



Writing

Essay: Thinking before you write

An essay task will sometimes give you a question asking for your opinion and two ideas to help you write about it. Before you start writing, you must decide the following:

- what your opinion is on the topic.
- how you will use the two given ideas to support your opinion.
- what the third idea will be.

If you find this difficult, imagine chatting to a friend about the topic and the given ideas. What might you say? Write quick notes and then choose the best ideas to use in your essay.

1 Read this writing task and the two conversations that discuss notes 1 and 2 from the task. Which conversation do you agree with?

You have had a class discussion on sport and money. Your teacher has now asked you to write an essay for homework.

Write your essay using **all** the notes and giving reasons for your point of view. (140-190 words)

Many footballers get paid a lot of money. Do they deserve it or not?

Notes

Write about:

- 1 talent & skill
- 2 training & playing
- 3 _____ (your own idea)

a **A:** Top footballers? There are only a few people in the world with such **talent and skill**. Excellence should be rewarded.

B: Yes, and it's a hard life. They get up early and **train** for hours even in bad weather, as well as travelling and **playing** in the evenings and at weekends.

b **A:** There are plenty of **talented** and **highly-skilled** people in the world but they don't earn millions. It's not fair and it's not necessary.

B: Right! And even though footballers **train** and **play** hard during the season, they get more time off than most people do.

2 Read these extra ideas which could be added to the conversations above. Decide which conversation they support and write a or b in the boxes.

- 1 Their careers are so short that they have to earn lots of money quickly.
- 2 It's wrong to be paid so much for playing sport when, for example, there are so many badly-paid farmers, who provide something much more important.
- 3 Famous players don't need such huge pay cheques from their clubs. They can also earn a lot in other ways, for example, by working with sportswear manufacturers.
- 4 They are important role models, inspiring youngsters and giving pleasure to millions of fans.

3 Read this writing task and discuss in class the two ideas in the notes. Can you think of a third idea to write about?

You have had a discussion in class on sport and the media. Your teacher has now asked you to write an essay for homework.

Write your essay using **all** the notes and giving reasons for your point of view. (140-190 words)

The media publishes many details of sports personalities' private lives. Do readers have a right to know these things or not?

Notes

Write about:

- 1 the right to privacy
- 2 their family & friends
- 3 _____ (your own idea)



4 Read the essay written in answer to the question in 3 and answer the questions below it.

The media is often full of stories about footballers and other sports stars. Readers are told how much money they earn and even details of their love lives. I think this is wrong. Sports celebrities should be allowed to keep their personal lives private.

In the first place, sports personalities have as much right to privacy as anyone else. If journalists followed ordinary people around, taking photographs of them and reporting embarrassing facts about their everyday lives, they would be stopped.

Moreover, it is not fair that sports stars' families and friends should have to put up with so much attention. It can damage friendships and destroy relationships.

However, I also believe that sports celebrities have a responsibility to set a good example to their young fans. If they take drugs or break the law, for instance, then readers should be told.

All in all, sports stars have enough pressure on them when they are playing and competing in public. They shouldn't have to put up with it in their private lives as well.

- 1 Does the writer clearly state his or her opinion in the first paragraph? _____
- 2 In which paragraphs are the two ideas from the Notes in the writing task discussed? _____
- 3 Does the writer's third idea support or contrast with the main opinion expressed? _____

5 When you have an opinion about a subject, there may sometimes be a special point you want to include that contrasts with your main viewpoint, as in the model essay. You can use your idea either in support of your main opinion or in contrast to it. Read the following opinions and add a contrasting idea.

- 1 I think the Olympic Games are a good idea. They encourage sportsmen and women to work towards achieving their very best and they also help countries to come together in a peaceful way. However, _____
- 2 I think doing a lot of sport is a waste of time. You don't have enough energy or time to spend on other important things, and you lose touch with your friends. However, _____

6 Read this writing task and use the plan and the Language Bank to help you write your essay. When you have finished your essay, check your work carefully.

You have been talking in class about training facilities for sport in your country. Now your English teacher has asked you to write an essay for homework.

Write your essay using all the notes and giving reasons for your point of view. (140-190 words)

Some countries spend a lot of money on providing world-class sports facilities for training talented youngsters. Is this a good way or a bad way to spend government money?

Notes

Write about:

- 1 health & lifestyle
- 2 international competition
- 3 _____ (your own idea)

Plan

- Paragraph 1: Introduce the topic and your opinion.
Paragraph 2: Use Note 1 to support your opinion.
Paragraph 3: Use Note 2 to support your opinion.
Paragraph 4: Use your own idea in support or in contrast.
Paragraph 5: Re-state your opinion using different words and add a comment.

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Before you start writing, take enough time to think about your opinion and how you will support it using the given ideas. Make notes about your own idea and plan how you will use it in support of or in contrast to your main opinion. When you start writing, make sure you express your ideas in formal language.

LANGUAGE BANK

Introducing supporting ideas

Firstly,/Secondly,/Finally,
In the first place,
Moreover,
Furthermore,
In addition,

Introducing a contrasting idea

However,
On the other hand,

Conclusion

All in all,
To sum up,
On the whole,
In conclusion,