

# ESSAY WRITING

Справочные материалы  
для студентов, обучающихся  
по специальностям

031201.65 – *Теория и методика преподавания  
иностранных языков и культур*

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## **Предисловие**

Данное пособие предназначено для обучения студентов написанию разнообразных эссе. Пособие содержит обширную информацию по особенностям, структуре, компонентам эссе; включает функциональную лексику, способствующую оптимизации работы над письменной речью.

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## 1. Academic Writing

Academic writing is a widespread form of practising a foreign language in higher education institutions. Forming an essential part of a student's course of study, it comes in different shapes and sizes. Some of these forms call for personal responses to a particular state of affairs; some compare and contrast different views on the same subject; others are a person's evaluation of a book, article or film; still others suggest a possible solution to a problem. Moreover, real texts that are produced for a particular purpose very often possess features characteristic of different kinds of academic writing.

Although there is a great diversity of types of academic writing, educationalists generally classify them into two major categories: compositions and essays.

A **composition** is fairly simple in form and content. It is basically an objective representation of a state of affairs: the writer concentrates on the bare facts by presenting an entity as it is in reality. In this case the writer does not comment on what they perceive, nor do they evaluate anything, which is why readers may usually infer what they wish. Compositions are usually written at the early stages of language study.

There are two main kinds of composition: narrative and descriptive.

A **narrative composition** is a representation of a meaningful succession of events. It is sequential in that the events are ordered. A straightforward movement from the first event to the last constitutes the simplest chronology. However, chronology is sometimes complicated by presenting the events in another order: for example, a story may open with the final episode and then flash back to all that preceded it.

A **descriptive composition** is a representation of the features of some object, person, place, event, sequence of events, or emotion. Description deals with different kinds of perception. A writer may attempt to describe how something looks, sounds, tastes, feels. The main thing is to arrange what we see, hear or feel into a significant pattern. This kind of essay involves splitting up a subject into its component parts and presenting them to the reader in a clear and orderly fashion.

An **essay**, on the contrary, is more complicated in form and content. It is not a mere description of facts, but rather an interpretation of a state of affairs. The writer focuses not so much on the entity proper as on thoughts and feelings aroused by perception of this very entity. Therefore the resultant text provides the writer's personal perspective on reality. Essays are normally written at the advanced stages of language study.

Teachers usually deal with three major types of essays: narrative, descriptive and discursive (also called expository).

The difference between a narrative or descriptive composition on the one hand and a **narrative** or **descriptive essay** on the other is that the latter provides

sophisticated perceptions of the world, which means that it has some literary merit.

The third type of essay – a **discursive essay** – is the presentation of the writer's ideas about a particular subject. The purpose of this kind of essay is to express in a highly consistent and coherent manner your views, which must be backed up by relevant evidence and / or arguments. A discursive essay is intended to analyse, explain, persuade, compare and contrast.

## 2. Types of Discursive Essays

Depending on the aim that the writer pursues, there are three major types of discursive essays: an opinion essay (also called an argumentative or persuasion essay), a problem-solution essay, and a comparison-and-contrast essay (also called a for-and-against essay).

The **opinion essay** presents the writer's view on a topic, which is clearly stated and supported by reasons and / or examples. In this case the writer tries to persuade the reader to accept their opinion by arguing for or against something. In doing so, the writer appeals to reason rather than emotion.

Writing an opinion essay is like participating in a debate by taking one side or the other, either for or against something. The writer is expected to prove that their ideas are correct by putting forward convincing arguments in favour of their position. However, this is not enough. It is also necessary to show that the opponent's views are wrong, which involves refuting their arguments.

But if the opponent has a valid point, the writer may concede it. It is highly unlikely that the arguments on one side are all tenable, whereas those on the other are extremely flimsy. Thus the concession will point to the writer's broad-mindedness in showing some understanding of the ideas of the opposite side. However, after admitting that the opposing side may have a good point, the writer should go on to show that, overall, their reasons are superior to those of the opponent. The opposing viewpoint should be included in a separate paragraph before the closing one, together with an argument that shows it is an unconvincing viewpoint. Importantly, the concession should not appear in the conclusion, as it cannot be allowed to overshadow the central idea conveyed in the essay.

The **problem-solution essay** analyses a particular situation with a view to finding solutions to the problems associated with it, as well as predicting any expected consequences. It may also discuss the way of translating the proposed solutions into reality.

The **comparison-and-contrast essay** explores a topic from opposing points of view, discussing arguments in favour of an opinion as well as those against, or the advantages and disadvantages of a policy, or similarities and differences

between two entities. Each point should be backed up by reasons and / or examples. The items that the writer compares and / or contrasts must be from the same general class. You can't, for example, compare an educational system with a health-care system, but you can compare and contrast the educational system of one country with that of another.

The writer should present both sides of the issue in a fair way by discussing them objectively and in equal detail. At the same time the writer usually chooses a particular perspective on the issue, in which case the emphasis will be on either the points in favour / advantages / similarities or the points against / disadvantages / differences. To put it another way, the former may outweigh the latter, or vice versa.

### 3. Essay Organization

A good discursive essay consists of:

- an introduction in which you clearly state the subject to be discussed and your central idea;
- a main body in which points are clearly stated in separate paragraphs and exemplified or justified;
- a conclusion in which you summarize the main points of the essay: you may state or restate your central idea or give a balanced consideration of the topic (= say that there are points for and against the topic).

#### 3.1. Introduction

##### 3.1.1. Structure of the Introduction

The introduction is the first paragraph of an essay. It begins the essay and has two parts: general statements and a thesis statement. The flow of ideas in the paragraph usually goes from the general (broad ideas) to the specific (concrete ideas). The most specific statement is the thesis statement, which is normally the last sentence of the paragraph. A good introduction should be approximately 15-20% of the essay length.

**General statements** provide background information about the topic of the essay. They should be interesting enough to attract and keep the reader's attention. The number of general statements you write in an introduction will depend on how long your essay is. However, you should write at least two or three general statements in an introduction.

**The thesis statement** introduces the main subject and the central idea of the essay. It may also list specific aspects of the main subject or the method of organization.

The difference between a subject and an idea is that the former is the question raised in the essay, whereas the latter is the answer provided to this question.

### 3.1.2. Thesis Statement

The thesis statement is an important element of an essay in general and an introduction in particular. It is the pivot point around which the whole essay revolves. Linked to the topic of the essay, it provides a clear focus for the subsequent parts of the essay. It establishes a basis on which to include information in the main body or exclude it. Every element of the thesis should be developed in the main body of the essay. Discussions that drift from the writer's thesis should be left out, or the thesis changed to accommodate the new discussions.

There is a direct relationship between the complexity of an essay and the complexity of its thesis statement. The more general the thesis, the longer your paper will be. The thesis must present the right balance between the general and the specific to allow for a thorough discussion within the allotted length of the paper.

Depending on the type of discursive essay, the thesis statement may communicate one of the following things:

- the main subject and the central idea of the essay (in the case of *opinion essays*);
- the nature of the problem, as well as what has caused it and the consequences (in the case of *problem-solution essays*);
- the main subject to be discussed, or alternatively the main subject and the method of organization of material in the main body (in the case of *comparison-and-contrast essays*).

It is generally recommended that the thesis statement should provide a brief explanation of the writer's position. For example, the statement *Old age is a wonderful stage of life because many elderly people finally come to terms with themselves in their last years as they evaluate their accomplishments and realize their true value as human beings* is preferable to *Old age is a wonderful stage of life*.

### 3.1.3. Types of Introduction

Given below are some of the most common kinds of introductions.

(1) *From the general to the specific*. It is one of the most common ways of constructing an introduction. In this case the introduction provides a natural and

smooth transition from the reader's world to the less familiar world of the essay. The following introduction to a discussion of the 1968 massacre at My Lai, Vietnam, begins with general statements and leads to the particular subject at hand.

*Though we prefer to think of man as basically good and reluctant to do evil, such is not the case. Many of the crimes inflicted on humankind can be dismissed as being committed by the degenerates of society at the prompting of the abnormal mind. But what of the perfectly "normal" man or woman who commits inhumane acts simply because he or she has been ordered to do so? It cannot be denied that such acts have occurred, either in everyday life or in wartime situations. Unfortunately, even normal, well-adjusted people can become cruel, inhumane, and destructive if placed in the hands of unscrupulous authority. Such was the case in the village of My Lai, Vietnam, on March 16, 1968, when a platoon of American soldiers commanded by Lt. William Galley massacred more than 100 civilians, including women and children.*

**(2) From the specific to the general: illustration.** Illustration is one of the most effective means of capturing and holding your reader's attention. Consider the following paragraph:

*In late 1971 astronomer Carl Sagan and his colleagues were studying data transmitted from the planet Mars to the earth by the Mariner 9 spacecraft. Struck by the effects of the Martian dust storms on the temperature and on the amount of light reaching the surface, the scientist wondered about the effects on earth of the dust storms that would be created by nuclear explosions. Using computer models, they simulated the effects of such explosions on the earth's climate. The results astounded them. Apart from the known effects of nuclear blasts (fires and radiation), the earth, they discovered, would become enshrouded in a "nuclear winter". Following a nuclear exchange, plummeting temperatures and pervading darkness would destroy most of the Northern Hemisphere's crops and farm animals and would eventually render much of the planet's surface uninhabitable. The effects of nuclear war, apparently, would be more catastrophic than had previously been imagined. It has therefore become more urgent than ever for the nations of the world to take dramatic steps to reduce the threat of nuclear war.*

**(3) Question.** You can provoke the reader's attention by posing a question or a series of questions. Opening your essay with a question can be provocative, since it places the reader in an active role: they begin by considering answers.

*Are gender roles learned or inherited? Scientific research has established the existence of biological differences between the sexes, but the effect of biology's influence on gender roles cannot be distinguished from society's influence. According to Michael Lewis of the Institute for the Study of Exceptional Children, "As early as you can show me a sex difference, I can show you the*

*culture at work." Social processes, as well as biological differences, are responsible for the separate roles of men and women.*

**(4) Historical review.** In many cases the reader will be unprepared to follow the issue the writer discusses unless the latter provides some historical background. In doing so, the writer helps the reader to understand their arguments. Consider the following introduction to an essay on the film-rating system:

*Sex and violence on the screen are not new issues. In the Roaring Twenties there was increasing pressure from civic and religious groups to ban depictions of "immorality" from the screen. Faced with the threat of federal censorship, the film producers decided to clean their own house. In 1930, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America established the Production Code. At first, adherence to the Code was voluntary; but in 1934 Joseph Breen, newly appointed head of the MPPDA, gave the Code teeth. Henceforth all newly produced films had to be submitted for approval to the Production Code Administration, which had the power to award or withhold the Code seal. Without a Code seal, it was virtually impossible for a film to be shown anywhere in the United States, since exhibitors would not accept it. At about the same time, the Catholic Legion of Decency was formed to advise the faithful which films were and were not objectionable. For several decades the Production Code Administration exercised powerful control over what was portrayed in American theatrical films. By the 1960s, however, changing standards of morality had considerably weakened the Code's grip. In 1968, the Production Code was replaced with a rating system designed to keep younger audiences away from films with high levels of sex or violence. Despite its imperfections, this rating system has proved more beneficial to American films than did the old censorship system.*

**(5) Review of a controversy.** A particular type of historical review is the review of a controversy or debate. In this case the writer refers to two opposing sides of the controversy, for example, by providing quotations that represent their views. This kind of focus helps the writer to secure the reader's attention and involve them in the controversy that forms the subject of the essay. Consider the following introduction:

*The American Heritage Dictionary's definition of civil disobedience is rather simple: "the refusal to obey civil laws that are regarded as unjust, usually by employing methods of passive resistance". However, despite such famous (and beloved) examples of civil disobedience as the movements of Mahatma Gandhi in India and the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., in the United States, the question of whether or not civil disobedience should be considered an asset to society is hardly clear-cut. For instance, Hannah Arendt, in her article "Civil Disobedience", holds that "to think of disobedient minorities as rebels and truants is against the letter and spirit of a constitution whose framers were*

*especially sensitive to the dangers of unbridled majority rule". On the other hand, a noted lawyer, Lewis Van Dusen, Jr., in his article "Civil Disobedience: Destroyer of Democracy", states that "civil disobedience, whatever the ethical rationalization, is still an assault on our democratic society, an affront to our legal order and an attack on our constitutional government". These opposite views are clearly incompatible. I believe, though, that Van Dusen's is the more convincing. On balance, civil disobedience is dangerous to society.*

**(6) Quotation.** A quotation may help to set the stage for the discussion the essay provides by presenting the reader with some provocative and well-phrased remarks. Here is an introduction to a paper on democracy:

*"Two cheers for democracy" was E. M. Forster's not-quite-wholehearted judgment. Most Americans would not agree. To them, our democracy is one of the glories of civilization. To one American in particular, E. B. White, democracy is "the hole in the stuffed shirt through which the sawdust slowly trickles ... the dent in the high hat... the recurrent suspicion that more than half of the people are right more than half of the time". American democracy is based on the oldest continuously operating written constitution in the world – a most impressive fact and a testament to the farsightedness of the founding fathers. But just how farsighted can mere humans be? In "Future Shock", Alvin Toffler quotes economist Kenneth Boulding on the incredible acceleration of social change in our time: "The world of today ... is as different from the world in which I was born as that world was from Julius Caesar's". As we move toward the twenty-first century, it seems legitimate to question the continued effectiveness of a governmental system that was devised in the eighteenth century; and it seems equally legitimate to consider alternatives.*

**(7) Statement of a thesis.** Perhaps the most direct method of introduction is to begin immediately with the thesis, particularly if it is a provocative assertion. The advantage of beginning with such a thesis statement is that it forces the reader to sit up and take notice – perhaps even to begin protesting.

*Computers are a mixed blessing. The lives of Americans are becoming increasingly involved with machines that think for them. "We are at the dawn of the era of the smart machine", say the authors of a cover story on the subject in "Newsweek", "that will change forever the way an entire nation works", beginning a revolution that will be to the brain what the industrial revolution was to the hand. Tiny silicon chips already process enough information to direct air travel, to instruct machines how to cut fabric – even to play chess with (and defeat) the masters. One can argue that development of computers for the household, as well as industry – will change for the better the quality of our lives: computers will help us save energy, reduce the amount of drudgery that most of us endure around tax season, make access to libraries easier. Yet there is a certain danger involved with this proliferation of technology.*

## 3.2. Main Body

The main body of an essay should consist of no fewer than two paragraphs. Each paragraph should be well-developed, that is, the reasons and / or examples provided there are expected to fully support its controlling idea. This means, among other things, that it should be fairly long – short paragraphs can be used primarily for the purpose of linking two other paragraphs.

An **opinion essay** should have two or more paragraphs presenting the writer's viewpoint on a particular topic and, optionally, one paragraph providing the opposing view.

A **problem-solution essay** has two or more paragraphs, each dealing with one of the proposed solutions to the problem.

A **comparison-and-contrast essay** follows one of the following two patterns: block organization or point-by-point organization. In *block organization*, the first paragraph or paragraphs present arguments for an opinion, or the advantages of a policy, or similarities between two entities, whereas the following paragraphs provide arguments against, or the disadvantages, or differences. In *point-by-point organization*, the writer organizes the essay according to the points that are common to both entities that are being compared and contrasted. In each paragraph of the main body, a different point is discussed. The discussion includes both arguments for and against, or advantages and disadvantages, or similarities and differences. Block organization is more suitable for a simpler subject, while point-by-point organization is usually chosen when there are many complex aspects to a subject.

### 3.2.1. Paragraph Development

The paragraph is normally a group of related sentences that develop one main idea. Occasionally a single sentence may make up a separate paragraph. However, in any one essay such short paragraphs should be the exception, not the rule, and may serve to provide a smooth transition from one fully developed paragraph to another, or alternatively may be employed for emphatic purposes.

The length of a paragraph depends on a number of factors, one of which is the overall length of the essay. As a general rule of thumb, for an essay of 300-350 words a paragraph should on average contain 50 to 120 words, depending on the number of paragraphs making up the main body of an essay (two to four paragraphs). A shorter paragraph looks underdeveloped and the whole essay disjointed. This means that it needs development, which can be achieved by providing more arguments and / or examples.

The sentences that a paragraph is composed of are of four different kinds: a topic sentence, supporting sentences and, optionally, a concluding sentence and a concluding comment.

The **topic sentence** is usually placed at or near the beginning, if the paragraph is deductively structured (= reasoning from the general to the particular), but can also come at the end, if the paragraph is inductively arranged (= reasoning from particular facts or ideas to a general rule). The topic sentence is the most general statement of the paragraph. It normally expresses the subject and the controlling idea, but sometimes only the subject.

In a deductively organized paragraph, the topic sentence may be either in initial position or come after one or two other sentences. In the latter case the sentences that precede it serve as a link with the previous paragraph.

In general, the topic sentence plays the same role in a paragraph as the thesis statement in an essay as a whole.

The topic sentence is followed by a number of **supporting sentences**. They develop the topic sentence by giving specific details about the controlling idea. These may be arguments and / or examples which serve to prove the point. In order to choose details to support the topic sentence, you may rephrase it as a question, and then answer that question with your supporting sentences. For example, in the model paragraph (see below) about a university professor, the topic sentence is *A university professor has many duties*. If you turn that statement into a question, it will say *What are the duties of a university professor?* The supporting sentences in the paragraph must answer this question by explaining what a professor's duties are.

If the paragraph is fairly long, it may be necessary to remind the reader about its subject and controlling idea. This is done by writing a **concluding sentence**. The concluding sentence is like the topic sentence, because it is also a general statement, but it should be phrased in a different way and may even qualify the controlling idea communicated by the topic sentence. Alternatively, the concluding sentence may express the controlling idea proper if the topic sentence states only the subject to be discussed in the paragraph.

After the concluding sentence of a paragraph, you may add a **concluding comment**. This sentence is the writer's final thought about the subject of the paragraph. The purpose of the concluding comment is to give the reader something to think about regarding the subject of the paragraph.

Here is a brief example:

*A university professor has many duties. [topic sentence] In the classroom, he or she lectures to the students and answers questions. If the professor is a science instructor, he or she also conducts laboratory experiments. During office hours, students are free to visit the professor to get help on difficult material or problems. In addition, a professor may often work for many hours in a laboratory doing a research project. Another professor might spend his or her time writing a scholarly paper for a professional journal. Still another one*

*might spend time writing a book.* [supporting sentences] *In conclusion, a professor is always a very busy person.* [concluding sentence] *However, he or she usually enjoys his or her work.* [concluding comment]

Overall, there are a number of different patterns of paragraph organization. The most widespread of them are the first and second ones.

