

Exercise 4

Look at the essay question again.

Some people believe the mass media have too much influence over people. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Then read the student's essay. Which ideas did the student include in his/her answer? Choose the correct answers.

As communications technology improves, there is no doubt that mass media like television, radio and internet have an increasing influence on the lives of everybody. Some people think this influence is positive as it allows freedom of choice, but many people worry that this situation has a negative impact on society. I strongly agree with the second opinion and will discuss below the reasons why.

There are several key reasons why the influence of mass media is negative. The first reason is political; the owners of newspapers, television stations, etc. are very rich and powerful and only give news and opinions which support their political view. I believe this can be very dangerous for people's freedom because different opinions are not discussed and we receive only one side of an argument.

The second main problem is that mass media destroy creativity. It is a fact that everybody wants to copy what is fashionable, but if only one view of the world is presented in the media, there is no room for different cultures and ideas. This leads to a further problem in that we may lose independent thought which could lead to a society full of people who behave like robots. Therefore, in my opinion, the world becomes a much more boring place.

Some people will argue that the influence of mass media is positive because people obviously feel good sharing the same experience with millions of others. It is my belief, however, that the negative aspects are much greater than the positive because if everybody does and thinks the same thing, all the richness and variety of life will be lost.

Agree

1. Owners of media groups force their own ideas on people

- Yes
 - No
- 2. TV is boring and has too many ads
 - Yes
 - No
- 3. Stops creativity as we always follow fashion
 - Yes
 - No
- 4. Too many people play computer games
 - Yes
 - No
- 5. Stops individual thought – we are told what to think
 - Yes
 - No

Disagree

- 6. Newspapers have lots of gossip
 - Yes
 - No
- 7. Freedom of choice is important
 - Yes
 - No
- 8. Helps us understand different issues
 - Yes
 - No
- 9. Gives us a common interest

- Yes
- No

10. Radio and TV can stop loneliness

- Yes
- No