug addiction and depression are common among these workers.</p>
Conclusion	
<p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><u>In conclusion</u>, nobody can deny the contributions of automation in the workplace. Living standards have certainly improved and, as technology advances, we will most likely experience more benefits. <u>On the other hand</u>, we cannot disregard its serious consequences on our personal lives and on society, too.</p>

Argumentative Essay

Topic

Some countries in the world have set aside land to create national conservation parks. In your opinion, how important do you think this is?

Introduction	
<p>General information</p> <p><i>Presenting your thesis</i></p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p>Human population and infrastructure are growing at an alarming rate <u>and</u>, <u>and as a consequence</u>, nature is being destroyed. <i>National conservation parks can preserve and conserve natural lands and their bio-diversity gives people the opportunity to escape from the city and explore nature <u>while</u> promoting an awareness of the importance of such a project.</i></p>
1st Main Paragraph	
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i></p> <p>Supporting ideas</p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><i>The rapid growth of the human population and the need for more space has supplanted natural lands and waterways with buildings, roads and bridges. <u>It</u> has also been responsible for the deforestation of large areas of natural habitat and the damage <u>which</u> has been caused to their bio-diversity. National conservation parks can offer a refuge for wildlife and be home to many species of plants. <u>Located</u> near unspoilt natural environments, or even within populated areas, these parks can protect the wildlife population under threat of extinction. <u>Moreover, not only</u> can they restore denuded forests <u>thereby</u> giving us clean water to drink and fresh air to breathe, <u>but</u> they can <u>also</u> lay the ground for scientific research on animal and plant life in their natural habitat.</i></p>
2nd Main Paragraph	
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i></p> <p>Supporting ideas</p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><i><u>Besides</u> protecting wildlife, national conservation parks can provide opportunities, in specially designated areas, for recreational activities. Anyone interested in escaping from the city can explore nature <u>and</u>, <u>at the same time</u>, enjoy the outdoors. <u>For example</u>, people can go hiking, bushwalking, or camping, or just enjoy nature and watch animals. <u>Along with</u> recreational opportunities, these parks promote environmental education and raise awareness of the need to protect all species on the planet and of the fundamental significance of nature itself.</i></p>
Conclusion	
<p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><i><u>In a nutshell</u>, the role of these parks is very important. They are special areas and it is the responsibility of both the government and the people to treat them with care for future generations to enjoy.</i></p>

Problem – Solution Essay

Topic

Every summer, news bulletins at island resorts are full of stories of young tourists misbehaving due to excessive alcohol consumption. What should be done to improve the situation? Support your ideas.

Introduction	
<p>General information</p> <p><i>Presenting your thesis</i></p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p>Greece's reputation of constant sun, unparalleled beaches and blue skies are a certain attraction for young holidaymakers seeking freedom from the constraints of home. They are urged on by colourful brochures offering them sun, fun and wild night-life. <u>Consequently</u>, <u>as soon as</u> they arrive, they start drinking excessive amounts of alcohol and misbehaving outrageously. <i>This has caused great consternation in holiday resorts and has led to a feeling that something needs to be done to curb this excessive behaviour.</i></p>
1st Main Paragraph	
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i></p> <p>Supporting ideas</p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><i>At the outset, certain measures should be imposed by the tour operators to deal with this increasingly distressing situation.</i> <u>First and foremost</u>, a great deal of the blame must be put squarely on the shoulders of the holiday companies. All written holiday information and brochures should be vetted and inappropriate vocabulary modified <u>before</u> they are circulated to the travel agents. <u>In addition</u>, cheap package holidays in troubled resorts should increase their prices to attract a better quality of tourists, many of whom are put off by the rowdier elements.</p>
2nd Main Paragraph	
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i></p> <p>Supporting ideas</p> <p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><i>Moreover, the resorts themselves should instigate new regulations to deal with offenders.</i> More restrictions must be placed on nightclubs <u>that</u> encourage excessive drinking. <u>Such</u> restrictions could include limiting the number of drinks consumed, removing anyone from the club <u>who</u> is out of control and banning them from returning. <u>This</u> would set a standard and promote a sense of responsibility. <u>If</u> the clubs did not comply, their licence could be revoked. Outside on the streets, there should be a much stronger police presence. Arrests and punishments have to be meted out to offenders, <u>even</u> putting them on the next plane home in certain circumstances, <u>thus</u> discouraging others by setting an example.</p>
Conclusion	
<p><u>Linking devices</u></p>	<p><u>In conclusion</u>, if both tour operators and resorts did their part, this problem could easily be resolved. <u>After all</u>, everyone wants to enjoy themselves <u>when</u> they are on holiday, <u>but</u> the happiness of the majority should not be spoiled by a few who misbehave.</p>