1. topic sentence [subject + controlling idea] – supporting sentences
2. topic sentence [subject + controlling idea] – supporting sentences – concluding sentence
3. topic sentence [subject + controlling idea] – supporting sentences – concluding sentence – concluding comment
4. topic sentence [subject] – supporting sentences – concluding sentence [controlling idea]
5. supporting sentences – topic sentence [subject + controlling idea]

### 3.2.2. Paragraph Unity

The sentences constituting a paragraph should reflect a clear, rational analysis of the subject. Examining whether the sentences of a paragraph correspond with its ideas is a good test of the unity of the paragraph.

*Paragraph unity* involves two related but distinct concepts: consistency and coherence (also called cohesion).

*Consistency* means that all the sentences discuss only one subject and the ideas expressed in the paragraph fit together. To be consistent a paragraph must meet three criteria. First, *relevance* – every idea must relate to the subject. No matter how attractive an idea may seem, you should drop it if you cannot fit it into the subject you have stated or cannot revise the subject to include it. However, relevance alone is not enough to establish consistency. All the ideas in a paragraph can relate to the subject yet be poorly arranged. Hence the second criterion is *effective order*, which means that ideas must be arranged in a way that clarifies their logic or their importance. Arrangement often inheres in the subject itself, which determines order of thought. For instance, telling a story, you must follow a certain sequence of events. There is, in addition, a negative criterion – *inclusiveness*, that is, nothing of vital importance must be omitted.

*Coherence* means that the sentences link up so that readers are not conscious of gaps. Coherence is a matter of style and is represented by specific words and grammatical patterns tying one sentence to another. These bind sentences successively as the paragraph develops, providing for a close connection between a particular statement and the one or ones preceding it. Sentences can be linked in several ways.

**(1) Repetition of key words.** Verbal repetition is the most obvious link. Sometimes a word is repeated, sometimes variant forms of the same word, and sometimes synonyms.

*We know that among the marks of holiness is the working of miracles. Ireland is the greatest miracle any saint ever worked. It is a miracle and a nexus of miracles. Among other miracles it is a nation raised from the dead.*

The repeated words may occur in a variety of positions. Of these the most useful are the beginnings of successive sentences, the endings of such sentences, and the close of one sentence and the opening of the one immediately following.

**(a)** *No man of note was ever further separated from life and fact than Lindbergh. No man could be more reluctant to admit it.*

**(b)** *Charles R. Forbes went to jail. Albert B. Fall went to jail. Alien Property Custodian Thomas W. Miller went to jail.*

**(c)** *Such plants to operate successfully had to run at capacity. To run at capacity they needed outlets for their whole output.*

A special use of synonymous repetition involves pronouns and demonstratives such as *one, another, some, the former, the latter, the first, the second, the third*, and so on. These words link sentences by substituting for an earlier word or phrase. *This* and *that* (along with their plurals *these* and *those*) are especially useful in this way and may be employed either as pronouns or as adjectives.

*The blind in particular seem to become indifferent to climatic extremes; and there must be in everyone's cognizance two or three immovable sightless mendicants defying rain and chill.*

*This insensitiveness to January blasts and February drenchings may be one of the compensations that the blind enjoy. Whatever else happens to them they never, perhaps, catch cold. And that is more than something.*

**(2) Discourse markers.** Sentences can also be linked by words and expressions that show the structure of discourse, that is, indicate relationships between ideas. The relationship may be one of time (*presently, meanwhile, afterwards*), of space (*above, below, in front*), or of logic (*therefore, however, as a result*). These linguistic devices serve as a signal telling readers what to expect.

*The intellectual life of the nineteenth century was more complex than that of any previous age. This was due to several causes. First: the area concerned was larger than ever before; America and Russia made important contributions, and Europe became more aware than formerly of Indian philosophies, both ancient and modern. Second: science, which had been a chief source of novelty since the seventeenth century, made new conquests, especially in geology, biology, and organic chemistry. Third: machine production profoundly altered the social structure, and gave men a new conception of their powers in relation to the physical*

*environment. Fourth: a profound revolt, both philosophical and political, against traditional systems of thought, in politics and in economics, gave rise to attacks upon many beliefs and institutions that had hitherto been regarded as unassailable. This revolt had very different forms, one romantic, the other rationalistic. (I am using these words in a liberal sense.) The romantic revolt passes from Byron, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche to Mussolini and Hitler; the rationalistic revolt begins with the French philosophers of the Revolution, passes on, somewhat softened, to the philosophical radicals in England, then acquires a deeper form in Marx and issues in Soviet Russia.*

(B. Russell)

**(3) Syntactic patterning.** Syntactic patterning simply means repeating the same basic structure in successive or near successive sentences. It often holds together the parts of a comparison or contrast.

*In bankless Iowa City eggs sell for ten cents a dozen. In Chicago the breadlines stretch endlessly along the dirty brick walls in windy streets.*

Syntactic patterning may be more extensive, working throughout most of the paragraph.

*It is common knowledge that millions of underprivileged families want adequate food and housing. What is less commonly remarked is that after they have adequate food and housing they will want to be served at a fine restaurant and to have a weekend cottage by the sea. People want tickets to the Philharmonic and vacation trips abroad. They want fine china and silver dinner sets and handsome clothes. The illiterate want to learn how to read. Then they want education, and then more education, and they want their sons and daughters to become doctors and lawyers. It is frightening to see so many millions of people wanting so much. It is almost like being present at the Oklahoma land rush, except that millions are involved instead of hundreds, and instead of land, the prize is everything that life has to offer.*

However, you cannot impose such syntactic patterning on just any sequence of sentences. It works only when the underlying thought is repetitious, as in the example above, where the sentences list a series of rising expectations common to Americans. In such cases the similarity of pattern does what ideally all sentence structure should do: the form reinforces the meaning.

### **3.3. Conclusion**

The conclusion is the last paragraph of an essay (approximately 10-15% of the essay length) which signals its end and summarizes its main points, as well as leaves the reader with the writer's final thoughts on the subject.

Essential to any conclusion is the summary, which is not merely a repetition of the central idea, but a restatement that takes advantage of the material presented in the essay. The simplest conclusion is an expanded summary, but the writer may want more than this for the end of the paper. Depending on their needs, they might offer a summary and then build onto it a discussion of the paper's significance or its implications for future study, for choices that individuals might make, for policy, and so on. They may also want to urge the reader to change an attitude or to modify behaviour.

Specifically, depending on the type of discursive essay, the conclusion provides one of the following pieces of information:

- a restatement of the writer's central idea, which is phrased in a different way from the introduction (in the case of an *opinion essay*);
- a summary of the points made in the main body, along with the desired effect (in the case of a *problem-solution essay*);
- a balanced consideration (if the writer is unable to opt for either one approach to the matter or the other) or the statement that the writer is either in favour of or against the topic (if they have formed a particular opinion) (in the case of a *comparison-and-contrast essay*).

In the concluding paragraph writers will generally use one of the following techniques: they may finish the essay with a quotation, or ask a rhetorical question, or propose a solution, or state the subject's significance, or call for further research, or give the reader something to consider. But what is important is that no new ideas should be added in the concluding paragraph because it is the end of the essay.

Let's take a look at an example. Suppose the thesis statement of an essay is *In fact, television may be a bad influence on children for three main reasons*, then the conclusion may go as follows: *In conclusion, if children watch too much television or watch the wrong programmes, their personalities can be harmed. Furthermore, their progress in school can be affected. Therefore, parents should know what programmes their children are watching. They should also turn off the television so that their children will study.*

#### **4. Discussion of a Sample Essay**

Given below is an essay dealing with one of the topical problems of contemporary life.

##### ***Television – Harmful to Children***

Over the past forty years, television sets have become standard pieces of equipment in most homes, and watching television has become a standard activity for most families. Children in our culture grow up watching television in

the morning, in the afternoon, and often in the evening as well. Although there are many excellent programmes for children, many people feel that television may not be good for children. *In fact, television may be a bad influence on children for three main reasons.*

*First of all, some programmes are not good for children to see.* For example, there are many police stories on television. People are killed with guns, knives, and even cars. Some children might think that these things could happen to them at any time. Therefore, they can become frightened. In addition, some youngsters might begin to think that violence is a normal part of life because they see it so often on television. They may begin to act out the violence they see and hurt themselves or their playmates.

*Second, television can affect children's reading ability.* Reading requires skills and brain processes that watching television does not. If children watch television too many hours each day, they don't practise the skills they need to learn how to read.

*Finally, television may affect children's schoolwork in other ways.* If they spend too much time watching television, they may get behind in their homework. Also, if they stay up to watch a late movie, they may fall asleep in class the next day. Consequently, they will not learn their lessons, and they could even fail in school.

In conclusion, if children watch too much television or watch the wrong programmes, their personalities can be harmed. Furthermore, their progress in school can be affected. Therefore, parents should know what programmes their children are watching. They should also turn off the television so that their children will study.

*(From "Introduction to Academic Writing")*

## ***Discussion***

In the first paragraph the writer introduces the subject by sketching out the role of television in children's life. This brief survey leads directly to the thesis statement (given in italics). The thesis states the subject matter and the central idea in combination (*In fact, television may be a bad influence on children*), it also mentions the order of discussion (*for three main reasons*). The latter gives the reader a general idea of what to expect in the subsequent part of the paper.

The main body of the essay takes up the three reasons referred to in the thesis statement in a general way. Each of the paragraphs opens with a topic sentence communicating the subject and the controlling idea (written in italics). The topic sentence includes a discourse marker pointing to the place of the corresponding paragraph in the structure of the main body as a whole (*first, second, finally*). Each topic sentence is followed by a number of supporting sentences which

provide arguments and examples in order to prove the point. The paragraphs are fully developed because they leave the reader convinced of the writer's point.

In the concluding paragraph the writer first summarizes the main points of the essay (the first two sentences) and then makes a recommendation as to what course of action parents should follow in the situation (the rest of the sentences). Note that the conclusion starts with a signal (*in conclusion*) telling the reader about the function this paragraph fulfils in the essay.

To test the unity of the essay, you may write out the essay topic, thesis statement and topic sentences separately and see how they fit together. Here is what you get as a result of this:

1. *Television – Harmful to Children* (essay topic)
2. *In fact, television may be a bad influence on children for three main reasons.* (thesis statement)
3. *First of all, some programmes are not good for children to see.* (topic sentence)
4. *Second, television can affect children's reading ability.* (topic sentence)
5. *Finally, television may affect children's schoolwork in other ways.* (topic sentence)

As you see, all the above statements fit in perfectly. The essay topic is the most general statement. Directly related to it is the thesis which narrows down the original subject to a more specific statement. The topic sentences are still more specific statements which are of the same level of generality and point out different aspects of the central idea conveyed by the thesis statement.

## **5. Tips on Essay Writing**

There are basically two ways of writing an essay.

You can start by jotting down an outline for your essay. Then you should go on to develop each of the points of the outline into a well-developed paragraph. Finally, you should make sure that all the paragraphs are properly linked.

Alternatively, you can do a kind of personal brainstorming by writing down anything that comes into your mind concerning the topic. The result will be a text that contains related and unrelated thoughts presented in a haphazard manner. Then you should sort out the ideas you have generated and leave out those that are not to the point and / or, perhaps, add some other relevant ideas. The last step is to arrange all available material into paragraphs and see to it that all of them are well developed and properly connected.

There is a good test of the unity of an essay. You can write out the essay topic, thesis statement and topic sentences separately and see how they fit in with one another. If there is a fit between them, it means that the essay is logically organized.

You must be ready to write several drafts of your paper and look critically at each of them with a view to making improvements. Remember that nothing you have written is final. Minor or even major changes can be made at any point of the writing process.

When you are through with the content of the essay, you should pass on to checking your paper for correctness. Make sure that there are no grammatical, lexical, punctuation or stylistic mistakes in your final draft.

Let's have a look at an example. Natasha Kostyushova, a fifth-year student, is set the task of writing an essay on the topic "Freedom of the mass media. Is it a myth or reality?" After pondering on the matter, she comes to the conclusion that there is no true freedom of the mass media nowadays. So she briefly phrases this idea in a sentence which is to serve as a thesis statement for her essay: *The belief that there can be absolute freedom of the mass media is definitely a myth.* As Natasha believes that the reason for this is the regimented nature of the society people live in, she then modifies the original statement by adding a pertinent explanation: *The belief that there can be absolute freedom of the mass media in our regimented society is definitely a myth.*

Now Natasha has to come up with a number of arguments that can be presented in support of the thesis. She can think of the influence of the state and that of big business, both of which erode the intended freedom of the mass media. Reflecting on the influence of big business, she comes to the conclusion that there are two sides to it: on the one hand big business strives for political power, and on the other it seeks to maximize profit. So she is able to put forward three arguments to substantiate the thesis statement. Then she goes on to formulate these arguments: (1) *the bulk of information resources are concentrated in the hands of the state which may be tempted to impose censorship*; (2) *media companies are often owned by individuals or big media groups who have a certain political bias*; (3) *these influential private individuals or groups use the potential of the mass media to achieve their main aim, which is profit maximization.*

Since she is going to discuss these three aspects, Natasha decides to refer to them in the thesis statement so as to give the reader an idea of the structure of the main body of the essay: *The belief that there can be absolute freedom of the mass media in our regimented society is definitely a myth, and there are at least three reasons for this state of affairs.* After this she writes out the essay topic, the thesis statement and the three arguments to see whether or not they fit in with one another:

- *Freedom of the mass media. Is it a myth or reality?*
- *The belief that there can be absolute freedom of the mass media in our regimented society is definitely a myth, and there are at least three reasons for this state of affairs.*
- *The bulk of information resources are concentrated in the hands of the state which may be tempted to impose censorship.*

- *Media companies are often owned by individuals or big media groups who have a certain political bias.*
- *These influential private individuals or groups use the potential of the mass media to achieve their main aim, which is profit maximization.*

This is actually an outline for her essay. Now Natasha has to expand on each of the points by providing evidence and proofs to support the thesis statement and the arguments. She gets down to work and produces the following text.

### ***Freedom of the mass media. Is it a myth or reality?***

The idea of freedom is considered to be one of the central ones in a democracy. However, it doesn't mean that a free person can do whatever they please, because true freedom is always limited by a number of factors, for example, by an individual's duties and obligations. Likewise, the mass media cannot enjoy complete freedom either. *The belief that there can be absolute freedom of the mass media in our regimented society is definitely a myth, and there are at least three reasons for this state of affairs.*

*First of all, the bulk of information resources are concentrated in the hands of the state which may be tempted to impose censorship.* This policy usually creates a situation in which no criticism of official figures can be published without the permission of a certain governmental body. TV and radio companies which are famous for expressing dissenting views are closed down; independent newspapers that can give true and reliable information are also difficult to find. All this means that the mass media is controlled by the state.

*Second, media companies are often owned by individuals or big media groups who have a certain political bias.* Adopting a particular position in politics, these groups make the mass media provide a particular slant on a political party or leader. This information doesn't reflect any objective reality but only gives an illusion of impartiality. The reality is actually misrepresented, which makes it possible to sway public opinion.

*Finally, these influential private individuals or groups use the potential of the mass media to achieve their main aim, which is profit maximization.* Thus, prevalent financial motivation influences the nature of media coverage. Some facts are hushed up, others, on the contrary, are hyped up. Most of the materials are concerned with the private lives of people who are in the news, whereas acute political and social problems are treated superficially.

In conclusion, freedom of the mass media is a myth rather than reality nowadays. To make this myth become a reality, some steps should be taken, such as limiting the state's interference in the mass media business, creating a free mass media market and changing the attitude of journalists to their profession.

(Natasha Kostyushova)

## 6. Sample Discursive Essays

### 6.1. Opinion Essay

#### 1. *The mass media have an adverse effect on moral standards. Do you agree?*

Newspapers, in one form or another, have been in existence for centuries, their purpose being to spread news. Public radio and television services, on the other hand, have only been available in the UK since 1922 and 1932 respectively, and were introduced with the intention of informing, educating and entertaining. *While radio seems to have largely maintained its standards, newspapers and TV have, in my opinion, totally abused their position of power, resulting in a serious decline in moral standards.* As Richard Hoggart said, "They are full of a corrupt brightness, of improper appeals and moral evasions ...".

*Perhaps the most serious offender is television, as today's broadcasters seem to have completely abandoned the issue of ethics.* This is more than apparent in the films and programmes which are intended to entertain, as they bombard the viewer with explicit language, sex and violence. Similarly, the news "informs" us using devastating images of grief, desperation and death. It is often felt that by exposing the public to such graphic depictions, television producers have contributed to our becoming immune to shocking behaviour and events which, in the past, we would have been upset or offended by.

*Furthermore, newspapers, especially the tabloids, have come to depend on overly-explicit articles and pictures in order to guarantee sales.* It is commonplace nowadays to see, for instance, photographs of celebrities' most private moments or horrific scenes of death occupying the front pages of daily publications. The fact that these images are intended – and generally manage – to sell newspapers displays the craving for sensationalism which exists within society today.

*In contrast, it must be admitted that the mass media have a lot to offer in the way of information and entertainment.* The news and documentaries can be very informative and educational as long as the material is handled in a responsible manner. The problem is that, because people are willing victims of the media's irresponsibility, the media continue to produce material which is unacceptable by all moral standards.

To conclude, it is clear that the public have a right to know and that producers should be allowed a certain degree of artistic licence, but should we not draw the line somewhere before we lose sight of our principles altogether?

*(From "Successful Writing")*

## *Discussion*

The introduction provides a brief historical background to the subject to be discussed in the essay. This survey leads to the thesis statement which is backed up by a quotation. The thesis states both the main subject and the central idea of the paper.

The first two paragraphs of the main body, in turn, take up both the elements of the thesis, one of which deals with the pernicious influence of television and the other with the harmful impact of newspapers. In the third paragraph, however, the writer concedes that the mass media have something useful to offer to the audience, which, nevertheless, doesn't make up for their overall negative effect.

In the concluding paragraph the writer gives a balanced consideration of the topic and ends the essay with a rhetorical question which in a very general way suggests the way out of the situation.

