

# Writing A discursive essay

Think about the following questions:

Do smartphones really improve our lives?

Read the following text and place identify de arguments.

Arguments Against

Arguments in Favour

## Do smartphones really improve our lives?



### Introduction

Perhaps the greatest benefit of smartphones is that they give us an incredible amount of information. They are not just phones – we can also use them as maps, encyclopaedias, novels, entertainment systems, and much more. We live in an age of information and smartphones help us to make the most of it all. In addition, they allow us to live our lives spontaneously. Whether you need a taxi, have to book a restaurant table, or want to identify stars in the night sky, you can do it straightaway. Finally, they keep us in touch with our friends and family and the social role they play in a fast-moving society is hugely important.

However, there are strong arguments to suggest that the advantages of smartphones can also be disadvantages. One drawback is the cost – monthly contracts are far from cheap and smartphones tend to become obsolete quickly, so people feel they need to buy the newest model. What is more, they are a constant distraction and they encourage people to spend hours checking social networking sites when they could be doing something more useful. But perhaps the most significant downside is for professionals. On the one hand smartphones offer great convenience, but they also mean that employees can be contacted by their boss all the time, even on holiday.

### Conclusion

Read the following information.



#### Introductions and conclusions

- In an essay, it is important that the introduction engages the reader's attention. A good introductory paragraph describes the present situation and gives supporting evidence. It should introduce the topic, but should not include the specific points that you are going to mention in the body of the text. It should refer to the statement or question you have been asked to discuss. This can often be done in the form of a question to the reader, which the subsequent paragraphs should answer.
- The conclusion should briefly sum up the arguments you have made and can include your personal opinion. The opinion you express should follow logically from the arguments you have presented. It is important that this is not just a repetition of your arguments. It is a summary of what you believe your arguments have proved.

Read the three introductions and choose which would be the most appropriate for the text.

### **Introductions**

- 1 Smartphones dominate the field of personal communications and it sometimes seems that nearly everyone owns one. The technology is universal, but do smartphones really make our lives better?
- 2 Smartphones clearly have important advantages and disadvantages. In this essay, I am first going to analyse the advantages of this technology and then I will outline some important disadvantages, before finally drawing my conclusions.
- 3 Can you imagine life without your smartphone? Probably not, as this fantastic technology has become such a crucial tool for our work and social lives. So how did we manage before smartphones were invented?

Read the three conclusion and choose s which would be the most appropriate for the text.

### **Conclusions**

- 1 To sum up, smartphones have both advantages and disadvantages, but all things considered, I believe that their influence is entirely beneficial – after all, we could not live without them.
- 2 In conclusion, smartphones have improved our lives considerably in my view, especially if you want to use the internet. They are very useful, for example, if you are in a shop and you decide to buy something online instead.
- 3 On the whole, smartphones are a wonderful tool, but they have both pros and cons and they have to be used appropriately. It is very important that we control them and not the other way round.

Choose one of the following essay titles and write three arguments against and three arguments in favour of it.

The growth of online shopping has greatly improved life for the consumer.

Ready meals have revolutionized eating at home – but at what price?

**Arguments Against**

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**Arguments in Favour**

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Read the following steps that you should take in mind to write an introductory paragraphs.

- 1 Write an introductory sentence about how important online shopping or ready meals have become.
- 2 Write a second sentence supporting the first one.
- 3 Ask the main question that you intend to answer in the essay.

Read the tips that you need to consider to write an argumentative essay.

- Brainstorm points for and against and decide which two or three you think are the most important.
- Use a neutral or formal style.
- Write a clear introduction which engages the reader. You could end the introduction with a question you are going to answer.
- An essay is not just a list of ideas and opinions. Link your ideas in a logical sequence. Use phrases to order, contrast, and weigh up the points in your argument.
- Make sure your conclusion is a summary of what you have previously said and refers back to what you were asked to write about.

Write the text following these instructions and submit it in a Word document through this activity.

## **WRITING**

Write an essay of between 200 and 250 words.

**DRAFT** your essay.

- Paragraph 1: Write an introduction.
- Paragraph 2: Give arguments in favour of online shopping or ready meals.
- Paragraph 3: Give arguments against online shopping or ready meals.
- Paragraph 4: Write your conclusion, saying whether you think the advantages outweigh the disadvantages or vice versa.

**EDIT** the essay, making sure you've covered the main points, cutting any irrelevant information, and making sure it is the right length.

**CHECK** the essay for mistakes in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and register.