

AN OPINION ESSAY

What is an opinion essay?

An opinion essay is an essay where the writer states an opinion about a topic and uses facts and anecdotes to support that opinion.

Writing an opinion essay

When you write an opinion essay, you must say what you think about a topic and try to convince the reader of your point of view on that topic.

To do that, you should first introduce the topic and state your opinion. Then, you should give three reasons that support your view, and finally, you should write a conclusion where you summarise your arguments and repeat your opinion using different words.

How to structure an opinion essay.

Paragraph 1: Introduction

In this paragraph, you present the writing topic and state your opinion.

A) How can you present the writing topic? You can capture your reader's attention with a good hook, for example, a rhetorical question, for example:

- Have you ever considered stopping eating meat?

You can also introduce the topic by restating the question or the title of the essay in your own words, for example, if the title is: **Playing computer games is a waste of time**

you can restate the title essay in your own words like in the sentence below:

"Some people disapprove of computer games because they do not think they are educational or useful."

B) Then, state your opinion. Your opinion should be clear from the start of the essay.

Here you have to say if you agree or not with the question or the title of the essay. You can agree, disagree or partially agree.

Check the two examples of **paragraph 1** below.

TITLE - Top sports players are paid too much - Opinion: I disagree.

Example 1

Nowadays, top sportspeople, such as football players or basketball players, have huge salaries, and this promotes a lot of debate. *However, I don't think they earn too much. In my opinion, their salaries are fair.*

Example 2

How often have you heard a friend or a colleague complain about the excessive salaries of professional sports players? But do they really earn too much? *I don't think they earn too much. I truly believe their salaries are fair.*

Paragraphs 2 and 3 (or even 4): Body

In this section you have to support your opinion with reasons and examples. You must include at least three reasons. Break it into several paragraphs. Write one paragraph for each supporting reason. Don't forget to include examples or facts. Here is an example:

TITLE -Top sports players are paid too much - Opinion: I disagree.

*As I disagree, my reasons and facts serve to support my opinion. **This is my plan:***

- **Reason 1:** Their careers are very short.
 - Fact 1: their careers usually end in their 30's.
 - Fact 2: sometimes, they are even shorter because of injuries.
- **Reason 2:** They lose their privacy.
 - Fact 1: Constantly followed by journalists and fans.
 - Fact 2: Now, everyone uses their phones to take photos and publish them.

Check this example of paragraph number 2, developing **Reason 1**

Firstly, **Despite** all the money professional sports players earn every year, they work for only a few years – they usually retire when they are in their thirties. **In addition,** many of them have to retire earlier **because** they get injured and have to stop playing.

Paragraph 5: Conclusion

Summarise your ideas and repeat your opinion using different words.

Check this example of a conclusion:

To sum up, **I believe** top professional sports players have the salaries they deserve **because** their careers are short and **because** during those years, their personal lives are affected by their popularity.



to express
opinion

*In my opinion,...
In my view,...
From my point of view/ perspective,...
Personally, I think,...*



to give
reasons

*My main reason is,...
because (of) ...
due to ...
so...*



to give
examples

*For example,...
For instance,...
such as...
like...*



to
conclude

*To conclude,...
To sum up,...
In conclusion,...
It is clear that,...*



to add
ideas

*First of all,...
Secondly/ Thirdly,...
Lastly/ Finally,...
Moreover,/ in addition,/ furthermore,...*

TRANSITION WORDS AND PHRASES YOU CAN USE FOR OPINION ESSAYS

An example of an opinion essay with 2 reasons

TITLE: It is better to travel around your own country instead of going abroad on holiday.

I think that (1) it is wonderful to travel to different countries and therefore (2) I completely disagree with the idea that it is better to stay in your own country.

I feel very strongly (1) that we should visit as many countries as possible. If we visit another country we can learn a lot. We can learn about the culture, we can meet the people and we can find out about different ways of life. We can eat new food, listen to a variety of music and learn about customs. We can also (2) practise a foreign language.

Another reason for (3) visiting other countries is that it is good for relations between countries. When we know about people's customs and culture we can understand the people better. If people travel more to other countries perhaps (1) there will be less fighting in the world.

I think it is clear that (1) going abroad on holiday can only be good for us and although (2) I love my own country I would like to visit as many different countries as I can.