### ***2. Smoking is the cause of millions of deaths each year. Therefore, there should be a worldwide ban on smoking. To what extent do you agree?***

The links between smoking and major illnesses such as lung cancer and respiratory disease have been well known for several decades. The laws governing the sale of cigarettes and the places where people are allowed to smoke have become stronger in response to people's growing fears. *I believe that these more gradual changes in the law are preferable to a complete ban.*

*A large number of people depend directly or indirectly on the tobacco business.* Small shops receive a large part of their income from the sale of cigarettes, and may be forced to close if cigarettes are made illegal. There are also many others who depend on this market. Tobacco is largely grown in warm countries, with undeveloped economies. A complete ban on cigarettes would force farmers to change the crops that they grow, and this is not something that can be carried out quickly. Poor farmers may not be able to feed their families without the income from tobacco.

*In addition, I firmly believe that there may be more social problems in our own society as a result of a complete ban.* It is not easy to give up an addiction like smoking. When the airline companies in my country introduced a ban on smoking, the number of violent incidents during flights rose dramatically. There might well be a similar increase in violence if people were forced to give up smoking everywhere. Cigarettes would, undoubtedly, still be traded in society in much the same way that other illegal drugs such as heroin are still traded, with an inevitable rise in organized crime.

*Finally, many experts are rightly concerned about the effects on personal freedom.* Eating junk food, not taking exercise, air pollution and long working

hours all have a bad effect on people, but I would not want the government to tell me what to eat or how often I can drive my car. By the same token, I do not think they should tell me that I cannot smoke in my own home or car.

In conclusion, while I firmly believe that anyone smoking should try to stop for their own health and the health of their immediate family members and friends, I do not believe that prohibiting smoking would have enough benefits to outweigh the many problems that it would cause.

*(From "Longman Exams Dictionary")*

### **Comments**

This essay is largely based on the same pattern as the first one. The only difference lies in the fact that the writer chooses not to make any concessions here but consistently presents arguments in favour of the thesis stated in the introduction.

### **3. Essay on "Waiting for Godot"**

The purpose of human life is an unanswerable question. It seems impossible to find an answer because we don't know where to begin looking or whom to ask. Existence, to us, seems to be something imposed upon us by an unknown force. There is no apparent meaning to it, and yet we suffer as a result of it. The world seems utterly chaotic. We therefore try to impose meaning on it through pattern and fabricated purposes to distract ourselves from the fact that our situation is hopelessly unfathomable. "Waiting for Godot" is a play that captures this feeling and view of the world, and characterizes it with archetypes that symbolize humanity and its behaviour when faced with this knowledge. *According to the play, a human being's life is totally dependent on chance, and, by extension, time is meaningless; therefore, a human's life is also meaningless, and the realization of this drives humans to rely on nebulous, outside forces, which may be real or not, for order and direction.*

*The basic premise of the play is that chance is the underlying factor behind existence. Therefore human life is determined by chance.* This is established very early on, when Vladimir mentions the parable of the two thieves from the Bible. "One of the thieves was saved. It's a reasonable percentage" (Beckett, 8). The idea of "percentage" is important because this represents how the fate of humanity is determined; it is random, and there is a percentage chance that a person will be saved or damned. Vladimir continues by citing the concordance of the Gospels on the story of the two thieves. "And yet... how is it – this is not boring you I hope – how is it that of the four Evangelists only one speaks of a thief being saved. The four of them were there – or thereabouts – and only one

speaks of a thief being saved" (Beckett, 9). Beckett makes an important point with this example of how chance is woven into even the most sacred of texts that is supposed to hold ultimate truth for humanity. All four disciples of Christ are supposed to have been present during his crucifixion and witnessed the two thieves, crucified with Jesus, being saved or damned depending on their treatment of him in these final hours. Of the four, only two report anything peculiar happening with the thieves. Of the two that report it, only one says that a thief was saved while the other says that both were damned. Thus, the percentages go from 100%, to 50%, to a 25% chance for salvation. This whole matter of percentages symbolizes how chance is the determining factor of existence, and Beckett used the Bible to prove this because that is the text that humanity has looked to for meaning for millennia. Even the Bible reduces human life to a matter of chance. On any given day there is a certain percent chance that one will be saved as opposed to damned, and that a person is powerless to affect the decision. *"The fate of the thieves, one of whom was saved and the other damned according to the one of the four accounts that everybody believes, becomes as the play progresses a symbol of the condition of man in an unpredictable and arbitrary universe"* (Webb, 32).

*God, if he exists, contributes to the chaos by his silence.* The very fact that God allows such an arbitrary system to continue makes him an accomplice. The French philosopher Pascal noted the arbitrariness of life and that the universe worked on the basis of percentages. He advocated using such arbitrariness to one's advantage, including believing in God because, if he doesn't exist, nobody would care in the end, but if he does, one was on the safe side all along, so one can't lose. It is the same reasoning that Vladimir uses in his remark quoted above, "It's a reasonable percentage." But it is God's silence throughout all this that causes the real hopelessness, and this is what makes "Waiting for Godot" a tragedy amidst all the comical actions of its characters: the silent plea to God for meaning, for answers, which symbolizes the plea of all humanity, and God's silence in response. "The recourse to bookkeeping by the philosopher [Pascal] no less than the clownish tramp shows how helpless we are with respect to God's silence" (Astro, 121). *Either God does not exist, or he does not care. Whichever is the case, chance and arbitrariness determine human life in the absence of divine involvement.*

*The world of "Waiting for Godot" is one without any meaningful pattern, which symbolizes chaos as the dominating force in the world.* There is no orderly sequence of events. A tree which was barren one day is covered with leaves the next. The two tramps return to the same place every day to wait for Godot. No one can remember exactly what happened the day before. Night falls instantly, and Godot never comes. The entire setting of the play is meant to demonstrate that time is based on chance, and therefore human life is based on chance.

*Time is meaningless as a direct result of chance being the underlying factor of existence.* Hence there is a cyclic, albeit indefinite, pattern to events in "Waiting for Godot." Vladimir and Estragon return to the same place each day to wait for Godot and experience the same general events with variations each time. It is not known for how long in the past they have been doing this, or for how long they will continue to do it, but since time is meaningless in this play, it is assumed that past, present, and future mean nothing. Time essentially is a mess. "One of the seemingly most stable of the patterns that give shape to experience, and one of the most disturbing to see crumble, is that of time" (Webb, 34-35). The ramifications of this for human existence are symbolized by the difference between Pozzo and Lucky in Act I and in Act II. Because time is based on chance and is therefore meaningless, human life is treated arbitrarily and in an almost ruthless manner, and is also meaningless. In Act I Pozzo is travelling to the market to sell Lucky, his slave. Pozzo is healthy as can be, and there seems to be nothing wrong. Lucky used to be such a pleasant slave to have around, but he has become quite annoying, and so Pozzo is going to get rid of him. This is their situation the first time they meet Vladimir and Estragon. The next day, everything has changed. Pozzo is now blind, and Lucky is mute. Pozzo has absolutely no recollection of the previous meeting, and even claims that Lucky has always been mute even though just the day before he gave a long philosophical discourse when commanded to "think". When asked by Vladimir when he became blind, Pozzo responds, "I woke up one fine day as blind as Fortune" (Beckett, 55). Vladimir, incredulous, continues asking him for details. Pozzo responds to this (violently), "Don't question me! The blind have no notion of time. The things of time are hidden from them too" (Beckett, 55). Pozzo's situation symbolizes the effects of time on humans. The inherent meaninglessness of a world based on chance degenerates human life into something that is worthless and can be toyed with by Fortune. Beckett uses this change in the situation of Pozzo and Lucky to show that human life is meaningless because time is meaningless. "Although a 'stream of time' doesn't exist any longer, the 'time material' is not petrified yet, ... instead of a moving stream, time here has become something like a stagnant mush" (Andres, 143).

*Humans try to remain oblivious of their condition.* Throughout the play, Vladimir and Estragon remain stupidly cheerful, and seek distraction in pointless activities. In doing so, they act rather comically, which gives the play its humorous element. "The positive attitude of the two tramps thus amounts to a double negation: their inability to recognize the senselessness of their position" (Andres, 143-144). Vladimir and Estragon try to distract themselves from the endless wait by arguing over mundane topics, sleeping, chatting with Pozzo and Lucky (again over mundane topics), and even contemplating suicide. All of this is an attempt to remain oblivious of the fact that they are waiting for a vague figure, partly of their own invention, that will never come. They do not want to realize that their lives are meaningless. This behaviour symbolizes humanity's

petty distractions. Humans have nothing else to do but try to distract themselves from their situation. "...while, in the case of Vladimir and Estragon, it is just the incessant attempt to make time pass which is so characteristic, and which reflects the specific misery and absurdity of their life" (Andres, 147-148). Vladimir and Estragon's attempts at distraction are attempts to make time pass, to draw them closer to the time when Godot will arrive and solve all their problems. This is pure wishful thinking, but this is all that they have to look forward to, even if the action is meaningless. The only alternative to this is death, which the two contemplate but lack the courage and initiative to carry through. In the end, the only recourse left to humans is to persist in meaningless action or perish. "Pozzo, after his vision of the emptiness and futility of human life, revives his Lucky and cries, 'On!' though they have nowhere to go and nothing to carry but sand" (Webb, 41).

*To impose pattern and meaning on their world, humans will rely on nebulous outside forces for relief and distraction from their predicament.* This is the only thing that can keep them going. Thus, in the play, Godot is symbolic of such an outside force, which seems to be silent and uncaring. Even so, he is still a pattern, and he infuses the two desperate tramps with a purpose to their absurd lives. By imposing pattern on chaos, Vladimir and Estragon achieve some degree of meaning. In this case, the pattern is waiting. Vladimir, in his philosophical soliloquy while contemplating whether or not to help Pozzo in Act II, declares, "What are we doing here, that is the question. And we are blessed in this, that we happen to know the answer. Yes, in this immense confusion one thing alone is clear. We are waiting for Godot to come – " (Beckett, 51). An illusion of salvation is needed to cope with a meaningless life. Godot is that illusion. *Therefore we see that, because of all the aforementioned factors that life is based on chance, that time is meaningless, that human life is meaningless, humans are driven to invent or rely on such "Godots," otherwise they would perish. In essence, "Waiting for Godot" is the story of two vagabonds who impose on their slovenly wilderness an illusory, but desperately defended, pattern: waiting*" (Webb, 26).

*It is never clear whether Godot is real or not, which is why he is referred to as an example of a "nebulous force".* In both acts, Vladimir and Estragon mistake or suspect Pozzo of being Godot. They have never actually seen Godot, and would not be able to tell him apart from a street passerby. Their only contact with him is his messenger boy that comes at the end of each day to inform them that Godot will again not be coming, but will surely come tomorrow. The boy never remembers one day from the next, another indication of the absence of a meaningful time sequence. At the end of the second act, Vladimir, the more philosophical of the two, gets a glimpse of the truth: that they will forever be waiting for Godot, that he is merely a distraction from their useless lives, and that he can even predict, ironically, when the boy comes again, everything that the boy will say. It is at this point that a great depression overcomes Vladimir at

the realization of the truth. It is the climax of the play and its most tragic part. But Vladimir realizes that he is trapped, that he must persist in the illusion, that he has no choice. This is the definition of "going on" for humanity. There is no point. But it is the only option. "All of these characters go on, but in the old ruts, and only by retreating into patterns of thought that have already been thoroughly discredited. In the universe of this play, 'on' leads nowhere" (Webb, 41).

"Waiting for Godot" is all about how the world is based on chance. A world based on chance can have no orderly time sequence, and thus time has no meaning. The extension, then, is that human life has no meaning. Realizing this, humans will create distractions and diversions, in the form of patterns and reliance on nebulous forces, to provide the purpose and meaning that is inherently lacking in their lives. "Waiting for Godot" is the classical, archetypical presentation of this facet of human existence.

*(Michael Sinclair)*

### ***Comments***

This essay is based on a play by Samuel Beckett. In this case the writer isn't set any particular topic but he himself pins down the central theme of the book and explicates it in his essay.

As this is rather a long essay, the paragraphs that it is composed of are far longer than those in the previous ones. That is why the writer sometimes has to reiterate the controlling idea at the end of some of the paragraphs by providing a concluding sentence in order to remind the reader about it.

## **6.2. Problem-Solution Essay**

### ***What could be done to improve the lives of the elderly?***

For many elderly people the latter part of their life is not a time to relax and enjoy retirement, but rather a difficult and unhappy period, owing to financial worries, failing health and loneliness. As life expectancy increases, the average person lives well beyond the age of retirement. *As a result, the elderly make up an ever-increasing percentage of society, which makes it more important than ever for a real effort to be made in improving the lives of senior citizens.*

*One way to deal with the situation would be to ensure that the elderly have enough money on which to live.* Obviously, when a person stops working, they still require a source of income to cover their basic needs such as food, accommodation and heating. A clear solution to the problem is for the

government to make sure that the state pension is adequate for these needs. Furthermore, free financial advice should be made available to retired people so that the stress of worrying about money could be reduced as far as possible.

*Steps should also be taken to overcome problems the elderly face as a result of deteriorating health due to old age, and inadequate health-care provisions.* Again, the responsibility should fall to the government to provide access to the best health care available, which may necessitate paying for residential homes where the elderly can have round-the-clock nursing, or, at the very least, providing medication free of charge to all people over a certain age. As a result, old people would enjoy not only better health, but also peace of mind from the knowledge that they need not fear falling ill and being unable to pay for treatment.

*The lives of old people could also be improved if attempts were made to address the problem of social isolation which so many of them face.* If we organized trips for the elderly to community centres, visits from social workers or free bus passes to allow pensioners greater mobility, the effect would be to alleviate the problem of loneliness which marks the lives of so many old people living alone and far from their families.

*One final suggestion, which would help enormously, is to change the attitude of the community towards its older members, who are all too often seen as a burden on society and dismissed as having little to do with modern life.* We need to be taught from an early age to respect the views of old people, and appreciate their broader experience of life. This would help society as a whole, and encourage appreciation of the role that old people can still play today.

To sum up, there are several measures which could be taken to improve the lives of old people. If the government and individuals alike were to help, it would make retirement and old age a time to look forward to, rather than dread.

*(From "Successful Writing")*

## ***Discussion***

In the introductory paragraph the writer gives some background information about the life of senior citizens in the contemporary world. The final sentence provides the author's thesis to be discussed in the essay. It outlines the problem and calls for an effort to be made to change the situation for the better.

The main body of the essay is made up of four paragraphs, each of which suggests a particular solution to the problem stated in the introduction. The proposed solution is given in the topic sentence, which is in initial position, and then explained in the rest of the paragraph.

The concluding paragraph briefly summarizes the main points of the paper and finishes by describing the desired effect.

### 6.3. Comparison-and-Contrast Essay

#### 1. *Greater freedom does not necessarily lead to greater happiness. Discuss.*

Over the years, humankind has recognized the need for personal and social freedom, and this is perhaps one of the most important social advancements ever made. *However, whether it has led to increased personal happiness is highly debatable; many people would argue that greater freedom has led to increased social disorder and personal dissatisfaction.*

*Firstly, it is true that people are now more at liberty to choose how to live their lives.* For example, in the western world at least, the choice of where to live, what career to pursue and which religion to follow has never been greater. In addition to this, people have more leisure time in which to enjoy a wider range of recreational activities. *On the other hand, it may be argued that this increased freedom can lead people to take things for granted and expect too much from life.* As an example of this, the greater choice of material goods available has resulted in people quickly growing bored with their possessions. Consequently, no sooner have they acquired something new than they tire of it. They find short-term happiness in material goods and entertainment, but boredom and frustration soon send them looking for fresh distractions.

*Secondly, social and moral attitudes have become less rigid.* This has allowed for a greater variety of lifestyles and more freedom in human relations. This is illustrated by the fact that pupils and teachers now treat each other as equals, and parent-child relationships are now much more relaxed. *Nevertheless, some people believe that this increase in freedom has resulted in the escalation of social problems.* They argue that the current lack of discipline has given rise to a breakdown in the traditional family and the decay in educational standards as well as the rise in juvenile delinquency. Thus, it may be said that society is becoming more and more dangerous because of the very fact that people are more open-minded than they were in the past.

*To conclude, there is evidence both to support and refute the view that greater freedom does not necessarily lead to greater happiness.* On the one hand, people have more opportunities to raise their standard of living. On the other hand, the many examples of protests, strikes and criminal activities, which are a feature of modern society, are a sign that, although people may be free, they are not necessarily happy.

*(From "Successful Writing")*

#### **Discussion**

After a brief reference to the benefit freedom has brought to humankind, the writer argues that the issue of the relationship between increased freedom and

personal happiness is a controversial one. The thesis statement points to two opposite views on the question.

The body of the essay uses point-by-point organization. The first paragraph is concerned with the impact of people's right of choice on human life, the first half of the paragraph pointing to its advantages and the second half to its disadvantages. The second paragraph deals with the influence of the relaxation of social and moral attitudes on everyday life: the first half of the paragraph talks about its positive side while the second half about its negative side.

In the conclusion the writer doesn't seem to take sides but, instead, gives a balanced consideration of the main subject by referring to the strong points of both approaches to the matter.

## **2. *The Changing American Family***

The family is important to people all over the world although the structure of the family is quite different from one country to another. In the United States, as in many countries in the world, the family is changing. A generation or two ago, the traditional family, in which the father was boss, was customary. Now, the modern family, in which both the father and the mother are equal partners, is more common. *Although there are several similarities between the traditional and the modern family, there are also some very important differences.*

*The traditional family of yesterday and the modern family of today have several similarities.* The traditional family was a nuclear family, and the modern family is, too. The role of the father in the traditional family was to provide for his family. Similarly, the father in the modern family is expected to do so, also. The mother in the traditional family took care of the children's physical and emotional needs just as the modern mother does.

*On the other hand, there are some great differences between the traditional family and the modern family. The first important difference is in the man's role.* The traditional husband was the head of the household because he was the only one who worked outside the home. If the wife worked for pay, then the husband was not considered to be a good provider. In many families today, both husband and wife work for pay. Therefore, they share the role of head of household. In addition, the traditional husband usually made the big decisions about spending money. However, the modern husband shares these decisions with his working wife. Also, the traditional husband did not help his wife with the housework or meal preparation. Dinner was ready when he came home. In contrast, the modern husband helps his working wife at home. He may do some of the household jobs, and it is not unusual for him to cook.

*The second difference is in the woman's role.* In the traditional family, the woman may have worked for pay during her first years of marriage. However, after she became pregnant, she would usually quit her job. Her primary role was to take care of her family and home. In contrast, in many families today, the modern woman works outside the home even after she has children. She is doing two jobs instead of one, so she is busier than the traditional mother was. The traditional wife learned to live within her husband's income. On the other hand, the modern wife does not have to because the family has two incomes.

