



Writing

Essay: Writing a strong introduction

The opening paragraph of an essay should introduce the topic of what you are going to write about and clearly state your opinion in answer to the question in the task. Avoid simply copying the words from the task; think of your own introduction. Describe something you know about the topic and then give your opinion using formal language.

1 Read this extract from a writing task and circle the topic. Then read the three alternative opening paragraphs written in answer to the task and answer the questions below them.

One reason why zoos keep animals in cages is to study them and protect them for the future. Is this a good way or a bad way to help animals?

A Animals need protecting but, in my opinion, zoos shouldn't keep animals in cages to study them and protect them for the future. It's not a good way to help them.

B Zoos know that many types of wildlife are in danger. If they can find ways of saving these animals by studying some of them, then I think they are doing something very good for nature.

C Wild animals are in increasing danger in the modern world. I think we should do all we can to increase our knowledge of nature and protect it.

Which introduction

- 1 wrongly uses informal language, such as contractions (eg *they're* instead of *they are*)?
- 2 copies too many words from the task?
- 3 does **not** introduce the topic?
- 4 does **not** give an opinion on the question in the task?
- 5 correctly introduces the essay task?

2 Read this writing task and circle the topic.

You have been talking about the environment in class. 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 are now banning plastic bags in shops.
Is this a good or a bad thing for shoppers?

Notes

Write about:

- 1 plastic rubbish
- 2 water pollution
- 3 _____ (your idea)



3 Read these two alternative opening paragraphs for the essay that was written in answer to the question in 2. Decide in class which one successfully introduces the topic and the writer's opinion. Then tick the correct box.

a The earth could soon be covered in bits of plastic, covering the countryside and ruining the oceans. I think that this is wrong and what some countries are doing is good for everybody.

b Every day, millions of plastic bags are used by shoppers for an hour or two and then thrown away. I think that banning them in shops reduces the amount of rubbish in the world which is good for everybody.

4 Now read the rest of the essay and answer the questions below it.

First of all, a huge proportion of our rubbish is made of plastic which does not decompose like paper and other waste products. Plastic takes years to disappear from the land.

In addition, many of the world's oceans and rivers are polluted by millions of plastic bags which are a danger to fish and other animals. Ducks and birds can get trapped in them and die, for instance, and fish get slowly poisoned if they eat them.

Moreover, there is no need for plastic bags in shops. People can easily get used to taking their own shopping bags with them when they go out.

All in all, I think more and more countries should stop shops using dangerous and unnecessary plastic bags. The world would be a much better place without them.

- 1 Underline the main point the writer makes about Notes 1 and 2.
- 2 Underline the main point the writer makes as a third idea.
- 3 In which paragraph does the writer use examples to support one of the points? _____

5 Using examples is a good way of explaining and supporting points in your essay. Look at the following statements about food and use your imagination to help you write examples.

- 1 Some of the food we buy would be easy to grow ourselves. For example, _____.
- 2 Some people do not have the time or energy to grow their own food. For example, _____.

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

You have been talking about the environment in class. 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)

Many people have decided to grow their own food these days. Is this a good thing or a bad thing for people?

Notes

Write about:

- 1 food from shops
- 2 prices and cost
- 3 _____ (your idea)

Plan

Paragraph 1: Introduce the topic and your opinion.
Paragraph 2: Make point(s) about shop food to support your opinion.
Paragraph 3: Make point(s) about prices and cost to support your opinion.
Paragraph 4: Use your own idea in support or contrast.
Paragraph 5: Re-state your opinion using different words and add a comment.



LANGUAGE BANK

Describing food

ripe ≠ unripe
fresh ≠ stale
healthy ≠ unhealthy
natural
processed

Producing food

additives
preservatives
chemicals
fertilizer

Growing food

digging
preparing the soil
sowing seeds
weeding
watering
harvesting

Introducing examples

for instance,
for example,

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Circle the essay topic in the task. Introduce the topic in your opening paragraph and make sure that:

- your opinion is clearly expressed.
- you answer the question in the task.

Use examples to help you explain your ideas later in the essay. Use formal language.

Many people have decided to grow their own food these days. Is this a good thing or a bad thing for

Paragraph 1: Introduce the topic and your opinion.

Paragraph 2: Make point(s) about shop food to support your opinion.

Paragraph 3: Make point(s) about prices and cost to support your opinion.

Paragraph 4: Use your own ideas in support or contrast.

Paragraph 5: Re-state your opinion using different words and add a comment.