

9 An ageing population

Aims: Using cohesive devices | Using punctuation effectively | Writing topic sentences

Part 1: Vocabulary



1 The sentences 1–7 all contain words relating to population and population growth. Circle the option (a or b) that the words in *italics* best correspond to.

- 1 Overpopulation relates not just to the size of the population but also to the *density* of population in relation to available resources.
a the total number of people
b the degree to which an area is filled with people
- 2 Many people predict that population growth will *accelerate* over the next thirty years before leveling off at approximately 12 billion.
a stay the same
b speed up
- 3 Governments regularly gather *demographic* data, including information about age, gender, income, and employment status, in order to plan effectively for the future.
a relating to population
b relating to politics
- 4 The 2001 *census* revealed that the median age of the population had risen markedly.
a estimate of the population
b count of the population
- 5 The proportion of the population composed of children has declined, while the proportion of the population that is *aged* has grown.
a old
b young
- 6 The recent jump in the numbers of people aged 60 to 65 in some countries can be attributed to the *boom* in births following the Second World War.
a gradual rise
b rapid rise
- 7 As the population ages, many fear that caring for the elderly will be too great a *burden* for the younger generation.
a obligation
b privilege

2 Match the expressions 1–10 with the definitions a–j.

1 pension	a a person who looks after the elderly or sick
2 longevity	b the ability to produce children
3 nursing home	c the middle point in a range of values
4 care-giver	d serious, recurring and/or long lasting
5 to retire	e long life
6 mortality	f a regular payment made by government or former employer to a person who has stopped working
7 fertility	g the control of the number of children in a family by use of contraceptives
8 median	h to give up work, especially on reaching pensionable age
9 family planning	i a hospital or home for people who are old or ill
10 chronic	j the number of deaths in a given period

3 The expressions a–h are either causes or consequences of population ageing. Decide which of them are causes and which are consequences.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| a increasing public health costs | e growing pressure on care givers |
| b lower fertility rate | f family planning |
| c decreasing mortality from infectious diseases | g dwindling pension funds |
| d increasing incidence of chronic illnesses (e.g. arthritis) | h improved health care |

4 Complete the sentences 1–7 with expressions from Exercise 3. Make any changes necessary.

- The increasing numbers of older people has put _____, especially women in their 40s, who are also often responsible for looking after children.
- _____ have been a cause for concern among governments, employers and financial institutions and led to calls for the working population to save more for retirement.
- _____ has resulted not only in greater longevity but also in better health status among the elderly.
- _____ such as cholera and polio has been a welcome development.
- As the population ages, there has been an _____ and type-two diabetes.
- Unless measures are taken to curb _____, these will almost certainly result in higher taxes.
- _____ measures have undoubtedly reduced birth rates in some countries.