

## Exercise 8

An agree/disagree essay should contain both facts and opinions.

Read the information. Then read the student's essay again and decide if the points in **bold** are facts or opinions.

Facts and opinions can be shown by using specific language.

Facts are general statements which cannot be argued.

**Example:**

*I has been shown that more people find out about the news through the internet.*

This is a **fact**.

We use words such as 'think' and 'believe' to express opinions. These ideas are personal.

**Example:**

*I think the TV news is much better than online news.*

This is an **opinion**.

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.**

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1. Mass media like television, radio and internet have an increasing influence.
  - Fact
  - Opinion
2. Some people think this influence is positive.
  - Fact
  - Opinion
3. The owners of newspapers, television stations, etc. are very rich and powerful.
  - Fact
  - Opinion
4. I believe this can be very dangerous for people's freedom.
  - Fact
  - Opinion
5. Everybody wants to copy what is fashionable.
  - Fact
  - Opinion
6. We may lose independent thought.
  - Fact
  - Opinion
7. The world becomes a much more boring place.
  - Fact
  - Opinion
8. People obviously feel good sharing the same experience with millions of others.

- Fact
  - Opinion
- 9. If everybody does and thinks the same thing, all the richness and variety of life will be lost.
  - Fact
  - Opinion