Another example of an opinion essay with 3 reasons

| | |
|--|--|
| Title | A2/B1 English learners should learn how to write opinion essays. |
| Introduction Introduce the topic. Say if you agree or not with the title. | Learning how to write an opinion essay is a skill that English learners should develop as early as possible. In my opinion, A2/B1 English learners should start learning how to write simple opinion essays for the following reasons. |
| Body Give at least 3 reasons to support your opinion. Give examples if necessary. | <p>First of all, A2/B1 students love to share their opinions. For example, they often use expressions such as "I agree" or "I disagree". Now, it is time for them to learn how to organize their ideas and share them in written form.</p> <p>Secondly, A2/B1 students know how to write some complex sentences. For instance, they know how to share their reasons and give examples to support their opinions.</p> <p>Finally, students will have to write a good opinion essay if they want to succeed in their IELTS, TOEFL, CELPIP, or Cambridge tests. Therefore, the sooner they develop this writing skill, the more likely they are to succeed.</p> |
| Conclusion It should be a summary of what you wrote in the body of your essay. | To conclude, I think that A2/B1 learners are more than ready to learn how to write simple opinion essays. If students learn the basics of writing an opinion essay at lower levels, they will not struggle at higher levels or when taking a proficiency test. |

Example of an opinion essay A2/B1

EXERCISES before writing your opinion essay

Look at the essay and do the exercises to practise and improve your writing skills.

Preparation

Are these points about *Video games* or *Sports*? Underline the correct subject.

- | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. | You can play basketball, water-ski or dance in your own room. | <i>Video games</i> | <i>Sports</i> |
| 2. | You can play them outside in the fresh air. | <i>Video games</i> | <i>Sports</i> |
| 3. | It's the best way to stay physically fit and healthy. | <i>Video games</i> | <i>Sports</i> |
| 4. | You can play them even when the weather is bad. | <i>Video games</i> | <i>Sports</i> |
| 5. | You can compete with people all over the world via the internet. | <i>Video games</i> | <i>Sports</i> |

An opinion essay

Are video games a good way to keep fit?

Nowadays, many teenagers have got video consoles at home and they often like playing active video games. These are good for you for a number of reasons.

First of all, I think that active video games are a good way to keep fit. There are lots of different types of exercise you can do such as basketball, water-skiing and dance and, what's more, you can play them in the comfort of your own home. In my opinion, these games are fun and interactive because you can play them with friends and, if you play online, you don't need to be in the same place as your friend to play.

In addition, you can play them whenever you want. Some people think that it's better to do exercise outside in the fresh air. Although this is true, it's actually difficult to play outside when it's raining or very hot so video games are a good alternative.

To sum up, I believe that video games are a fun and social way to keep fit. I think they are a good option when you can't play outside and they might encourage people to do more exercise.

Top Tips for writing

- Write your essay in clear paragraphs. Use phrases like *First of all*, *In addition* and *To sum up* to start each paragraph.
- Express your own opinion using *I think*, *In my opinion* or *I believe*. Mention other viewpoints with phrases like *Some people think* and say whether you agree or disagree with them.

1. Check your understanding: multiple selection

Tick the six points which are mentioned in the essay.

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|---|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | There are a lot of different types of games. |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Video games are fun to play with your friends. |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Video games allow you to play many different sports. |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | You can compete with people all over the world via the internet. |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Playing video games is the best way to stay physically fit and healthy. |
| 6. | <input type="checkbox"/> | It's better to do exercise outside in the fresh air. |
| 7. | <input type="checkbox"/> | You can play video games even when the weather is bad. |
| 8. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Playing sport is more intense exercise than playing video games. |

2. Check your writing: matching – useful words and phrases

Match the words and phrases that have the same meaning and write them below.

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------|
| In addition, | First of all, | Nowadays, | In fact, |
| In conclusion, | I believe that | I disagree that | |

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|-------|
| 1. | Today, ... | _____ |
| 2. | Firstly, ... | _____ |
| 3. | Also, ... | _____ |
| 4. | I think that ... | _____ |
| 5. | I don't think that ... | _____ |
| 6. | Actually, ... | _____ |
| 7. | To sum up, ... | _____ |