7b

Write A letter (to the editor) expressing an opinion

A. Discuss.

- Why do you think people write letters to the editors of newspapers and magazines?
- Have you ever read any of these letters?
- Would you consider writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper? Why / Why not?

B. Read the extract from a newspaper article and the letter to the editor below. Do you agree with the writer?

Yesterday the mayor of Mayfield announced plans to build a modern shopping centre in Clifton Park. He says it will serve the needs of the residents and also attract shoppers from neighbouring towns. Many people are not happy with this decision. One resident, Mark Wilson, told us, 'We don't need a shopping centre! So many trees will be cut down if the mayor goes ahead with his plans. Clifton Park gives us the oxygen we breathe and it's where our children go to play. We need to save it at all costs.'

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a concerned resident and I am writing in response to your article about the mayor's plans to build a modern shopping centre in Clifton Park.

First of all, I must agree with the mayor that a shopping centre would be very convenient for everybody. In addition to creating more job opportunities, it would also offer us more options for entertainment. Who would say no to a cinema complex or a food court with different cuisines, for instance?

On the other hand, it is outrageous to even think of destroying Clifton Park. I am very disappointed that the mayor shows such a lack of sensitivity for environmental issues. Air pollution is a growing problem in Mayfield and as Mr Wilson points out, Clifton Park must be saved at all costs. Surely a more suitable location can be found for the shopping centre – for example, the abandoned warehouses behind the train station.

In conclusion, we do not need to destroy Clifton Park in order to build the new shopping centre. If we consider the alternative solutions more carefully, we can find one that is acceptable to everyone in Mayfield.

Yours faithfully,

PWoodhouse

Paula Woodhouse

C. Read the following sentences. Tick the ones that apply to the letter above.

The writer:

1. uses an appropriate greeting and signature ending. ◯
2. explains why she is writing in the first paragraph. ◯
3. uses rude language. ◯
4. justifies her opinion and gives examples. ◯
5. uses rhetorical questions for emphasis. ◯
6. refers to specific points made in the newspaper article. ◯
7. expresses her opinion in an aggressive manner. ◯
8. makes suggestions. ◯
9. uses linking words / phrases. ◯
10. writes in a formal style. ◯

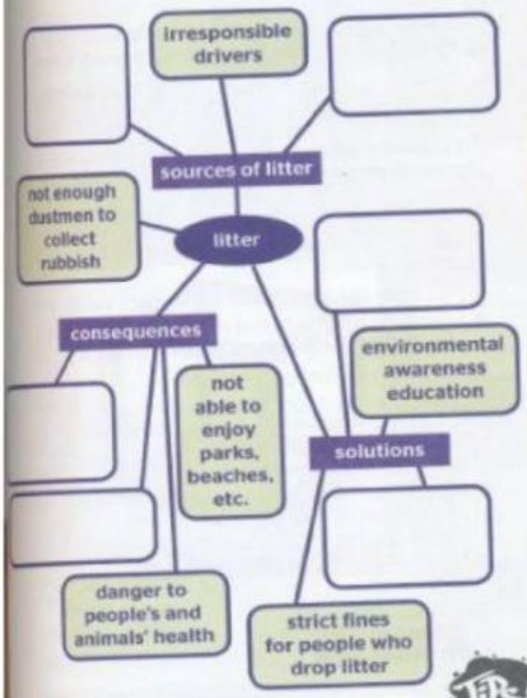
LIVEWORKSHEETS

D. Read the writing task below and discuss the questions that follow in pairs or groups. Then complete the mind map.

You read this article in a local newspaper. Write a letter to the editor expressing your views on the issue.

According to a survey that was carried out among the residents of our city last month, litter is the number one problem our city faces. It is a fact that streets are overflowing with rubbish and it is even impossible to enjoy our parks and beaches because of the problem. At a protest demonstration held outside the city hall yesterday, one angry protester asked our reporter, 'Whose responsibility is it to keep this city clean? Isn't it time the mayor did something about it?' That is a good question, but aren't we all responsible for keeping our cities clean?

1. Why do you think there is so much litter around?
2. What kind of problems does it create?
3. What do you think can be done about it?



E. Write a letter to the editor of the newspaper expressing your views on the issue described in the article above. Use some of your ideas from activity D.

PLAN

When writing a letter (to the editor of a newspaper, etc.) expressing your opinion, follow the plan below.

GREETING
- **Use a formal greeting.**
  - *Dear Sir / Madam,* • *Dear Editor,*

OPENING PARAGRAPH
- **Say why you are writing the letter.**
- **If you are writing in response to an article, refer to the topic / title of it.**

MAIN PART (1-2 PARAGRAPHS)
- **Focus on one or two aspects of the issue / problem.**
- **Give your opinion and provide justification and/or examples.**
- **Make any relevant suggestions.**

CLOSING PARAGRAPH
- **Summarise your points and end your letter politely.**

SIGNING OFF
- **Use an appropriate signature ending.**
  - *Yours faithfully,*
- **Sign underneath and print your full name below your signature.**

TIPS!

When writing a letter (to the editor of a newspaper, etc.) expressing your opinion:
- use the appropriate layout and style (formal).
- group related ideas together in paragraphs.
- refer to specific points made in the newspaper article.
- state your opinion clearly.
- use rhetorical questions for emphasis.
- do not be aggressive or rude.
- use linking words and phrases (see pages 33 and 57).

LIVEWORKSHEETS