*The final difference is in the role of the children.* In the traditional family, the children were taken care of by the mother because she did not work outside the home. However, today preschool children may go to a child care centre or to a babysitter regularly because the mother works. The school-age children of a traditional family were more dependent. Their mother was there to help them to get ready for school and to make their breakfast. In contrast, modern children are more independent. They have to get up early in the morning and get ready for school. Their mother is busy getting ready for work, so they may even have to make their own breakfast.

*In conclusion, the American family of today is different from the family of fifty years ago.* In the modern family, the roles of the father, mother, and children have changed as more and more women work outside the home. The next century may bring more important changes to the American family structure. It should be interesting to see.

*(From "Introduction to Academic Writing")*

## ***Discussion***

In the introduction the writer argues that the American family as a social institution is changing and mentions one of the aspects that have already changed. This statement is followed by the thesis according to which there are very important differences between the traditional and the modern family, although there are certain similarities between them as well.

The main body employs block organization and point-by-point organization in combination. The first paragraph deals with similarities, whereas the next three paragraphs are concerned with differences. This overarching pattern is block organization. But while talking about differences between the two kinds of family, the writer makes use of point-by-point organization. The second paragraph is about the man's role, the third paragraph about the woman's role and the fourth paragraph about the children's role. In each of these three paragraphs the traditional and modern families are compared and contrasted.

In the concluding paragraph the writer first restates the thesis, while providing more detail, and then summarizes the main points made in the body of the essay.

## 7. Essay Topics

### 7.1. Opinion Essay Topics

1. What higher education reform does Russia need?
2. Private provision has an advantage over free provision of higher education. Do you agree?
3. What is your idea of an effective university admissions policy?
4. Equality of opportunity in education. Is it a myth or reality?
  
5. Politics is a dirty business. Do you agree?
6. Should all people eligible to vote go to the polls? Why?
7. Are elections the expression of democracy?
8. Elections are of no use if there is a low voter turnout at the polls.
9. Can opinion polls be used to manipulate public opinion and influence elections?
10. Freedom of the mass media. Is it a myth or reality?
  
11. What are the major causes of war?
12. Any war is a terrible mess.
13. The impact of war on an individual.
14. Is it possible to eradicate armed conflicts from the world?
15. Did nuclear weapons really act as a deterrent in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century?
16. Is war always morally unjustifiable?
  
17. What are the major causes of terrorism?
18. The dangers of terrorism.
19. Double standards in combating terrorism.
20. Can terrorism be a morally justifiable means of struggling for self-determination?
  
21. Does global warming really pose a threat to people?
22. The impact of energy production on the environment / climate change.
23. Environmental racism.
24. Is humankind heading for environmental suicide?
  
25. Capital punishment should be abolished in all countries.
26. Trial by jury is a godsend for Russia.

## **7.2. Problem-Solution Essay Topics**

1. This country's higher education system is in poor condition. Discuss the problem and offer some possible solutions.
2. What should be done to improve this country's university admissions policy?
3. University qualifications often don't meet the future employers' requirements. Discuss the problem and suggest what might be done about it.
4. How can a presidential candidate win an election in this country?
5. How can the electorate make successful candidates deliver on their election pledges?
6. What should be done to make it possible to hold fair elections?
7. What should be done to encourage nuclear disarmament in the world?
8. There is a threat of nuclear war in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Discuss the problem and offer some possible solutions.
9. What are the best ways of preventing terrorism?
10. What are the most effective ways of fighting terrorism?
11. Discuss one of the most serious environmental problems and offer possible solutions.
12. How can we reduce the impact of human activity on the environment / climate change?
13. Discuss and suggest ways of reducing violent crime among the young.
14. Crime is on the increase in Russia. Discuss the problem and suggest what might be done about it.

## **7.3. Comparison-and-Contrast Essay Topics**

1. University admission by an entrance examination versus university admission by a public examination. Discuss.
2. Assessment by examination versus continuous assessment at university. Discuss.
3. Democracy versus monarchy as a form of government most suitable for contemporary Russia. Discuss.
4. The mass media's role in politics. Discuss.

5. Patriotism versus chauvinism. Discuss.
6. The advantages and disadvantages of a professional army. Discuss.
7. What is the difference between a terrorist and a freedom fighter?
8. Is there any difference between terrorism and the struggle for self-determination?
9. The rights of an individual versus the rights of a nation in fighting terrorism. Discuss.
10. Conventional power stations (coal-burning, oil-burning, gas-burning and hydroelectric) versus nuclear power stations. Discuss.
11. Traditional sources of energy (fossil fuel, nuclear fuel, hydroelectric power) versus alternative sources of power (wind, solar, tidal, geothermal). Discuss.
12. Technological progress and the environment. Discuss.
13. Discuss the arguments for and against capital punishment / euthanasia.
14. The advantages and disadvantages of trial by jury.

## **8. Representing Functions in Essay Writing**

### **8.1. Subject**

#### **(1) *about / on sth***

- The book is about a boy named Huckleberry Finn.
- In her novels she writes about life in South Africa.
- Professor Jones has written a number of books and articles on this subject.
- The Club has published its annual report on mountaineering and walking accidents in Scotland.

#### **(2) *on the subject / topic of sth***

- Hundreds of books have been written on the subject of population growth.
- She gave a series of lectures on the topic of nutrition.

#### **(3) *concerning / regarding sth***

- The laws concerning child care and child protection will need to be reviewed.
- The report raises a number of important questions regarding food safety.

**(4) *with regard to sth***

- With regard to the recent series of terrorist attacks, it is likely that the police will be given new powers of arrest.
- The college has adopted a tough approach with regard to racism and sexism.

**(5) *as far as / where sth is concerned*** (spoken)

- As far as bilingual education is concerned, the schools are not doing a good enough job.
- Where taxes are concerned, savings bonds are better than certificates of deposit.

**(6) *to deal with sth***

- The author has tried to deal with a very difficult subject.
- Her new film deals with the relationship between a woman and her sick daughter.
- These ideas are dealt with more fully in Chapter Four.

**(7) *to be concerned with sth***

- Most of the book is concerned with the relationship between politicians and the media.

**(8) *to focus on / upon sth***

- In this essay I will focus on some of the results from recent research into brain function.
- The study focuses on the economic and social consequences of unemployment.
- Tonight's programme focuses on the way that homelessness affects the young.

**(9) *to tell the story of sth / sb***

- The play tells the story of a trip to Germany by an American woman and her husband.
- *Snow White* tells the story of a beautiful young princess and her jealous stepmother.

**(10) *subject***

- The main subject of the book is the history of the English language.
- The case was the subject of a Hollywood film.
- The author deals with a range of different subjects in his article.

**(11) *topic***

- The course covers topics such as interview techniques and giving presentations.
- Global warming continues to be a major topic of discussion.

**(12) *theme*** (= an important idea that appears several times in a book, film, play etc, and influences its development)

- Man's relationship with nature is a common theme in his work.
- Good child care was the central / main / major theme of the conference.
- Feminine beauty is a recurring / recurrent theme in Western art.
- Most of Kurt's other pictures were variations on the same theme.

**(13) *question***

- Scientists have been trying to find the answers to these questions for hundreds of years.
- We want to be protected from terrorist attacks. However, this also raises the question of how we can protect our basic freedoms as citizens.
- Nostalgia movies pose a curious question of cinema sociology.
- The research addresses some fundamental questions about the nature of knowledge.

**(14) *matter*** (= a subject that is being discussed in a general and rather vague way)

- Some people do not think that car crime is very important, but in fact it is a serious matter.
- He held strong views on religious matters.
- Various matters were dealt with / were discussed at the meeting.
- In his book he gets right to the heart of the matter.

## **8.2. Aim and purpose**

**(1) *aim***

- My aim in this article is to examine ways in which the present system could be improved.
- The main aim of the study is to investigate the way in which young people deal with the stress of exams.
- The structure should be tailored in such a way that it can most effectively pursue its aims.
- The group was committed to achieving its aims through peaceful means.

**(2) objective**

- The policy has three main / principal objectives: firstly, to increase food production; secondly, to improve the distribution of food; and finally, to improve the diet of ordinary people.
- Obviously it is not a matter of pursuing both objectives at the same time.
- The government is unlikely to achieve / accomplish / attain / meet its (short-term / long-term) objective of cutting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

**(3) goal**

- World leaders have set themselves the goal of getting rid of child poverty.
- They threaten our ability to pursue the environmental goals we all share.
- Adaptation to a changing environment may be necessary to achieve / accomplish / attain / meet / reach traditional goals.

**(4) purpose**

- The main purpose of education is to help people to lead satisfying and productive lives.
- The information will be used for research purposes.

**(5) intention**

- The reader can never be 100% sure of the writer's original intentions.
- It is not my intention here to give a detailed account of all the events that led up to the war.
- The government announced its intention to create / of creating 50,000 jobs by the end of the year.

**(6) mission** (= an important aim)

- The mission of International House is to enable students of different cultures to live together and build life-long friendships.
- The agency's mission is to provide medical and psychological help to victims of the war.

**(7) point**

- The point of the experiment is to show how different metals react with oxygen.
- People sometimes find it difficult to see the point of studying subjects such as Latin at school. (= they find it difficult to understand why it is necessary)
- He felt that his critics were completely missing the point. (= they failed to understand the most important purpose or reason for something)

**(8) ends**

- They achieved their ends by peaceful means.
- The government manipulates economic data for political ends.
- Several politicians were accused of trying to exploit the situation for their own ends.
- The end justifies the means. (= used to say that doing bad things is acceptable if they achieve an important result)

**(9) target** (= the exact result, often a number or an amount of something, that a person or organization intends to achieve)

- Self-assessment is a key feature of the module and students should set themselves targets / set targets for themselves based on their initial self-assessment.
- A realistic plan sets achievable targets against which progress can be monitored.
- The University is expected to achieve / reach / meet / hit its target of 5000 students next September / its target of having a computer in every classroom.

**(10) to aim**

- In this study, we aimed to record the number of birds who returned to the same woodland for a second summer.
- This paper aims to show how science and technology have influenced the work of artists.

**(11) to set out**

- The authors set out to show how men's and women's language are different from each other.
- The first chapter sets out to explain the origins of modern science.

**(12) to be intended / designed / meant**

- The course is intended / designed to provide a basic introduction to molecular biology.
- The course is intended / designed / meant for beginners.
- The book is intended / designed as a reference manual.

**(13) to be supposed / meant** (= these phrases are used especially when something actually fails to achieve what was originally planned)

- The film is supposed to be a serious drama.
- The scheme was meant to improve the city's image.

**(14) *(in order / so as) to do sth***

- The speech was changed in order / so as not to offend anyone.
- The organization was set up originally to protect the rights of children.

**(15) *for / with the purpose of (doing) sth / with the aim of doing sth / with the intention of (doing) sth***

- The United Nations was established for / with the purpose of protecting basic human rights.
- The committee will reform the tests, with the aim of better evaluating student performance.
- We ask students to write essays under examination conditions, with the deliberate aim of familiarizing them with these conditions.
- The Green Party was started with the aim of protecting the environment.
- No one goes to college with the intention of failing.

**(16) *with a view to (doing) sth***

- They wanted to establish closer links with Germany, with a view to becoming members of the European Union.
- He has called a meeting of all parties tomorrow, with a view to forming a national reconciliation government.

**(17) *for the purposes of sth / for political / economic / medical etc purposes***

- For the purposes of this book, America is taken to include the continent north of Mexico.
- I should like for the purposes of this inquiry to reconstruct a typical evening.
- It should be legitimate to use cannabis for medical purposes.
- The land is used for agricultural purposes.
- The details are, for the present purposes, irrelevant.

**(18) *so (that)***

- Workers need to learn new skills so that they can keep up with the latest advances in technology.

**(19) *for sth***

- Some people give up eating meat for health reasons, while others give up because they are concerned about animal welfare.
- She went into hospital for a check-up.

### 8.3. Research

**(1) to study sth / to study what... / how...**

- She studied the relationship between writers' lives and their work.
- Scientists are studying what causes the disease.
- Pavlov studied how dogs could be trained to associate certain sounds with food.

**(2) to research (into) sth**

- They have been researching the effects of the drug on mice.
- The subject has not been fully researched before.
- She is researching into the causes of the disease / possible cures for AIDS.

**(3) to investigate sth / to investigate what... / why... / whether...**

- Greenpeace has been investigating the environmental impact of dumping nuclear waste in the ocean.
- The study investigates the impact of violent TV programming on children.
- The authorities in California are investigating what caused the crash.
- The research aims to investigate why schools are not doing better.

**(4) to examine sth / to examine what... / how... / why... / whether...**

- Scientists are examining the impact of global warming on local climates.
- Her new book examines the causes of social discontent.
- A starting point is to examine what a liberal democracy is.
- In the course, we will examine how and why Spain became a democracy in 1931.
- This chapter examines how the courts have applied these principles in cases involving teachers.
- We want to examine whether our theory can contribute to the explanation of this fact.

**(5) to analyse (BrE) / analyze (AmE) sth / to analyse what...**

- Scientists have been analysing the latest data about global warming.
- Water samples taken from streams were analysed for contamination by chemicals.
- This book teaches you how to analyse what is causing the stress in your life.

**(6) to evaluate / assess sth / to evaluate / assess what... / how... / whether...**

- The best way to evaluate any treatment is to carry out trials on large groups of patients.

- It's too early to evaluate / assess the long-term consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- The study will evaluate / assess the long-term effects of exposure to radiation.
- Our correspondent has been assessing the impact of the sanctions.
- The technique is being tried in classrooms to assess what effects it may have.
- The committee will continue to assess how we can improve the system.
- We need to assess whether the project is worth doing.

**(7) to carry out / conduct / do / make a study (into / on / of sth)**

- We are carrying out / conducting / doing a study into how much time people spend watching television each day.
- They made / carried out a study on sex education programmes.
- We conducted a comparative study of political culture.

**(8) to do / carry out / conduct research (into / on sth / how... // in sth)**

- Universities are finding it difficult to get the funding they need to do basic research.
- The team is doing / carrying out / conducting research into the effects of human activity on wildlife.
- Baskin has made several trips to Nicaragua to carry out research on land distribution.
- The department is conducting research into how to make diesel engines burn fuel more efficiently.
- The organization's laboratories conduct advanced research in areas such as electronics, biotechnology, and engineering.

**(9) study**

- There have been many studies on this subject.
- The study shows / indicates / suggests a strong connection between poverty and crime.
- Recent studies show / indicate / suggest that our sense of smell is closely linked with the part of the brain that deals with memory.
- In one study of almost 80,000 women, researchers found that those who used artificial sweeteners gained more weight over a year than those who ate sugar.

**(10) research**

- Some people think that cigar smoking is safer than cigarette smoking. Recent research shows / indicates / suggests that this is untrue.

- In his research, he showed that the islanders once had a highly developed culture.

**(11) *work***

- Faraday is famous for his work on electricity.
- A lot of work has been done on hydrogen-powered cars.
- Their work had an enormous influence on the study of genetics.

**(12) *experiment***

- They carried out / did / conducted / performed a series of experiments in order to try to prove their theory.
- Experiments have shown / proved that there is an increased risk of some forms of cancer.
- In his experiment, Pavlov only fed the dogs while ringing a bell.
- Many people think that there should be a ban on experiments on live animals.
- Their experiment with solar heating was a great success.

**(13) *test***

- The doctors carried out / did / conducted / performed / ran some tests to find out if the couple were able to have children.
- The new missiles are currently undergoing tests.
- Tests have shown that pigs and sheep are actually highly intelligent animals.

**(14) *trial***

- They are carrying out / doing clinical trials on a new drug.
- Farmers were asked to carry out / do trials of genetically modified crops.
- The drug is currently undergoing clinical trials in the US.
- The robots have been on trial for the past year.

## **8.4. Results of research**

**(1) *results***

- The results of this experiment / study are shown in the diagram below.
- The results of the survey will be published shortly.
- Our results show / indicate / suggest that an effective vaccine is feasible.
- It is expected that the results of the research will have important implications for teaching children who have learning difficulties.
- It is necessary to follow the routines exactly to obtain the best results.
- A third round of injections showed similar results.

- This technique has yielded widely inconsistent results, however, and is now rarely performed.
- Previous studies of the effect of smoking on gall bladder disease have reported conflicting results.

**(2) *finding(s)***

- Her findings show / indicate / suggest that regular exercise can prevent some of the diseases that are common in old age.
- This finding suggests close interaction between deaf people belonging to these different groups.
- The report's finding on the decrease in violent crime supports the police chief's claims.
- Surveys conducted in other countries reported similar findings.

**(3) *conclusion***

- The report's main conclusion was that more investment was needed in the police force.
- Critics complained that this conclusion was based on a survey of only a small number of women.
- Other studies have reached similar conclusions.
- Several eminent biologists challenged the conclusions of the report.

## **8.5. Problem**

**(1) *problem***

- a big / fundamental / important / enormous / serious / main / major / acute / pressing / urgent problem
- Problems can arise / come up / occur when people try to defend themselves in court without help from a lawyer.
- Air pollution can cause / create other environmental problems.
- The very high rate of inflation is / poses / presents a serious problem for the government
- Britain had / encountered / faced / experienced enormous economic and social problems after the war.
- It is in everyone's interest to deal with / address / tackle the problem of global poverty.
- No one has solved / resolved / overcome the problem of what to do with radioactive waste.
- Professor Murray believes that the root of the problem lies in a basic fault in the car's design.

(2) **issue** (= a problem that is often discussed or argued about, especially a social or political matter that affects the interests of a lot of people)

- a big / basic / central / fundamental / important / key / main / major / critical / crucial / immediate / pressing / topical issue
- a controversial / contentious / thorny / divisive / explosive // sensitive / delicate issue
- Nuclear power is a highly controversial issue in the UK.
- This tragedy highlighted / raised the issue of racism in schools.
- My purpose is to explore / examine / discuss / talk about / consider the underlying issues in general terms and at a somewhat philosophic level.
- Previous governments failed to deal with / address / tackle social issues such as unemployment and homelessness.
- The issue can only be resolved / solved through negotiation between the two sides.

