

Speaking skills practice: From Source Analysis to Opinion II

Continue practising the speaking task with a new topic and two different written sources. Read the source material and pay attention to how the student compares the ideas, gives their own opinion and supports it with reasons and examples. Use this task to practise the structure and useful language you have already learned.

PAPER X

Task instructions:

You are taking part in an English debate club discussion on **career education**.

You should give a 3 to 5-minute talk in which you present your opinion on the issue.

After your talk you will answer three questions and justify your opinion.

Use the two sources provided below to plan your talk.

You have 5 minutes to prepare. You can make notes on the paper.

In your talk you should:

- **formulate the issue raised in the material,**
- **compare the information provided in the material,**
- **state your opinion on the issue,**
- **support your opinion with at least two arguments, including reasons and examples,**
- **come to a conclusion.**

Source 1:

Career education can help secondary school students understand their strengths, interests and future possibilities. Lessons about careers may include information about different professions, university courses and practical skills such as writing a CV or preparing for a job interview. Meeting professionals or visiting workplaces can also give students a clearer idea of working life. Supporters believe that career education helps young people make better decisions and feel more confident about their future.

adapted from oedc.org

Source 2:

Some people believe that students should not be asked to make important career decisions too early. Teenagers' interests can change as they grow older, and too much focus on one career may limit their choices. Career programmes can also be unequal because some schools have better resources, more professional contacts or more opportunities for workplace visits than others. Instead of choosing a specific career early, students may benefit more from developing general skills that can be useful in many different jobs.

adapted from bbc.com

1. Read an example speech by a Year 10 student. Complete the gaps in the example speech.
For each gap, choose the option that is both grammatically correct and logically connects the ideas.

Formulate the issue raised in the material (explain the issue; you may also briefly describe the situation today):

The main topic of both sources is career education and how it can help secondary school students prepare for their future. ¹ _____, young people have many different study and career options, so choosing what to do after school can be difficult. For this reason, schools often try to help students understand different professions and make future plans.

Compare the information provided in the material (explain the difference between the two sources in your own words; you may also connect the information to real-life examples or situations you know about):

Source 1 ² _____ the benefits of career education. It explains that students can learn more about different jobs, university courses and many useful skills such as writing a CV or preparing for a job interview. It ³ _____ mentions that meeting professionals and visiting workplaces can help students understand what working life is really like. ⁴ _____ of this, students may feel more confident when they need to make decisions about their future.

⁵ _____, source 2 presents a different view. It says that teenagers should not feel pressure to choose one career too early because their interests may change. Another important point is that not all schools can offer the same career opportunities. Some schools may organise workplace visits or invite professionals, ⁶ _____ others may not have enough resources. This means that career education can be useful, but students should still have enough freedom to change their plans.

State your opinion on the issue and support it with at least two arguments, including reasons and examples (start each argument with a clear main point, explain your opinion, and support it with relevant examples; you may also suggest possible solutions):

In my opinion, career education is important, ⁷ _____ for students who are not sure what they want to do after school.

⁸ _____, career education can introduce students to jobs they may know very little about. Many teenagers are familiar with common professions such as teachers, doctors or lawyers, but there are many other careers they may never have considered. ⁹ _____, meeting people from different workplaces could help students discover jobs connected to technology, design, science or business. This could make it easier for them to understand what subjects and skills they may need in the future.

My second point is that career education can help students make more realistic decisions. Sometimes a job may sound interesting, ¹⁰ _____ the reality of the work can be very different. For example, a student might be interested in a career in medicine but later realise that the long years of study are not suitable for them. Learning more about careers before making a final choice can help students avoid decisions they may regret later.

Come to a conclusion (summarize the main ideas of your speech in your own words; you may also mention your own experience or role in the issue, or add a future prediction or suggestion):

¹¹ _____, career education can give students useful information and help them feel more prepared for life after school. At the same time, students should not feel that their first career choice has to be permanent. I think schools should offer different career activities ¹² _____ give young people enough support to explore several possibilities before making important decisions.

2. Read the student's answers to the interviewer's questions.
For each gap, choose the most appropriate verb from the list. Use each verb only once.

1. What can schools do to help students choose a future career?

Schools can ¹ _____ students more information about different jobs and study options. They can also ² _____ professionals to speak about their work or organise visits to workplaces in our city or even in another city in Latvia. I think this would ³ _____ students understand what different careers are really like and make better decisions about their future.

2. Do you already know what career you would like to choose? Why or why not?

I have some ideas, but I am not completely sure yet, to be honest. I am interested in a few different areas, so I would ⁴ _____ to learn more before making my final decision. I also believe it is normal for students my age or even year 12 students to ⁵ _____ their minds because our interests can develop over time.

3. Should students choose a career while they are still at school? Why or why not?

I think students ⁶ _____ start thinking about possible careers, but they should not feel pressure to make one final choice too early. As the second source ⁷ _____, young people's interests can change. Schools should help students explore different options, but students should still ⁸ _____ the freedom to change their plans later.