

ITEP WRITING PRACTICE EXERCISES



This section consists of two (2) writing tasks. This part of the test is designed to test your basic language skills (i.e. reading, vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation) and non-language skills (i.e. quick and critical thinking and keyboard command and fast typing).

❑ There are 2 parts:

1. **Writing a short note or letter:** This task requires you to write between 50 to 100 words in **5 minutes** about a general everyday topic that is a simple question to answer.
2. **Writing an essay:** This task requires you to provide your own opinions on topics and use reasons to support your position. The essay should be written within 175 to 250 word limit in **20 minutes!**



- ❑ Make sure that you are actually answering what the prompt is requiring.
- ❑ Proofread as you write. Check all spelling and punctuation, especially capitalization of certain words.
- ❑ Time management is key in this section, so try to answer the questions as quickly as possible.
- ❑ Make sure that the length of each of the tasks complies with the provided word limit.
- ❑ Don't write any words in Spanish or mistranslate words. If you are not sure how to spell a word, don't write it and use a synonym.
- ❑ Plan your arguments before writing your essay.

□ Writing part 1:

In this section, you will be asked to describe a person, a place or a thing, based on several different topics, such as:

1. Describe someone you know.
2. Describe something you like.
3. Explain how to do something.

Example 1:

Prompt: Write about a good friend and what you have learned from him or her.

Sample response: *"My best friend is John. He is tall and very handsome with long brown hair. I like being with him because people like him so I made a lot of nice friends through him. He always asks them questions about their lives instead of talking about himself. So he has taught me how to make friends and how to show people that I care about them"*

Notice that there are 2 parts in the prompt:

About a good friend	What you have learned from him or her.
<i>"My best friend is John. He is tall and very handsome with long brown hair.</i>	<i>I like being with him because people like him so I made a lot of nice friends through him. He always asks them questions about their lives instead of talking about himself. So he has taught me how to make friends and how to show people that I care about them"</i>

Practice exercises:

1. What is your favorite subject at school? Why?
2. What is your favorite activity when you have free time? Why?
3. Who is your favorite person? Why?
4. What is your least favorite subject at school? Why?

Example 2:

Prompt: Think about your favorite author. Write a note to the author telling him or her that you're a big fan.

Sample response:

"Dear Andrew McCall Smith,

*I am a big fan of your book The number one ladies detective agency. The character of my *Mma Ramotse* and the details about her daily life have given me a sense of what it would be like to live in Botswana.*

I especially enjoyed learning that she has the same feelings about her country, her life, and her family that I do. Thank you for such a wonderful lesson about human nature.

Sincerely,

James Myers"

Notice that there are 3 parts in the letter structure:

1. **Greeting:** *Dear Andrew McCall Smith,*
2. **Body paragraph:**
 - a. **Reason for writing the letter:** *I am a big fan of your book The number one ladies detective agency. The character of my *Mma Ramotse* and the details about her daily life have given me a sense of what it would be like to live in Botswana.*
 - b. **Answering the prompt:** *I especially enjoyed learning that she has the same feelings about her country, her life, and her family that I do. Thank you for such a wonderful lesson about human nature.*
3. **Closing:** *Sincerely, James Myers*

Practice exercises:

1. Think of one of your favorite teachers. Write a note to him or her asking for a recommendation for you to get into a school or program where you're applying.
2. Think of a place where you would like to work. Write a letter to the company, asking for a part-time job.
3. Write about a place that you would like to visit one day. What makes it special to you?
4. Your friend from Australia sent you a gift for your birthday. Write a note thanking him or her for the gift and explaining why you like it so much.
5. Your teacher has organized an email- friend project. You will write a weekly email to a student living in Australia. Write to your email-friend describing one of your best friends or one member of your family.
6. Your family has planned a one-week trip during the school term. Write to the teacher to inform the school of your absence and to find out how to keep up with your studies while you are away.

7. Recently, your friend was giving a large amount of money. She's considering using the money either to start her own small business or to invest in some established businesses. What do you advise your friend to do with the money? Should she start her own company or put the money into businesses that are already operating?
8. You're going to attend a university in the US and will live on campus in the dorm with another roommate. Write a letter to this University describing the type of roommate you would like to have.
9. You are going to take a trip and want to invite your best friend to go with you. Write to your friend both explaining your plans for the trip and inviting him or her to go along.
10. Write a letter to your friend describing your favorite foods from the city you live in.
11. What is your favorite day of the week, and why?

Writing part 2:

In this section, you will be asked to supply an argument supporting a particular perspective on a topic. Therefore, you must think beyond what the prompt is asking you to.