(3) **challenge** (= something difficult that you must do or deal with, which needs a lot of skill, effort, and determination)

- a big / huge / formidable / great / major / serious / real challenge
- a fresh / new challenge
- We face the challenge of persuading teenagers of the value of education.
- He accepted / took (up / on) the challenge of this demanding task with enthusiasm.
- The Internet poses / presents / represents / offers / provides a huge challenge to personal privacy.
- Children's books have risen to / responded to / met the challenge of providing positive role models for girls. (= to successfully deal with one)

(4) **difficulty**

- a considerable / great / enormous / immense / major / serious / severe / real difficulty
- The real difficulty is that no one in the group has a car.
- Difficulties arise / come up when there are personal disputes.
- New difficulties arose from this arrangement.
- While war could cause / create / give rise to / lead to serious difficulties for the merchant class, other social groups looked at it in a different light.
- Attractive though this approach is, it faces / encounters / runs into difficulties.
- These students often have / face / encounter / run into / experience financial difficulties.
- Only those strategies used to overcome difficulties arising from gender distinctions will be commented on.

- This type of research is fraught with difficulty. (= involves a lot of difficulties)

**(5) *complication*** (= an additional problem that makes a bad or difficult situation even harder to deal with than it already is)

- An added complication is the growing concern for the environment.
- This, however, causes / leads to a major complication.
- The extradition will add a further complication to the Guinness criminal trial.
- As might be supposed, complications arise with regard to transfers of votes.
- Another complication arises from the fact that the same term may have different meanings in different contexts.

**(6) *setback***

- The peace talks suffered a major / serious / severe setback when a bomb exploded outside the conference hotel.
- He experienced / suffered a serious setback in his political career.

**(7) *obstacle***

- Criminal gangs are a big / chief / formidable / great / main / major / real / serious obstacle to democratic reform.
- There are a number of obstacles in the way of / on the road to a lasting peace settlement.
- Displaced people from rural areas face / encounter even greater obstacles.
- The tax put / placed / created obstacles in the way / path of companies trying to develop trade overseas.
- We want to remove all obstacles to travel between the two countries.
- Women still have to overcome many obstacles to gain equality.

**(8) *pitfall***

- Composition can also present many potential pitfalls.
- Financial advisers should explain to customers the potential pitfalls of investing in risky small company stocks.
- The store fell into one of the major pitfalls of small business, borrowing from suppliers by paying bills late.
- The book shows you how to avoid the usual / common pitfalls when you are at an interview.

**(9) *dilemma***

- The President is clearly in a dilemma about / over how to tackle the crisis.

- Kennedy found himself in a dilemma over Cuba. On the one hand he did not want to risk a nuclear war, but on the other he could not allow the Russians to place nuclear weapons so close to American soil.
- The issue raises / creates a big / moral / ethical / vexing dilemma for doctors.
- She faces the dilemma of disobeying her father or losing the man she loves / of whether or not to return to her country.
- Many women are faced / are confronted with the dilemma of choosing between work and family commitments.
- This deliberate emphasis on the young people's unreliable and hurtful past relationships poses a dilemma for residential workers / presents residential workers with a dilemma.
- The students say they've put forward new ideas which could solve / resolve the dilemma.

**(10) *vicious circle / cycle***

- Abused children often grow up to abuse their own children – it's a vicious circle.
- Many are in a vicious circle of mismanagement and underfunding, as governments, fed up with incompetence, squeeze their cash.
- More and more teenagers are / get caught / trapped in a vicious circle of drug addiction and crime.
- Some developing countries are / get caught / trapped in a vicious circle. They cannot afford to pay their debt repayments, and so the debts get even bigger.
- Stress at work can create a vicious circle. If you feel stressed and under pressure, you take longer to do your job, and because you take longer you become more stressed.
- The whole sorry affair became a vicious circle.
- The Home Secretary aims to break the vicious circle between disadvantage and crime.

**(11) *snag*** (slightly informal) (= a small problem or disadvantage that you have not expected)

- The drug is very effective – the only snag is that it cannot be produced in large quantities.
- They don't anticipate any snags in / with the negotiations.
- Almost immediately after they began their research, they hit a series of snags.
- There are one or two little snags that needed to be ironed out.

## 8.6. Solution

### (1) *solution*

- a flexible / optimal / perfect / possible / practical / simple solution to sth
- There was no easy solution to this problem.
- When people become too old to look after themselves, the ideal solution is for other members of their family to look after them.
- Politicians have been trying to find / obtain a solution to the housing crisis / many of those problems for years now.
- Unless scientists can come up with / arrive at / devise a solution quickly, we may soon run out of sources of energy.
- In this essay I shall consider the main causes of the problem of air pollution, and try to put forward / propose some possible solutions.
- Solar energy offers / provides a low cost solution to our fuel problems.

### (2) *answer*

- Some people believe that the only answer to the problem of rising crime is to build more prisons.
- There are no easy answers to this crisis / the problems facing the economy.
- It would be mistaken to think that science and technology can always provide an answer to everything.
- Prison is not the answer for most young offenders.
- People have been struggling with this problem for a long time, but no one has yet come up with an answer.
- Legislation is only part of the answer.

### (3) *way out*

- We are faced with a very difficult situation, but there must be a way out.
- At first there seemed to be no way out of her difficulties.
- He was in a dilemma, and could see no way out (of the present deadlock).
- The president's advisors are trying to find a way out of the crisis.

### (4) *cure / remedy / prescription*

- The only cure for unemployment is to make it easier for companies to invest and create new jobs.
- However, don't assume that this will provide a complete cure for the problem, it will merely reduce it.
- There are no miraculous remedies for learning difficulties.
- A number of remedies have been suggested, but so far none of them has shown itself to be effective.
- The remedy lies in the hands of the government.

- The problems in our schools do not have a simple remedy.
- The party's main prescription for educational problems was to give schools more money.
- Their prescription for dealing with poverty in Africa is to encourage more trade, instead of increasing aid.

(5) **panacea** (= something that people think will make everything better and solve all their problems)

- The law is not a universal panacea.
- There is no panacea for the country's economic problems.

(6) **quick fix** (informal) (= a solution to a problem that can be done quickly, but is not a good or permanent solution)

- There is no quick fix to defeat terrorism.
- Congress is trying to avoid quick-fix solutions.
- A leading scientist has warned that quick fix schemes to deal with global warming could potentially be more damaging than the problem itself.

(7) **magic bullet** (= a quick and easy solution to a very difficult problem)

- There is no magic bullet for school reform / dealing with inflation.
- A lot of people are looking for some sort of magic bullet that will solve this problem.

## 8.7. Suggesting

(1) **to suggest sth / to suggest that... / as sb suggests** (= to show that something is probably true, even though there is no definite proof)

- Trends in spending and investment suggest a gradual economic recovery.
- The study / research / data / evidence / results suggests / suggest that humans existed on earth thousands of years earlier than was previously thought.
- Opinion polls strongly suggest that only 10% of the population trusts the government.
- I'm not suggesting that giving up smoking will be easy.
- The cause of the problem, as Hutton suggests, is the leadership's refusal to accept any form of criticism.

(2) **to indicate sth / to indicate that...** (= if scientific facts, tests, figures etc indicate something, they show that it is probably true)

- The study indicates a strong connection between poverty and crime.

- Today's disastrous events clearly / strongly indicate the importance of planning.
- Research indicates that over 81% of teachers are dissatisfied with their salary.
- A survey indicated that 89 per cent of people recycle paper.

**(3) *to imply sth / to imply that... / as sth implies*** (= if a piece of information implies that something is true, it shows that it is likely to be true, often in an indirect way)

- Free trade implies shared values.
- The article implied that unemployed people are lazy and do not want to work.
- The results imply that the disease originated in West Africa.
- The maths and science reports imply that together these two subjects should occupy about one-third of the timetable.
- The high level of radiation in the rocks implies that they are volcanic in origin.
- As the examples imply, some markets are local while others are national or international in scope.
- An off-road vehicle, as its name implies, is designed for use where there are no roads.

**(4) *there is some evidence that...***

- There is some evidence that foods rich in vitamin A and vitamin C may give protection against cancer.

**(5) *to give the impression that... / to give the impression of sth*** (= to make you think that a situation exists, even though this may not actually be true)

- Textbooks often give the impression that history is about the activities of kings and queens.
- The report gives the impression of having been rather hastily put together.

**(6) *to lead to the conclusion that...***

- All these arguments lead to the conclusion that there should be greater control on gun ownership.

## 8.8. Showing and proving

**(1) *to show sth (to sb) / to show (sb / to sb) that... / how... / why... / what... / sth is shown to do sth / as is shown by / in sth***

- These figures show a 9% rise in inflation / an increase of over one million in unemployment.
- A recent survey by Sheffield University showed that 95% of patients were satisfied with the service that they received.
- Research / Evidence shows that a high-fibre diet may protect you from bowel cancer.
- They wanted to show to people how well the system worked.
- This document shows how to oppose bad decisions about new housing.
- Accidents like this show what can happen when drivers are not alert.
- Smoking has been shown to increase the risk of getting lung cancer.
- As has been shown by / in our study, young people are less likely to vote.

**(2) to prove sth (to sb) / to prove that... / to prove sb right / wrong**

- He was able to prove his theory to his fellow scientists.
- Lind proved that eating fresh oranges and limes could prevent sailors from getting the disease.
- These documents prove that the three men were innocent.
- Recent excellent results have proved their critics wrong.

**(3) to demonstrate sth / to demonstrate (to sb) that... / what... / how... / why...**

- The study demonstrates the link between poverty and malnutrition.
- These figures clearly demonstrate the size of the economic problem facing the country / the importance of strategic planning.
- Research / The study demonstrates that cigarette advertising does encourage children to smoke.
- It has been demonstrated that even low levels of lead can damage the central nervous system.
- This section will attempt to demonstrate how the Bank of England operates.

**(4) to reveal that... / how... (= to show that something is true, especially something surprising that many people did not realize)**

- A recent survey revealed that 61% of those interviewed believe that tobacco advertising should be banned.
- The inquiry revealed how hundreds of children in public care were mistreated in the 1980s.

**(5) sth can be seen in the following examples / as can be seen in sth**

- This can be seen in the following examples.
- Shaker furniture is extremely well made. Evidence of this can be seen in the surprising number of items that have survived to the present day.

- As can be seen in Table 1, wages have risen at a lower rate than the rate of inflation.

**(6) to be evidence of sth**

- Some people think that this research is evidence of a much larger problem.
- In the past, comet and meteorite strikes were much more common in the solar system. The pitted surface of the moon is evidence of that.

**(7) to be symptomatic of sth / to be a symptom of sth**

- The rise in unemployment is symptomatic of a general decline in the economy.
- The fighting is a symptom of growing insecurity in the region.
- Noisy classrooms are a symptom of a breakdown in authority.

**(8) to confirm sth / to confirm (the view / idea) that... / to confirm what...**

- The study confirms the findings of earlier research.
- These new statistics confirm our worst fears about the depth of the recession.
- The latest research confirms the view that global warming is happening at an increasing rate.
- Several surveys have confirmed that the blood pressure in diabetics is higher than in non-diabetics.
- This article confirms what many experts have been saying for years.

**(9) to support sth / to support the idea / view that... / to back sth (up)**

- Our research supports this view.
- The results support our original theory.
- Our conclusions are supported by extensive research.
- Recent archaeological discoveries seem to support the idea that there was a settlement here in Roman times.
- They produced no evidence to back up their claims.
- His claims are backed up by recent research.

**(10) to corroborate sth** (formal) (= to provide additional information that shows that what someone else has said is true)

- Recent research seems to corroborate his theory.
- Her evidence was corroborated by two other witnesses.

**(11) to bear sth out / to bear out the claim / idea / opinion / view that...** (= if facts or information bear out a claim, story, opinion etc, they help to prove that it is true)

- Unhappily the facts do not wholly bear out the theory.
- Evidence bears out the idea that students learn best in small groups.
- Scientific evidence bears out the claim that stress and disease are linked.

(12) *to validate sth* (formal) (= to prove that something is correct using scientific tests or very careful checking)

- We know that some scientists have altered the findings of their research in order to validate their claims.
- The evidence does seem to validate his claim.
- Many scientists plan to wait until the results of the study are validated by future research.

(13) *to substantiate sth* (formal) (= to prove the truth of something that someone has said, claimed etc)

- There is little scientific evidence to substantiate the claims.
- They were unable to substantiate their claims of government malpractice.
- The evidence normally used to substantiate this claim is drawn from the work of Brennan and McGeevor (1985).

## 8.9. Disproving

(1) *to disprove sth*

- The results of the experiment seemed to disprove her theory.
- Scientific studies have clearly disproved this idea.
- These figures disproved Smith's argument.
- The statistics to prove or disprove his hypothesis will take years to collect.

(2) *to contradict sth*

- A study conducted at Massachusetts General Hospital contradicts the results of the Canadian study.
- Recent evidence appears to contradict the established theory / hypothesis.
- The article flatly contradicts their claims.
- The fact that a great number of university graduates cannot find employment contradicts the belief / idea that a university education is the key to a successful career.

(3) *to refute sth / to refute the idea / opinion / view / claim that...* (formal)

- All attempts to refute Einstein's theory have failed.
- Her research refutes the idea that population growth is desirable and will not cause ecological damage.

- The evidence refutes all claims that the student loan scheme is not working.

**(4) to invalidate sth** (formal)

- Later findings invalidated the theory.
- This study invalidates their earlier research.
- An international inspection would easily confirm or invalidate such reports.
- Most people now believe that Marx's ideas have been invalidated by history.

**(5) to demolish sth / to demolish the belief / idea that...** (= to prove that something is completely wrong)

- It would not be difficult to demolish a theory that was so obviously a load of rubbish.
- Chomsky was able to demolish many of Skinner's arguments about how people acquire language.
- He demolished the widely held belief that the sun went around the Earth.

## 8.10. Comparison and contrast

**(1) (as) compared to / with sth**

- This year's profits are much higher compared to last year's.
- Compared to / with most other advanced economies, their total spending on health care is low.
- Mortality rates are lower for women as compared with men.

**(2) in / by comparison (with / to sth)**

- In / By comparison with other European countries, car prices in the UK are very high.
- Today's economic problems pale in comparison with / to those of the 1930s.
- In his early pictures he used rather dull colours. His later work is much brighter in / by comparison.
- He was a loud friendly man. In / By comparison, his brother was rather shy.

**(3) in / by contrast (with / to sth)**

- The US and Australia, in contrast with most other leading industrialized nations, chose not to sign the Kyoto Protocol on climate change.

- In contrast to the south of the island, the north is still untouched by tourism.
- Durkheim, by / in contrast, maintained a considerably less rosy picture of how social life used to be.
- A report by the FBI shows that 26% of female murder victims in 1995 were killed by their husbands or boyfriends. By contrast, only 3% of male victims were killed by their wives or girlfriends.

**(4) *next to / beside sth***

- Our problems seem trivial next to those faced by people in the developing world.
- This year's sales figures don't look very good beside last year's results.
- Their achievements pale beside his.

**(5) *as opposed to sth / as against sth***

- One study predicted that 42% of female university graduates would remain single the rest of their lives, as opposed to just 5% of male graduates.
- Students discuss ideas, as opposed to just copying from books.
- The company achieved sales of \$404 million, as against \$310 million in the previous year.

**(6) *unlike sb / sth***

- Unlike his brother, he had no interest in music.
- The drug has very few side effects, unlike other drugs that are used to treat this illness.

**(7) *in proportion / relation to sth***

- People from Sweden pay the highest rates of tax in proportion to their incomes.
- Britain's national debt was greater than that of the US in relation to the size of its economy.
- Discontent comes in proportion / relation to knowledge.

**(8) *relative***

- The parents are discussing the relative merits of the local schools.
- In his article he compares the relative merits of living in the countryside and living in a big city.
- It is too early to make a judgement about the relative importance of these different factors.

**(9) *relative to sth / sb***

- The value of the dollar relative to the yen has dropped slightly.
- The control group students did fairly well relative to the whole class.

**(10) *but***

- Her books are fascinating but often rather disturbing.
- Most of us value human life, but some people think of animals as being equally important.

**(11) *however / nevertheless / nonetheless* (formal)**

- The town is a long way from the nearest big city. However, there is a good bus service.
- Their economy was incredibly successful in the 1980s. Since then, however, there has been a big rise in unemployment.
- A series of studies 20 years ago suggested that there was a link between watching violent films and violent behaviour. Nevertheless, the results remain highly controversial.
- It was very hard digging in the dry ground, but the work was satisfying nevertheless.
- There are serious problems in our country. Nonetheless, we feel this is a good time to return.
- The paintings are complex, but have plenty of appeal nonetheless.

**(12) *although / even though***

- The windmill is still in good working order, although it has not been used since the 1950s.
- Although lack of sleep causes some problems, it has a relatively small effect on performance at work.
- Pascal went ahead with the experiment even though he knew it was dangerous.
- Even though he left school at 16, he still managed to become prime minister.

**(13) *whereas / while***

- Taxes make up 62% of the price of a litre of petrol in France, whereas in Britain the tax is 75%.
- Some people visit their doctor once every few weeks, while others may not visit a doctor for several years.
- Whereas in most of the world they drive on the right, in the UK and Japan they drive on the left.

**(14) *(and) yet***

- Last summer there was a drought, yet some people were still watering their gardens every day.
- We all know that fibre is important for good health. And yet all the natural fibre is removed from many foods such as white bread and sugar.

**(15) *(but) even so*** (= used when saying that something is true, in spite of a fact that you have just mentioned)

- Morris's furniture is distinctly English. Even so, the sale drew a lot of American interest.
- The economy continues to do well, but even so, many analysts are predicting a slowdown in the near future.

**(16) *still***

- It is a well-known fact that living in the city is harmful to one's health, still a lot of people move to the city every year in search of a better future.
- The hotel was terrible. Still, we were lucky with the weather.
- Though employment growth is down, the area is still attracting health care, high tech, banking and sports-related industries.

**(17) *in spite of sth / the fact that... / despite sth / the fact that...***

- This was a dinosaur that weighed only 10 tons, in spite of being some 28 metres long.
- In spite of everything that has happened, life is still getting better for many Russians.
- Many people are worried that cellphones may be dangerous to health, despite the fact that most of the research suggests that there is little risk.
- Despite his lack of formal education, he became one of the world's leading mathematicians.

**(18) *regardless / irrespective of sth / whether... / what... / why... / how... / where...***

- The legislation must be applied regardless / irrespective of someone's ethnic origins.
- The law requires equal treatment for all, regardless / irrespective of race, religion, or sex.
- This service should be available to everybody, regardless / irrespective of whether they can afford it.
- All children should have access to the latest technology, regardless / irrespective of where they live or how much their parents earn.

## 8.11. Similarity

### (1) *to liken sb / sth to sb / sth*

- Critics have likened the new theatre to a supermarket.
- His works have been likened to those of Beckett.

