

UNIT 5 D

WRITING SKILLS: WRITING AN OPINION ESSAY

Are global-warming campaigns effective?

Gloria López

From 2015 to 2018, there were many climate change campaigns worldwide, and most people accept that global warming is real. However, they often don't change their behavior because they feel that experts may be exaggerating the problem and that rising temperatures are not an immediate threat. In general, environmental campaigns are not as effective as they could be, and we need to understand why.

One reason is the use of campaigns that use fear to motivate a person to change his or her behavior. For example, an environmental group might use images of environmental disasters so that people respond positively and take action. **Nevertheless**, they rarely do take action, since fear is an unpleasant emotion, and, **consequently**, people tend to ignore the things that make them afraid.

Similarly, the kinds of changes that people are asked to make are often too difficult. It is fairly easy, for instance, to recycle, take shorter showers, or use energy-efficient lightbulbs **as opposed to** more conventional ones. However, it is hard to give up meat, buy expensive organic food, or, in some cases, even leave your car at home. In other words, some changes are fairly easy, whereas others often require a lot of effort. The question is, how many people are willing to make these changes?

In sum, people do not respond well to fear or unrealistic demands. For an environmental campaign to be successful, it should encourage people to think about the issue of climate change in a positive and realistic way. In the words of author Ron Kaufman: "Convince people and you win their minds. Inspire people and you win their hearts." We need to do both.

A Is the answer to the question in the title *yes* or *no*?

YES

NO

B Read the essay again. Does it give reasons:

a for and against the main argument?

b for the main argument, but not against?

Skill writing an opinion essay

One way to write an opinion essay is only to give reasons that support the main argument.

- In paragraph 1, write a thesis statement (a sentence that states the main point of your essay). A good thesis statement isn't too broad and clearly states the writer's position.
- In paragraphs 2 and 3, give arguments that support your thesis statement. Use examples, facts, figures, etc.
- Start each paragraph with a clear topic sentence (a sentence that introduces the main point of the paragraph).
- Summarize the key points in the concluding paragraph. Don't add any new arguments.

Read the skill box. Then read Gloria's essay again and write (copy the exact words from the text):

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 the thesis statement (paragraph 1). | 3 an argument to support the thesis statement. |
| 2 the topic sentences (paragraphs 2 and 3). | 4 the summary sentence in the concluding paragraph. |

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Text builder formal linkers

Two similar arguments: *Climate change can be difficult for some people to understand. **Similarly**, a lot of people feel confused when scientists disagree with each other.*

A comparison: *People should be encouraged to buy electric cars, **as opposed to** gas or diesel ones.*

A result: *Fear about the future of the planet is a negative emotion. **Consequently**, we tend to reject it.*

A contrast: *People should respond positively to climate change campaigns. **Nevertheless**, they rarely do.*

A conclusion: ***In sum**, people do not usually respond well to environmental campaigns.*

B Complete the sentences below with the linkers in **bold** from the Text builder.

- 1 Many families are less well off these days. _____, a lot of students are dropping out of college because they cannot afford the tuition fees.
- 2 Many people say that children are not easily influenced by violent video games. _____, a lot of research suggests that this is not true.
- 3 Some pop stars have millions of followers on social media. _____, millions of people watch their favorite stars on TV.
- 4 To be successful, you need to be smart, creative, and have good interpersonal skills. _____, these three critical traits are necessary for success.
- 5 Video games should encourage creativity and cooperation, _____ violence.