These are the common types of questions in this part:

1. Discuss whether you agree or disagree with a statement made in the prompt.
2. Choose one form among two or three possible answers provided in the prompt, and defend your choice.
3. State your belief on a controversial topic and explain why you believe that way.
4. Compare two points of view, giving your feelings on a subject and explaining why.
5. Discuss both advantages and disadvantages of a certain action or method of doing something.
6. Explain what you would do if you had a specific problem or issue to deal with.

Before answering the prompt, organize your arguments by thinking about the following questions:

1. What is your opinion about that topic?
2. Why do you feel the way you do?
3. What makes you feel the way you do about that topic?
4. What facts, details, experiences, knowledge, feelings, and beliefs do you have about the topic?

Example 1:

Prompt: Some companies offer students internships to help them gain work experience. Others argue that this takes valuable time away from the student's education. What do you think? Give reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Sample response:

I think that internships are a good way for students, especially college students, who gained valuable on-the-job experience. My experience as a waitress taught me that I am well suited for a career in restaurant management, which is what I intend to major in at college. Without this on-the-job experience, I wouldn't know how much I enjoy the atmosphere of a restaurant, or meeting and serving many different people every day. I have some friends who have also decided on their careers because of their summer jobs. One of my friends worked at a newspaper and is now studying journalism at college.

I do believe that it's necessary for the intern to have a level of maturity and some theoretical knowledge if one is to perform well in an interesting position and still be a good student. It's difficult to mix work and study but maybe students do it successfully. In addition, an internship should not take away from class time, but rather offer the students the opportunity to apply what is learned in class. The value of gaining this type of practical knowledge is recognized by many schools and colleges, of course credits for internship work.

In conclusion, internships can be very beneficial as long as they do not replace classroom experience, but offer the students a way to apply his or her knowledge and learn whether such a career is the right choice.

Notice that there are 4 parts in the essay structure:

1. **Introduction:** I think that internships are a good way for students, especially college students, who gained valuable on-the-job experience.
2. **Body paragraph 1:** My experience as a waitress taught me that I am well suited for a career in restaurant management, which is what I intend to major in at college. Without this on-the-job experience, I wouldn't know how much I enjoy the atmosphere of a restaurant, or meeting and serving many different people every day. I have some friends who have also decided on their careers because of their summer jobs. One of my friends worked at a newspaper and is now studying journalism at college.
3. **Body paragraph 2:** I do believe that it's necessary for the intern to have a level of maturity and some theoretical knowledge if one is to perform well in an interesting position and still be a good student. It's difficult to mix work and study but maybe students do it successfully. In addition, an internship should not take away from class time, but rather offer the students the opportunity to apply what is learned in class. The value of gaining this type of practical knowledge is recognized by many schools and colleges, of course credits for internship work.
4. **Conclusion:** In conclusion, internships can be very beneficial as long as they do not replace classroom experience, but offer the students a way to apply his or her knowledge and learn whether such a career is the right choice.

Practice exercises:

1. Certain countries protect their native Industries by imposing heavy tariffs on imported goods . Other countries encourage imports in order to ensure their citizens access to as many goods as possible. Should countries be allowed to impose high tariffs on imports or should all countries allow each other free access to their markets? What do you think? Give reasons and examples to support your opinion.
2. Often former government regulators are offered jobs by the industries that they had previously been overseen. Critics say that this is a conflict of interest, While others say it's not justifiable to restrict

individuals' actions once they've left public service. What do you think? Give reasons and examples to support your opinion.

3. People think that women should work at home and not have professional jobs, While others feel that women
4. should work in all areas of society. What do you think? Give reasons and examples to support your opinion.
5. Some schools require students to wear uniforms. Other schools for students to choose which clothes they wear. Which policy do you think is better, and why?
6. Some people believe that rich countries should help poor countries. Other people believe that each country is responsible for its own success. What are your thoughts on this topic?
7. Nowadays, some people are choosing to teach their children in their home, instead of sending them to traditional schools with other children. This type of education is called homeschooling. Do you think homeschooling is a good choice for a child's education? Why or why not?
8. The past 150 years or so have seen an unprecedented number of technological innovations. Which one technological advance from this period do you think has had the most far-reaching effect on humanity, and why?
9. Name one of the most important issues in the world today and explain why it's important.
10. If you had extra money to spend on one charitable cause, what would it be and how would you support that cause?
11. People enroll in higher education with Vera's goals and objectives in mind. In your opinion, what do most adults continue their education at University of College?
12. Who do teenagers learn the most from parents or teachers? Use specific reasons to support your opinion.
13. Do you believe people learn more by doing or reading? Compare and contrast the knowledge learned from books with hands-on experience. Which learning experience is most valuable in your opinion?
14. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Children living in urban environments grow up with more opportunities than children living in rural environments. Use specific examples to prove why either a city or country environment is better for children.

WRITING PRACTICE 1

PROMPT 1

Dear, _____

WRITING PRACTICE 2

PROMPT 1