### (2) *to compare sb / sth to sb / sth*

- The playwright compared sleep to death.
- His poems have been compared to those of the English Romantics.

### (3) *to draw / make a comparison / analogy (between sth [and sth] / with sth) / to draw a parallel (between sth [and sth] / with sth)*

- The author draws a comparison between East and West Germany and the North-South divide in England.
- The article makes a comparison between the novels "Anna Karenina" and "Madame Bovary".
- He was drawing parallels between events leading up to the last war and current political problems.
- The writer drew parallels between the two societies.
- You could draw parallels with the old Samson and Delilah story.
- Some people have attempted to draw an analogy between America's invasion of Iraq and the war in Vietnam.

## 8.12. Difference

### (1) *to compare sth / sb (with / to sth / sb)*

- The report compares the different types of home computer available.
- The essay compares and contrasts Verdi and Wagner and their operas. (= shows how two things are similar and different)
- A study by Nottingham University compared the cost of recycling plastic bags with making them from scratch.
- The results are then compared to the results of previous studies.

### (2) *to contrast sth / sb (with sth / sb)*

- In her novel she contrasts the lives of two families in very different circumstances.
- The book compares and contrasts the various methods used in language teaching.
- He contrasted his party's record on unemployment with that of the last government.
- The documentary contrasts the reality of war with its romanticized image.

- In the film, the peaceful life of a monk is contrasted with the violent life of a murderer.

**(3) to draw / make a distinction between sth (and sth)**

- The author draws a distinction between allowing death to occur and causing it.
- The report draws a distinction between various forms of health care.

### 8.13. Reason

**(1) the reason (for this) is sth / that...**

- The reason for the disaster was engine failure, not human error.
- These printers quickly achieved a market share of over 60%. The reason for this is that the technology they use is much simpler — and therefore cheaper — and running costs are lower.

**(2) there is a reason for sth / the reason why... / that...**

- There were two main reasons for his success.
- 39% of workers gave poor working conditions as a reason for leaving their previous job.
- There are good reasons for believing that the Earth has not increased in size during the past 500,000 years.
- The reasons why this happens are as follows.
- The reason that sales have not increased is that we had a very cold summer.

**(3) motive / motive for (doing) sth / motive behind sth**

- The violence was clearly prompted by political motives.
- There may have been a political motive for the killing.
- Some people have questioned the motives behind the decision.
- The motives behind the decision remain obscure.

**(4) argument (for / against sth) / argument why... / that...**

- an airtight / balanced / cogent / compelling / conclusive / convincing / credible / good / logical / persuasive / plausible / powerful / rational / reasoned / solid / sound / telling / tenable / trenchant / valid argument
- an irrefutable / unassailable argument
- a groundless / spurious / tenuous / weak / flimsy argument
- to present / put forward / provide / produce / offer / set out an argument
- to support an argument
- to accept / agree with an argument

- to reject an argument
- to refute / confute / rebut / counter / demolish an argument
- (so) the argument goes / runs
- a line of argument / reasoning
- She presented a good / strong argument for more funding.
- He was the first person to put forward this argument.
- We need to provide a convincing argument as to why the system should be changed.
- He produced the strongest arguments why these provinces should not be partitioned.
- The doctors have set out their arguments against the proposals.
- There is little evidence to support their argument.
- I can't accept the argument that prison deters crime / criminals.
- I do not agree with the argument that experiments are necessary on live animals.
- The judge rejected the argument that publication of the information in an article would be in the public interest.
- He could not publicly counter / refute / rebut the false arguments of the government.
- He completely demolished all her arguments.
- If violence is increasing amongst children, so the argument goes / runs, then the increased violence on television must be a factor.
- I don't think that line of argument is going to work.
- There are strong environmental arguments for limiting car use.
- One of the main arguments against the death penalty is that an innocent person could accidentally be executed.

(5) *case (for / against sth)* (= a set of arguments, reasons and facts in support of or against something)

- to make (out) / present / put (forward) / argue / state a case (for / against sth)
- Calvin makes a good case for this unpopular policy in his article.
- She presented / put forward a well-argued case for the banning of smoking in public places.
- He argues a case against the war.
- She is going to state her case.
- Both these facts strengthen the case against hanging.
- There is a good / strong case for / against government intervention.
- The case for reform of the law is clear.
- The case against cigarette advertising is becoming stronger all the time.

(6) ***rationale for / behind sth*** (= a set of reasons that someone uses to explain why they need to do something in a particular way)

- The rationale for using this teaching method is to encourage student confidence.
- All organizations need a rationale for dividing up their work.
- In the first part of the book I will attempt to provide a rationale for such an approach.
- The document outlines the rationale behind the government's economic reforms.

(7) ***justification (for sth)*** (= a reason why you think it is right to do something, especially something that seems wrong or unfair to other people)

- The US government's main justification for the war was that they wanted to bring democracy to the country.
- There is, he states, no justification for killing another human being under any circumstances.
- It can be said, with some justification, that she is one of the greatest actresses on the English stage today.

(8) ***basis for / of sth***

- There is no scientific basis for such beliefs.
- Piaget provided a theoretical basis for studying children's mental behaviour.
- Newton's work forms the basis of much of modern physics.
- Leadership provides organizational values which can serve as a basis for the development of mutual trust and commitment.

(9) ***there are grounds for (doing) sth / to give / provide grounds for sth / to have grounds to do sth / on moral / economic / medical grounds / on (the) grounds of sth / on the grounds that...***

- There are strong grounds for believing that what he says is true.
- In the interview he gave some grounds for optimism.
- The latest crime statistics provide some grounds for optimism.
- We have grounds to believe that you have been lying to us.
- They recommended joining the EU on purely economic grounds.
- The army turned him down on medical grounds.
- The Act prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex or marital status.
- They oppose the bill on the grounds that it is too restrictive.

(10) ***pretext for sth / to do sth / on / under the pretext of (doing) sth*** (= a false reason given for an action, in order to hide the real reason)

- The incident provided the pretext for war.

- The border dispute was used as a pretext for military intervention.
- The conflict was used as a pretext for introducing military rule.
- They would now find some dubious pretext to restart the war.
- Opposition leaders are afraid to give Milosevic the pretext to use more brutality and proclaim martial law or something along those lines.
- The incident provided a pretext for the government to institute harsher measures against the student demonstrators.
- Police went into the area on / under the pretext of looking for drug dealers.

(11) *excuse (for [doing] sth)* (= a reason that you give to try to explain why you did something bad, especially one that is not true)

- a good / plausible / legitimate / valid excuse
- a lame / feeble / poor / pathetic / sad excuse
- A mixture of muddle-headedness and corruption offers an excuse for doing nothing politics in the west.
- None of these reasons provides an adequate excuse for leaving an important ingredient like behaviour to chance.
- There are people out there who will use any excuse to cause trouble.
- Poverty should not be seen as an excuse for crime.

(12) *because / because of sth*

- People are leaving the countryside because they cannot find work there.
- The streets were flooded because of all the rain.
- Because of the use of chemical fertilizers, there are fewer fish in our rivers.

(13) *since / as*

- Since it is difficult to predict how the climate will change, it is not possible to say which countries will suffer the most.
- Enjoy the first hour of the day. This is important as it sets the mood for the rest of the day.

(14) *due / owing to sth*

- The number of songbirds has declined. This is partly due to modern farming methods.
- The men did most of the work in the fields. This was partly due to the fact that the men were stronger.
- Due to the danger of fire, people are advised not to drop cigarettes on the ground.
- Owing to lack of public interest, the programme was abandoned.

- Local authorities have been slow to build recycling facilities, mainly owing to lack of money.

**(15) *through sth***

- Thousands of working days are lost each year through illness.
- Most accidents occur through human error.
- She succeeded through her own efforts.

**(16) *thanks to sth*** used when explaining that something good has happened because of someone's efforts, or because something exists

- Thanks to recent research, effective treatments are available.
- Today, thanks to the Internet, people can do all their shopping from home.
- Reinhardt survived the war, mainly thanks to the help of a German officer who loved his music.
- It is thanks to this committee that many new sponsors have come forward.

**(17) *in view of sth / the fact that...*** (formal)

- The court decided that in view of his age he should be released.
- In view of all the research on the subject, it seems strange that so many people still smoke cigarettes.
- Most British people do not want to change from the pound to the euro. This may seem surprising in view of the fact that they often use euros on their holidays.

**(18) *out of***

- He started reading the book out of curiosity.
- Out of desperation, he tried to borrow money from his neighbour.

## 8.14. Cause

### I. Sth causes sth

**(1) *to make***

- Plants need light and heat to make them grow.
- The government's economic policies made it unpopular with voters.

**(2) *to cause*** (rather formal)

- The crisis caused oil prices to go up dramatically.
- Smoking causes cancer.
- The lack of rain is causing problems for farmers.

**(3) to lead to sth**

- The research could eventually lead to a cure for many serious illnesses.
- A degree in English could lead to a career in journalism.

**(4) to lead up to sth** (= if events, problems, actions etc lead up to an important event, they happen one after another in a way that makes it possible for the event to happen)

- The book describes some of the events leading up to the First World War.

**(5) to result in sth** (= to make something happen, especially something bad)

- The crash resulted in the deaths of 14 passengers.
- The fire resulted in damage to their property.
- The trial resulted in Oscar Wilde being sent to prison for two years.

**(6) to create**

- In the novel, McEwan creates an atmosphere of menace.
- Science and technology often create more problems than they solve.

**(7) to bring about**

- The war brought about enormous social change.
- So far, all attempts to bring about peace have failed.
- A huge amount of environmental damage has been brought about by the destruction of the rainforests.

**(8) to give rise to sth** (formal)

- His speech gave rise to a bitter argument.
- The President's absence has given rise to speculation about his health.
- Drinking unfiltered water can give rise to health problems.

**(9) to generate**

- The trial generated a lot of interest in the media.
- Her latest film has generated a lot of interest / excitement.
- Japan's economic success generated a huge demand for luxury goods.

**(10) to be responsible for sth**

- The human rights panel concluded that the military was responsible for killings, torture and other abuses.
- The floods were responsible for the deaths of over a hundred people.
- These particles are responsible for making new protein molecules.

**(11) to set off / spark (off) / trigger (off) / touch off / provoke sth**

- The killing of Martin Luther King set off a wave of rioting across the USA.
- The move sparked (off) violent protests among students, parents and teachers.
- If oil prices keep rising, this could trigger (off) an economic crisis.
- It was these national rivalries that eventually touched off the First World War.
- The leaks provoked angry protests from citizens and environmentalists.

**II. Sth is caused by sth**

**(1) to be caused by sth**

- Many illnesses are caused by stress.
- Almost half of all accidents are caused by speeding.

**(2) to be the result of sth**

- Greenhouse gases are the (direct) result of pollution from cars and factories.

**(3) to result from sth**

- These conditions result from a combination of economic and social factors.

**(4) to arise from sth**

- A number of problems arose from the break-up of the former Soviet Union.
- People are now much more aware of the dangers arising from asbestos dust.

**(5) to stem from sth**

- The present difficulties stem from the recession and the collapse of the housing market.
- His emotional problems stemmed from an unhappy childhood.

**III. Sth is one of the things that cause something**

**(1) to play a part (in sth)**

- No one knows exactly what causes the disease. Genetic factors are thought to play a part.

- The rioting in the capital played a major part in the collapse of the government.

**(2) to be a factor in sth**

- Public pressure against nuclear power was definitely a factor in their decision.
- The parent's influence is a major factor in a child's progress at school.
- It is acknowledged that unhappiness is a contributing factor in the development of certain illnesses.
- Cost is often the deciding factor when choosing any product.
- Studies have shown that alcohol is a contributory factor in 10% of all accidents in Britain.

**(3) to contribute to sth**

- Methane gas is known to contribute to the greenhouse effect.
- Television often gets blamed for contributing to the decline of family life.

**(4) to influence sth / how...**

- Weber demonstrated that culture and religion influenced economic development.
- Genetic factors may influence how the central nervous system reacts to nicotine.

**IV. Sth is the cause of sth**

**(1) the cause(s) of sth**

- Almost certainly, the root / underlying cause of the war was the need for oil. (= the most important cause, even though it is not immediately obvious)
- Polluted water is one of the major causes of death among young children in some countries.
- Scientists are still trying to find / establish the cause of the disease.

**(2) factor (in sth)**

- The committee studied a wide range of social, economic, and environmental factors.
- The research tried to identify the key factors affecting economic change.

**(3) *origins***

- The book describes the origins of modern science.
- The origins of Sudan's debt crisis go back to the early 1970s.
- The dispute between the two families had its origins in the battle of Wakefield.

**(4) *source***

- The fact that the two words are so similar can be a source of confusion.
- Housework can become a major source of conflict between couples.
- Further study was necessary to identify the source of the infection.

**(5) *root***

- Bad experiences in childhood lie at the root of many psychological disorders.
- They failed to get to the root of the problem.

## **8.15. Consequence**

**(1) *consequence***

- Many believe that poverty is a direct consequence of overpopulation.
- Our findings have far-reaching consequences for researchers.
- Environmentalists warn that deforestation of this critical watershed area could have disastrous / serious consequences for downstream regions.

**(2) *implication*** (= a possible future effect or result of an action, event, decision etc)

- The results of the study could have important / profound implications for future educational policy.
- Some people believe that the increase in air travel will have serious implications for the climate.
- His talk will consider / discuss / examine the wider implications of the Internet revolution.

**(3) *repercussion*** (= the effects of an action or event, especially bad effects that continue for some time)

- It was a major economic crisis with serious social and political repercussions.
- The scandal could have serious repercussions for her political career.
- The unfavourable climate may have repercussions on the general attitudes to the black population in the United Kingdom.

(4) **ramification** (= an additional result of something you do, which may not have been clear when you first decided to do it)

- The course that people choose to do at university can have ramifications for the rest of their lives.
- The introduction of national testing in schools had wider ramifications than people realized.

(5) **therefore** (formal)

- The Japanese writing system has thousands of characters. Therefore it takes a long time to learn.
- Punishment cannot, therefore, be discussed in isolation from social and political theory.
- Most voters care more about jobs and therefore the Government can write off voters motivated by environmental issues.

(6) **so**

- They had not eaten all day, so they were very hungry.
- Questions have been raised over the safety of the toys, and so they are being withdrawn from the market.

(7) **thus** (formal)

- The dinosaurs all died out within a short period of time. Thus it seems likely that there must have been some kind of catastrophic event.
- Someone had removed all the evidence. Thus, it was now impossible for the police to continue their investigation.
- Fewer pupils will attend the schools, and they will thus have fewer teachers.

(8) **hence** (formal)

- European music happens to use a scale of eight notes, hence the use of the term octave.
- The cost of transport is a major expense for an industry. Hence factory location is an important consideration.
- The Socialist Party was profoundly divided and hence very weak.

(9) **as a result / consequence (of sth) / in consequence (of sth) / consequently**

- Sea levels are rising as a result of global warming.
- As a result of his work, illnesses such as tuberculosis can now be treated.
- Some people suffer from stress at work and become ill as a result.
- Scientists think it unlikely that any species will actually become extinct as a consequence of the oil spill.

- As a consequence of global warming, our climate is already starting to change.
- In this changing business environment, different demands are being placed on employees. As a consequence, the education system needs to change.
- More people are using their cars, and as a consequence many rural bus services have been severely reduced.
- She was over the age limit and, in consequence, her application was rejected.
- The book has no narrator or main character. Consequently, it lacks a traditional plot.
- There was no fighting and consequently no casualties.

**(10) *for this reason / these (and other) reasons***

- She was not very good at ball games. For this reason she did not care much for sport or physical activities.
- If you live in a big city, housing is very expensive and there is so much pollution. For these and other reasons, more and more people are choosing to move out to the country.

**(11) *with the result that...***

- Taxes were increased, with the result that people had to work harder if they wanted to maintain their standard of living.

**(12) *thereby* (formal)**

- He became a citizen in 1978, thereby gaining the right to vote.
- A firm might sometimes sell at a loss to drive a competitor out of business, and thereby increase its market power.

**(13) *accordingly***

- Some of the laws were contradictory. Accordingly, measures were taken to clarify them.
- He had disobeyed an order from a senior officer, and accordingly he was dismissed from the army.

## **8.16. Influence**

**(1) *influence***

- The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes had a considerable influence on Spinoza.

- For much of the 20th century, Berlin exerted a unique influence on the world.
- In his book, McLuhan examines the influence of the media on our society.

**(2) effect**

- Building hundreds of new homes is likely to have an adverse effect on the environment.
- Some people believe that television has a positive effect on our lives, while others think that it has a negative effect.
- She was one of the first scientists to study the effects of radiation on the human body.
- The decision could have far-reaching effects.

**(3) impact**

- The war had a devastating impact on the country's industries.
- Population growth will have a big / great / major / profound / significant impact upon world demand for food.
- In practice, the change in the law did not have much impact.
- But it is here that ecological education could make an impact.

**(4) after-effect** (= a bad effect that continues for a long time after the thing that caused it)

- The country is still suffering from the after-effects of war.
- The after-effects of the illness can last for months.

**(5) knock-on effect** (British English) / **domino effect** / **chain reaction** (= a situation in which one event or action causes several other things to happen one after the other)

- The strikes are likely to have a knock-on effect on the whole economy.
- If schools were allowed to become more selective, there would be a domino effect.
- Opponents of the scheme claimed that if the museum moved from Golden Gate Park it would have a domino effect on the other facilities.
- Instability would spread like a chain reaction.
- The demise of Woosung could have a chain reaction on other subcontractors relying on a government helping hand, analysts said.
- The revolution set off a chain reaction of revolts in neighbouring states.

**(6) to influence**

- There is no convincing evidence that advertising influences total sales of alcohol.

- Levels of ozone are strongly influenced by annual variations in the weather.

**(7) to affect**

- The disease affects women more than men.
- Noise from the airport is adversely affecting the quality of life for local residents
- The island was badly affected by last month's storms.

**(8) to be good / bad for sth / sb**

- Mr Blair's speech contained analysis of how environmental action can be good for the economy and for business.
- When companies close down it is bad for the local economy.

**(9) to impact (on) sth** (used especially in business and journalism)

- Falling export rates impacted on the country's economy quite considerably.
- The recession in the US has negatively impacted sales of luxury cars.

**(10) to make a difference**

- In practice it makes very little difference which type of oil you use.
- Having a good teacher has made all the difference for Alex.
- One more person wouldn't make any difference to the arrangements.
- New drugs made a big difference in the treatment of some forms of cancer.

## 8.17. Condition

**(1) if**

- If the scientists' predictions are correct, average global temperatures could rise by six degrees.
- The report said that the accident could have been avoided if the correct safety procedures had been followed.
- The injury needed to be treated immediately. If not, infection could set in.
- The British authorities could not help, even if they wanted to.
- Most countries are prepared to use force, if necessary, to protect their national interests.

**(2) unless** (= except if)

- Unless something is done quickly, developing countries will fall even further behind Western countries.

- The star is really difficult to see unless the sky is dark and very clear.
- (3) ***whether or not*** (= used when saying that it does not matter if something happens or not, or if something is true or not)
- Research showed that six out of ten patients got better on their own, whether or not they received treatment.
  - Whether or not you agree with what she is saying, her articles are always interesting and thought-provoking.
- (4) ***otherwise*** (= used when saying that there will be a bad result if someone does not do something, or if something does not happen)
- The committee needs to act quickly, otherwise there could be a serious problem.
  - The local people are certainly glad that the tourists are there. Otherwise there would be no money and no jobs.
- (5) ***assuming that...*** (= accepting as true without question or proof)
- Assuming that the present trend continues, the world population is likely to rise to over eight billion.
  - Even assuming that smokers do see the health warnings, I doubt they'll take any notice.
- (6) ***as long as / provided / providing that... / on condition that...*** (= only if something else happens or is true)
- As long as the economy continues to grow, people will continue to support the government.
  - Vegetarian diets are perfectly healthy, provided / providing that you take care to get enough iron, calcium and B vitamins.
  - The painting was sold on condition that it never left France.
- (7) ***in case*** (= in order to deal with something that might happen)
- Doctors have to take out insurance to protect themselves in case they are sued.
  - She did not think it would rain, but she took her umbrella just in case.
  - It is best to keep a medical kit ready in case of emergency.
- (8) ***in the event of sth / that...*** (= if something happens, especially a serious situation such as an accident, a fire, or a war)
- Guidelines have been issued to local authorities on what to do in the event of a nuclear accident.
  - In the event of an earthquake, people are advised to take cover under desks or doorways.

- In the event that the party lost the election, his future as party leader would be in doubt.

### 8.18. Listing and ordering

#### (1) *firstly / first // secondly / second // thirdly / third*

- Many people are concerned about the problems associated with nuclear energy. Firstly, what do you do with all the nuclear waste? Secondly, how can we prevent nuclear materials from falling into the hands of terrorists?
- This essay seeks to answer the following questions. First, is our current political system truly democratic? Second, what are the alternatives?
- There are many things we can do to help protect our environment. First of all, we can use our cars less. Secondly, we can recycle more. Thirdly, we need to develop new sources of energy which cause less pollution.
- The statistics show, firstly, that crime is increasing; secondly, that most crime is committed by young men; and lastly, that many of these young men are on drugs.

#### (2) *first of all* / (= used especially when the first thing that you mention is the most important thing)

- The content of the article must, first of all, be useful to the reader.
- People are living longer for several reasons. First of all, there have been enormous advances in medical science. Secondly, our diets are now much healthier.

#### (3) *in the first / second / third place* (less formal than *first / second / third*)

- Modern communications have completely changed the way we work. In the first place, they have made it possible for many people to work from home. They also allow people in different parts of the world to communicate instantly at any time of day.

#### Note

When you are giving a long list of reasons or parts in an essay, it sounds rather repetitive to say *Firstly... Secondly... Thirdly ... Fourthly... Fifthly* etc. It sounds much more natural to vary the language and use other phrases instead of numbers, for example *In addition ... Furthermore / Moreover ... Lastly ...*

Here is an example of this kind of ordering:

*There are many reasons for switching to wind power. **Firstly**, it causes much less damage to the environment than fossil fuels such as oil and coal. **In addition**, wind power comes from a renewable energy source,*

*and there will always be more wind available. Furthermore, wind turbines and windmills are much more graceful and attractive to look at than power stations. Last but not least, they are very cheap to run.*

**(4) to start / begin with / for a start** (informal)

- The hotel was awful! To start / begin with, our room was far too small. Then we found that the shower didn't work.
- It comes as a surprise to be reminded that he is 70. For a start, he doesn't look it.
- You must get her name and address, and that can be a problem for a start.

**(5) in addition (to sth) / added to this / that / then** (informal)

- Fast foods and snacks have been linked to obesity. In addition, studies have shown that these foods can cause behavioural problems in young children.
- People gain valuable work experience and, in addition, employers can afford to employ them.
- In addition to his movie work, Redford is known as a champion of environmental causes.
- Added to this, they must be safe.
- She lost her job last week, and now added to that she's pregnant again.
- More than 750 commercial airliners were involved in fatal accidents last year. Added to that were the 1,550 smaller aircraft.
- This is the standard model, then there's the deluxe version which costs more.

**(6) furthermore / moreover** (formal) (=used especially when suggesting that what you are saying is just as important or even more important than what you have already said)

- In order to keep the price of the book down, we have used fewer photographs than we wanted to. Furthermore, the book has no colour, which means that we have been limited to black and white images.
- Older workers often have a great deal of experience to offer. Moreover, they are extremely reliable and less likely to change jobs.

**(7) lastly / (and) finally**

- The island has become very popular, firstly for its beautiful beaches, secondly because of its friendly atmosphere, and lastly because it is so easy to get to from the UK.
- There are many reasons why prison doesn't work. First of all, prisons often act as training colleges for criminals. Secondly, prison does not deal

with the reasons why young men commit crime. Lastly, it costs huge amounts of money to keep people in prison.

- Finally, I would like to suggest some possible solutions to the problem.
- And finally, I'd like to thank the cast and crew for all their hard work.

**(8) *one last / final point*** (= used when you want to add one last thing to what you have already said, for example at the end of the final paragraph of your essay)

- One final point to remember is that although regular exercise is usually good for health, too much exercise can actually cause permanent damage to muscles and joints.

**(9) *then / next / after this / that*** (= used when saying what happens next in a process)

- First, we added the salt to the water, then we boiled the mixture for five minutes.
- When you receive the equipment, you need to check that all the parts are there. Then you need to connect it to the electricity supply.
- Take the fish and gently rub oil over it. Next, place it in a medium hot oven for 15 minutes.
- After this / that, the Prime Minister will speak.

## 8.19. Advantage

**(1) *advantage***

The advantage of One advantage of Another advantage of One other advantage of A further advantage of A major advantage of The main advantage of The greatest advantage of The first advantage of One of the big advantages of	digital cameras is that there is no film to process.  using a specialist firm is that the people who work there have years of experience.
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- The university has the advantage of being one of the oldest and best respected in the country.
- This gives wave power a distinct advantage over wind power.
- Despite a few problems with the design, the car's advantages clearly outweigh its disadvantages.

**(2) *benefit***

- Regular exercise has many benefits, including reducing the risk of heart disease.
- Modern technology has brought great benefits to humankind.
- There has been a great deal of research into the potential benefits of using genetically modified crops.

**(3) *merit***

- The committee will consider the merits of the proposals.
- In her book, she discusses the relative merits of the two political systems.
- The merits and demerits of alternative funding systems were widely discussed in the newspapers.
- The chairman saw no great merit in this suggestion.

**(4) *good point***

- One of the good points about the car is that it is easy to drive.
- Each system has its good and bad points.

**(5) *plus (point)***

- The plus point of this area is its school system, which is considered one of the best in the city.
- The estate agent's leaflet said a major plus point was the recently modernized kitchen.
- The hotel's closeness to the beach is definitely a plus.

**(6) *good / great / best thing about* (rather informal)**

- The good thing about cycling is that you don't have to worry about getting stuck in a traffic jam.
- The great thing about living in a city is that you can go shopping at almost any hour of the day or night.
- Her wicked sense of humour was the best thing about her.

**(7) *the beauty of sth* (= a very good or useful feature)**

- The beauty of the design is that it is so simple.

**(8) *upside* (= the positive part of a situation that is generally bad)**

- The upside of the whole thing is that we got a free trip to Jamaica.

## 8.20. Disadvantage

### (1) *disadvantage*

The disadvantage of One disadvantage of Another disadvantage of One other disadvantage A further disadvantage of A major disadvantage of The main disadvantage of The greatest disadvantage of The first disadvantage of One of the big disadvantages of	this book is its price.  using large quantities of chemicals is that they quickly get absorbed into soil.
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- These vaccines have two serious disadvantages.

### (2) *drawback*

- The major / only drawback of this method is that it can be very time-consuming.
- One of the major drawbacks of being famous is the lack of privacy.

### (3) *bad point*

- There are good points and bad points about single sex schools.
- For all its bad points, and there are many, it is still the best software system of its kind available.

### (4) *minus (point)*

- There are both pluses and minuses to living in a big city.

### (5) *downside*

- The downside of the book is that it is written in a rather boring style.
- The downside of running your own business is that you are responsible if anything goes wrong.
- Most comfort eaters enjoy what they eat, but the downside is that they soon start to put on weight.
- Everyone wants to be rich and famous, but it does have its downside.

## 8.21. Generalization

### (1) *to generalize (about sth) / to generalize from sth / to generalize sth to sth*

- Critics love to generalize, to formulate trends into which all new work must be fitted, however contradictory.

- It's difficult to generalize about a subject as broad as world history.
- The polls show that it is difficult to generalize about which issues were most important to voters.
- The study group was very small, and it's hard to generalize from just a few cases.
- A child first labels the household pet cat as a 'cat' and then generalizes this label to other animals that look like it.

**(2) *generalization***

- The evaluation of conduct involves some amount of generalization.
- Social scientists try to make generalizations about society, based on the best available evidence.
- It's unfair to make generalizations about teenagers being lazy and untidy.
- English people love animals. As a broad generalization, there is much truth in this statement.
- When people say things like "the theatre is for everyone", this seems rather a broad / sweeping / gross generalization.

**(3) *most***

- Most people would agree that the law needs changing.
- In most cases the patient makes a full recovery.
- Most of the research supports this point of view.
- The students speak English most of the time when they are at school.

**(4) *mostly / mainly / largely***

- The people who use the service are mostly businessmen.
- Apart from the Nile valley, Egypt is mostly desert.
- The audience were mainly young people in their teens.
- The disease mainly affects women.
- Half of the country's people faced starvation, largely as a result of the civil war.
- Until recently the civil war had been largely unreported in the press.

**(5) *predominantly***

- At that time England was a predominantly agricultural society.
- The condition predominantly affects middle-aged women.

**(6) *almost / nearly / virtually all***

- Unemployment rates went up in almost all European countries.
- Nearly all the children interviewed said that they are worried about what will happen in the future.

- Magnesium is found in virtually all foods.

**(7) *the majority of sb / sth***

- The majority of crimes are never reported to the police.
- The majority of the employees have university degrees.
- Can the president order a military operation in another country if the majority of the legislature opposes the action?
- The great / vast / overwhelming majority of Algerians are Muslim.
- A large majority of people approve of the death sentence.
- In the vast majority of cases the disease is fatal.

**(8) *in general***

- Men, in general, are just as good at looking after children as women.
- In general, teenagers from poor families are less likely to go to university.

**(9) *generally***

- It is now generally accepted that even the smallest dose of radiation carries a health risk.
- Generally, part-time workers receive lower wages than full-time workers.

**(10) *generally / broadly speaking / as a (general) rule***

- Generally speaking, female workers are less likely to strike.
- People in the US are, generally speaking, not very well informed about international politics.
- The surface of Mercury, broadly speaking, can be divided into two types of land area.
- As a rule, snakes have simple teeth, all roughly the same shape.
- As a general rule most students finish their coursework by the end of May.

**(11) *for the most part***

- For the most part, local people welcomed the plan.
- These problems have, for the most part, been resolved.
- In many countries medical services are state-funded and, for the most part, free.

**(12) *by and large / on the whole / in the main***

- By and large, the papers greet the government's new policy document with a certain amount of scepticism.
- The scheme was by and large a success.
- On the whole, the system worked well.
- The people on the whole were very friendly.

- Lawyers in the main were intellectual mercenaries to be bought and sold in any cause.

## 8.22. Explaining

### (1) *to explain sth (to sb) / to explain that / what / why / how / when...*

- The book begins by explaining the difference between psychology and psychiatry.
- He explained that each person has different ideas of what freedom is.
- He was the first scientist to explain how the process of evolution works.
- There are a number of theories which seek to explain why zebras have stripes.

### (2) *to give / offer / provide an explanation of / for sth / of how... / there is an explanation of / for sth*

- He attempts to give a simple explanation of his theory.
- Scientists have offered several possible explanations for these results.
- They were unable to provide a satisfactory explanation for their behaviour.
- Religion plays a vital role in society because it provides an explanation of origin and destiny, of identity and purpose.
- Each approach provides a different explanation of how politics works.
- There is no convincing explanation of the overall structure of the universe.

### (3) *to set / spell sth out / to set / spell out how... / what...* (= to explain facts, reasons, plans etc by stating them clearly and in a carefully planned order)

- He sets out his plans for an ideal Roman city in the first volume of his work.
- The government has so far refused to spell out its plans / policies.
- The document sets out exactly how the money will be spent.
- The report spelled out in detail what the implications were for teacher training.

### (4) *to go through sth* (= to explain all the details about something in the right order, so that someone can understand it)

- She begins her article by going through all the reasons why people have opposed the use of nuclear energy.

(5) **to outline / sketch (out) sth** (= to explain the main ideas about something, without giving all the details)

- In his introduction, Piaget outlines the four main stages in a child's development.
- This essay outlines the uses of comparative history as well as Mill's methods of agreement and difference.
- In Chapter 8, I sketched out three different levels of rationality: groundedness, enlightenment and emancipation.

(6) **to expand on sth** (= to add more details or information to what has already been said)

- The author expands on this theme at length.
- Melville saw the ocean as the source of all life. He expands on this idea in his novel, "Moby Dick".

(7) **this means that... / which means that... / to mean sth by sth**

- Childcare is very expensive. This means that many women cannot afford to go back to work after having children.
- If students arrive late, this can mean that a large part of the lesson time is wasted.
- There is a shortage of hospital doctors, which means that patients often have to wait a long time for treatment.
- Everything depends on what you mean by the word 'free'.
- The report fails to define what is meant by the term 'key issues'.

### 8.23. Emphasizing

(1) **to emphasize / stress sth / the fact that... / that...**

- China's leaders have emphasized / stressed the need for increased co-operation between Third World countries.
- I would like to emphasize / stress that the characters in this poem bear no resemblance to real people.
- The report emphasized / stressed that student math skills need to improve.
- It must be emphasized / stressed that they have acted and reacted in a wide variety of ways.
- I can't emphasize / stress enough how grateful we are for your donations. (= this needs to be emphasized a lot)

(2) **to underline sth / the fact that... / that... / to underscore sth / how...**

- Both leaders underlined / underscored their commitment to making the agreement work.

- Yesterday's shelling of a Red Cross hospital underlines / underscores the difficulties faced by rescue teams.
- Studies and statistics underline / underscore the fact that much of the country's wealth is in the hands of a tiny minority.
- Doyle underlined that the students would not welcome these changes.
- The rash of accidental shootings underscores how difficult it will be to restore order here.

**(3) to highlight sth**

- The report highlighted the need for prison reform.
- This case highlights some of the problems associated with patients travelling long distances for treatment.

**(4) to draw / call (sb's) attention to sth / to focus (sb's) attention / mind on sth**

- The purpose of the article was to draw / call attention to the problems faced by single parents.
- We wanted to focus public attention on this matter.

**(5) to point sth up**

- The report pointed up the need for more research on the subject.
- Her research points up the difficulty of finding a solution.

**(6) to note sth / that...**

- In the article, she notes several cases of medical incompetence.
- The report noted a complete disregard for safety regulations.
- He noted that the poverty level for a family of four is now about \$16,000 a year.
- The report notes that export and import volumes picked up in leading economies.
- It should be noted that there are a number of alternative methods available.

**(7) it is worth bearing in mind that...**

- It is worth bearing in mind that 90% of the scientists researching herbicides in the US are employed by chemical companies.

**(8) crucial / essential / vital**

- Burgin distinguishes between photographic theory and photographic criticism (Burgin 1982). This distinction is crucial / essential / vital.
- Improved consumer confidence is crucial / essential / vital to an economic recovery.
- Resolving this issue is crucial / essential / vital to making peace work.

- One explanation is that dreaming is a crucial / essential / vital part of our adaptation to the demands of the world we face.
- Factors such as temperature and acidity play a crucial / essential / vital role / part in determining how well the process works.
- It is crucial / essential / vital that the problem is tackled immediately.
- It is essential / vital to approach this novel with a cleared mind.

(9) ***first and foremost*** (= used to emphasize the most important quality, purpose, reason etc)

- What children need first and foremost from their parents is a sense of security.
- Dublin is thought of first and foremost for its literary heritage.
- This meant, first and foremost, following Bacon in the making of natural histories.

(10) (***more / most / equally***) ***importantly / significantly*** (= used to emphasize that your next statement is more or equally important than what you said before)

- Importantly, these measures were accepted by all political parties.
- More importantly, it was regarded as a distraction from the real environmental issues.
- But / Even more importantly, they can make or break political careers.
- These were accompanied, more importantly, by social policies aimed at encouraging early retirement.
- We had a fraud-free election, and most importantly, record turnouts.
- Perhaps most importantly, the nation seemed to have lost its pride and its sense of direction.
- The 18th century was a period of enormous social change. Most significantly, the Agricultural Revolution drove large numbers of workers into the cities.

(11) ***especially / particularly / in particular*** (= used to emphasize that something is more important or happens more with one particular thing than with others)

- An economic boom followed, especially in housing and construction.
- He was very much influenced by Picasso, especially when he was young.
- Tourism is very important for the economy, particularly in the south of the country.
- If working mothers are to resume their careers then the provision of incentives, especially / particularly / in particular day-care centres, is essential.
- His work had a big influence on Picasso in particular.

- In the USA in particular, large numbers of ordinary citizens lost money by investing in internet companies.
- One of the biggest environmental issues was the movement of hazardous waste. In particular, there was concern about rich, industrialized countries exporting such waste to poor developing countries.

**(12) (*most*) notably**

- The congress was characterized by frank admissions of past failings, notably in the economic sphere.
- Some subjects are very popular, most notably the sciences.
- Some economists, most notably J. M. Keynes, recommended increasing government spending in times of recession, in order to stimulate the economy.

**(13) (*and*) above all / above all else / everything else / all things**

- Cycling is not only pollution-free but also flexible, cheap, and above all, healthy.
- Try to find out if your daughter has any other worries or problems. Above all, show her that you care and will give her all the support and help you can.
- Above all else, the government must keep the promises it has made.
- I value my freedom above all things / everything else.

**(14) (*and / but*) most of all**

- Most of all, we need an approach that works.
- America had become an importer of copper, lead, zinc, and most of all, oil.
- He was friendly and intelligent, but most of all he was a good worker.
- Out of everybody at school she was the person who helped me most of all.

**(15) (*and*) last but not least** (= used when mentioning the last person or thing in a list, to emphasize that they are still important)

- Last, but not least, Mexico's economy recovered quickly because its government wasted no time in implementing tough measures and restructuring its financial sector.
- I would like to thank my publisher, my editor and, last but not least, my husband.
- Last but not least, I would like to thank my wife for her support.
- And last but not least, I thank Begona Canup for her interest in the book.

**(16) *naturally / clearly / obviously / needless to say***

- Naturally / Clearly / Obviously / Needless to say, the scheme was bound to fail due to insufficient funds.

## **8.24. Clarifying and rephrasing**

**(1) *to clarify sth / what... / how...***

- In his speech the prime minister attempted to clarify his position on economic reform.
- This chapter aims to clarify some of the most important issues in genetics today.
- It is important to clarify what the change in the law will mean.
- An example might help to clarify what I mean.
- The report aims to clarify how these conclusions were reached.

**(2) *in other words / (or) to put it another way***

- In a democracy, the government must be accountable to the people. The people should, in other words, be able to get rid of their rulers through elections.
- Average incomes fell, while the incomes of the top 20 percent of the population increased. In other words, the rich got richer.
- Money makes money. To put it another way, the more you invest, the greater your potential profit will be.
- Or to put it another way, global behaviour entails regional variety.

**(3) *that is (to say) / i.e. / ie***

- The book is about art in the modern period, that is, art since 1900.
- One solution would be to change the shape of the screen, that is, to make it wider.
- Her son suffers from Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. That is, he finds it difficult to pay attention or stay quiet for more than a short period of time.
- Languages are taught by the direct method, that is to say, without using the student's own language.
- There has been a decline in the number of 'good' jobs, i.e. ones that are highly skilled and well-paid.

**(4) *to put it simply / bluntly / mildly***

- A romantic novel should demand a certain level of emotional involvement on the part of the reader. To put it simply, the novel should not just describe a love relationship; it should allow the reader to participate in it.

- What the treatment aims to do, to put it simply, is to make the skin grow back over the wound.
- To put it bluntly, you're going to have to improve.
- He was annoyed, to put it mildly.

(5) *(more) specifically* (= used when saying exactly what you are referring to, when you are explaining something)

- What we need is a stable economic climate that encourages companies to invest on a long-term basis. Specifically, we need to get rid of the current high taxes on investment income.
- More specifically, we lack competitive export credit guarantees in comparison with other countries.

## 8.25. Concluding and summarizing

(1) *to conclude that... / from sth* (= do not use the phrase at the beginning of the final paragraph of an essay or article)

- Richardson concluded from his studies that equality between the sexes is still a long way off.
- The report concluded that a world recession was unlikely.

(2) *to draw a conclusion (from sth) / to reach / come to / arrive at a conclusion (that...)* (= do not use the phrase at the beginning of the final paragraph of an essay or article)

- With regard to defence measures against attack from the air, the following conclusions may be drawn. The best method of defence is a strong air force. The next requirement is a well-organized observation (radar) and warning system.
- The following conclusions may be drawn from these figures. Firstly, the US economy is moving out of recession. Secondly, there are no grounds for concern about its immediate future.
- The main conclusion to be drawn from this discussion is that the best way to help slow readers is to improve their skill at recognizing individual words.
- Hubble reached the conclusion that the universe was expanding.
- Scientists were gradually coming to the conclusion that the disease was hereditary.
- Three decades later, free-thinker James Lovelock arrived at the same conclusions based on his telescopic analysis of other planets.

**(3) to summarize sth** (= do not use the phrase at the beginning of the final paragraph of an essay or article)

- The organization's main aim can be summarized as follows: to create opportunities for students to learn a wide range of computer skills.
- The result of the survey can be summarized as follows. Both Japan and Korea show a strong preference for natural gas over oil, coal, and nuclear energy
- Table 3.1 summarizes the information given above.
- Your final paragraph should summarize the main points of your essay.

**(4) to sum sth up** (= do not use the phrase at the beginning of the final paragraph of an essay or article)

- The last section of the report sums up the arguments on both sides.
- Summing up the discussion, he said that all parties would consider how best to resolve the problem.
- In your final paragraph, sum up your argument.

**(5) in conclusion / to conclude (sth / on sth)** (= used at the beginning of the final paragraph of an essay or article, when you want to write about the main things that you have mentioned in it)

- In conclusion, while I firmly believe that anyone smoking should try to stop for their own health and the health of their immediate family members and friends, I do not believe that prohibiting smoking would have enough benefits to outweigh the many problems that it would cause.
- Thus, in conclusion, the population of England remained fairly stable for much of the 15th century.
- To conclude, there is evidence both to support and refute the view that greater freedom does not necessarily lead to greater happiness.
- To conclude this section it is necessary to point out a few things about the squad training sessions.
- To conclude on such a vast subject as this is not easy but I would like to make the following points.

**(6) to summarize / to sum up / in summary** (= used at the beginning of the final paragraph of an essay or article, when you want to write about the main things that you have mentioned in it)

- To summarize, in most cases the schools were achieving the standards set.
- To summarize: there are many reasons why people commit crime.
- To sum up, in 1922 the Soviet government found itself in a situation similar to the one faced by the Tsars.
- In summary, it is my opinion that this complete treatment process was very successful.

(7) *taking everything into account / consideration / all things considered / on balance / for the above-mentioned reasons* (= used at the beginning of the final paragraph of an essay or article, when you want to write about the main things that you have mentioned in it)

- Taking everything into account / consideration // All things considered // On balance // For the above-mentioned reasons, it is unlikely that there will be peace in all the countries of the world concurrently.
- Students have been very responsible, on balance, when choosing courses to provide a broad education.

(8) *the purpose / aim of this essay / article / report / study was to ...* (= used at the end of an essay, article, report, study, when saying what its purpose was and whether you have succeeded, what you have found, etc)

- The aim of this study was to determine whether it is possible to reduce the amount of salt in bread without spoiling its taste.

(9) *in this essay / article / report / study I have tried / attempted to ...*(= used at the end of an essay, article, report, study, when saying what its purpose was and whether you have succeeded, what you have found, etc)

- In this essay, I have tried to set out the main events that led to the start of the First World War.
- In this report, we have attempted to demonstrate that although nuclear power is cleaner than using gas or coal, it is more expensive in the long term.

## 8.26. Agreeing

(1) *to agree*

- Many people agreed with his views about the war.
- I completely agree with Chomsky when he says that humans are born with a special ability to learn language.
- Most experts agree that dieting needs to be accompanied by regular exercise.

(2) *to be of the same opinion*

- All three specialists were of the same opinion about the cause of her illness.
- Professor Dawkins is of the same opinion as Dr Jones.

**(3) to share somebody's view / concern / fear**

- A lot of people share his view that tourism will have a negative impact on the island.
- I share her concerns about the lack of women in high academic positions.
- This fear was shared by union leaders, who saw the new law as an attack on their rights.

**(4) to subscribe to a view / theory**

- These scientists subscribe to the view that there is a God who controls the workings of the universe.
- I, for one, do not subscribe to this theory.

**(5) to concur (formal)**

- The committee concurred with this view.
- Most modern historians would readily concur that this was an event of huge importance.
- As most biblical scholars concur, the letter could not have been written by any contemporary of Jesus.

**(6) somebody is right**

- Darwin was right when he argued that humans and higher mammals are closely related.

**(7) somebody makes a valid point**

- Cox makes a valid point when he questions our ability to remain objective.

**(8) to agree up to a point (= to partly agree with someone or something)**

- Although I agree with him up to a point, I find it hard to believe that this is true in every case.

**(9) to broadly agree (= to agree with most parts of something)**

- The conference delegates broadly agreed with the proposals.

**(10) there is some truth in (= something is partly true or right)**

- There is some truth in the argument that there is a link between violence on our streets and violence on our TV screens.

**(11) agreement**

- There is widespread agreement on / about the need for prison reform.
- Today there is general agreement that pollution from cars and planes is threatening the future of our planet.

- Geologists are mostly in agreement about / on how the islands were formed.
- The two sides were unable to reach agreement.

**(12) *consensus***

- There is now a general consensus among scientists on the causes of global warming.
- There was a growing consensus that the military government had to be replaced.

**(13) *common ground***

- There are many areas of common ground between the two philosophers.
- Often parents and teenagers find they have little common ground.
- Despite their differing backgrounds, they found common ground in their interest in science.

**(14) *unanimous*** (= if a group of people are unanimous on something, they all have the same opinion about it)

- Medical experts are unanimous on this issue / in their opposition to the plan.

**(15) *widely held view / belief***

- There is a widely held view / belief (among business experts) that advanced western societies are becoming more and more criminalized.

**(16) *to be widely / generally accepted***

- It is widely / generally accepted that electricity generated from nuclear power is more expensive than other forms of electricity.

## **8.27. Disagreeing**

**(1) *to disagree***

- Scholars disagree about / on the meaning behind the poem.
- Scientists disagree (among themselves) about / on what causes the disease.
- I strongly disagree with his views on immigration.

**(2) *to take issue with sb / sth*** (formal)

- I must take issue with you on / over the question of teachers' pay.
- It is difficult to take issue with his analysis / the article's conclusion.
- I feel that I must take issue with what you said yesterday.

**(3) to dispute**

- Researchers have disputed her claims.
- No one disputes that the problem exists.

**(4) to differ**

- Critics differed sharply on the merits of his work.
- Opinions differ about the proper relationship between the mass media and society.

**(5) to be / remain divided / split**

- America's doctors are / remain deeply divided on the issue of whether it should be legal for a physician to help a terminally ill patient commit suicide.
- Scientists were split on the uses to which the discoveries of atomic physics were being put.

**(6) to be mistaken**

- He is mistaken if he believes that the United States will not respond to this threat.
- He is mistaken about what he saw.
- She is mistaken in thinking that the report was written last year.
- Such a view is, however, seriously mistaken.

**(7) mistaken belief / idea / view / impression**

- People have a mistaken idea about artists.
- This can give rise to the mistaken belief that cocaine is not an addictive drug.

**(8) disagreement**

- There is considerable disagreement (among experts) about / on the usefulness of these tests.
- She was / found herself in disagreement (with her colleagues) on / about the issue.

**(9) dispute**

- There is considerable dispute over / about the precise definition of this term.
- The facts of the case are still in dispute.

**(10) controversy / debate**

- There is a lot of / some controversy (among politicians) over abortion in the US.

- There is a lot of / some controversy about whether this is actually true.
- Alice Walker writes about the controversy about / over / surrounding the film version of her novel.
- This idea caused / provoked / sparked off / gave rise to a controversy / debate that still continues.
- Controversy / Debate arose over the use of the chemicals on fruit and vegetables.
- Controversy / Debate about how to reform the railways has intensified.
- Her books are the subject of much / bitter / fierce / heated / continuing controversy / debate.

**(11) *controversial / contentious***

- Sex education in schools is / remains a (highly) controversial / contentious issue.
- One (particularly) controversial / contentious area in the field of health and safety is the valuation of human life itself.
- Oliver Cromwell remains a controversial historical figure.
- The judge's decision was highly controversial at the time.

**(12) *divisive***

- The war was (extremely) divisive.
- Abortion is a divisive issue in America.

## 8.28. Certainty

**(1) *certain***

- I am (absolutely / entirely / quite / fairly) certain that his analysis is correct.
- One can never be absolutely certain about / of anything in science.
- It now seems certain that the earth's climate is starting to change.

**(2) *sure* (*certain* is more formal than *sure*; it also sounds more definite)**

- I am (absolutely / completely / entirely / quite / fairly) sure that many other writers share this view.
- The past has gone and no one can be sure about / of what is to come in the future.

**(3) *to be convinced* (= to be completely sure that something is true, especially when you cannot prove it but you have strong feelings about it)**

- Many were convinced that something radical had to be done.

- They are (firmly / totally / fully) convinced that very many of the problems that they deal with are unemployment related.
- They were / became convinced of the need for better health education.

**(4) to be confident**

- In his report he said he was confident that standards would improve.
- The Prime Minister was / appeared confident of winning an overall majority.
- The researchers were confident of success.

**(5) to be satisfied**

- Professor Knowles is now (completely / fully / totally / entirely) satisfied that the drug is safe for general use.
- The insurance company needed to be satisfied that the damage was caused by the storm.

**(6) to have no doubt(s) / be in no doubt**

- I have no doubt that a cure for the disease will one day be found.
- They had no doubts at all about his ability to do the job.
- The government ministers had no doubts as to whether the policy would work.
- He said that he was in no doubt that the fire was started deliberately.

**(7) there is no doubt / there is no denying / disputing the fact that... / there is no denying that...**

- There is no doubt that violence on our TV screens does influence children.
- There is no denying the fact that these men are guilty of the most horrendous crimes.
- There is no disputing the fact that new technology has had a dramatic effect on our lives.
- There's no denying that this is an important event.

**(8) without (a) doubt**

- She was without doubt one of Mexico's finest artists.
- His experience was, without doubt, very important to his career as a writer.
- Without a doubt, it is what we eat that determines our weight.

**(9) certainly / undoubtedly**

- Certainly it will be a long time before humans are able to live in other parts of the solar system.
- Businesses will certainly benefit from the new tax laws.

- Undoubtedly there is a link between smoking and lung cancer.
- She was undoubtedly the best candidate for the presidency.

### 8.29. Uncertainty

#### (1) *not certain / uncertain*

- I am not certain that the figures are accurate.
- People often feel uncertain about / of how to deal with this type of situation.
- It is by no means certain that she is right.
- It is uncertain whether his death was accidental.

#### (2) *not sure / unsure* (*not certain / uncertain* is more formal than *not sure / unsure*)

- I am not sure whether this story is true or not.
- Scientists are not absolutely / completely / entirely / quite sure that life does exist in other parts of the universe.
- Police are still unsure about / of the precise details of what happened.

#### (3) *to have doubts*

- Many people have doubts about the methods used in the research.
- Doctors have doubts as to whether these alternative treatments really work.

#### (4) *to be dubious about sth*

- The writer is dubious about the effectiveness of prison as a way of dealing with drug-related problems.
- Some universities are dubious about accepting students over the age of 30.

### 8.30. Personal opinion

#### (1) *in my opinion / view*

- In my opinion, the cathedral is one of the world's most beautiful churches.
- In my view, the court made the right decision.
- Their concerns are, in my opinion / view, fully justified.

#### (2) *in this writer's opinion / view* (= used in formal essays when giving your opinion)

- In this writer's opinion, the arguments against using nuclear energy are overwhelming.

- In this writer's view, the present system is in need of reform.

**(3) *I think that...***

- I think that everyone should be able to own their own home.
- I think that hunting should be banned.

**(4) *I believe that... / I am convinced that... / it is my firm belief that...*** (= used about strongly held beliefs, for example about moral issues)

- I believe / I am convinced / It is my firm belief that the death penalty is morally wrong.

**(5) *to my mind / to my way of thinking***

- The Internet, to my mind, represents information exchange at its best.
- To my way of thinking, the economic recession of the previous decade was foreseeable.

**(6) *it seems to me that... / I am inclined to think / believe that...***

- It seems to me that there is some truth in her argument.

**(7) *as / so far as I am concerned***

- As / So far as I'm concerned, the issue is over and done with.

**(8) *to the best of my knowledge / to our knowledge / as far as I know / can remember / can see / can tell*** (= used to say that you think something is true, but you are not completely certain)

- To the best of my knowledge, the chemicals which were found are not dangerous.
- To our knowledge, this is the first time it's happened.
- As far as I know, Canary Wharf is the tallest building in London.
- He was the only one who enjoyed the play, as far as I can remember.

### **8.31. Another person's opinion**

**(1) *according to sb / sth***

- According to Freud, our dreams represent our hidden desires.
- Young children need at least ten hours of sleep a day, according to Dr. Shaefer.
- According to newspaper reports, fighting has broken out in the northern provinces.
- There is now widespread support for these proposals, according to a recent public opinion poll.

**(2) *in the words of sb***

- In the words of one professor, the object of teaching English literature is not to pass on knowledge, but to train the imagination.

**(3) *sb's / the opinion / view is that...***

- The judge's opinion was that she was fit to stand trial.
- His view is that consumers should be told the whole truth about the product they are buying.
- The general opinion is that the combined vaccine works better.

**(4) *in sb's opinion / view***

- The important thing, in Galileo's opinion, was to accept the facts and build a theory to fit them.
- Criticism is quite different, in Barthes's view, from ordinary reading.
- In his opinion, the portrait painter seeks to capture the moment when the model looks most like himself or herself.

**(5) *from sb's point of view***

- From their point of view, the system worked quite well.
- It is important to consider the situation from the point of view of the ordinary man in the street.

**(6) *for sb***

- For Chomsky, language is an abstract system of rules which is used by human minds for transmitting and receiving ideas.
- For Vygotsky, social factors play a fundamental role in intellectual development.

**(7) *as far as sb is concerned***

- As far as he was concerned, the failure showed the limits of military intervention.
- The election was a formality as far as the ruling party was concerned.

**(8) *to say that... / to write that... / to argue that... / to point out that... / to state that... / to observe that... / to note that... / to remark that... / to claim that... (to claim – to say that something is true, even though there is no definite proof) / to allege that... (to allege – to say that something is true or that someone has done something wrong, although this has not been proved)***

- In their report, they say that they see no reason to change the existing system.
- Du Bois wrote that the United States was "a land of magnificent possibilities – the home of noble souls and generous people."

- Rousseau argued that all men were born equal.
- Dr Graham points out that "All normal children show some degree of antisocial behaviour".
- Parkinson's Law states that "work expands to fill the time available".
- Winnicott observed that mothers spend much of the first few months imitating their infants.
- Lyons (1977) notes that not all languages have tenses.
- The report claimed that hundreds of civilians had crossed the border to escape the fighting.
- The prosecution alleged that the man had been responsible for an act of terrorism.

**(9) *as sb says / writes / points out / notes / remarks / observes / states / argues / claims...***

- As Rachel Carson points out in her book "Silent Spring", chemicals used in farming are having a devastating effect on our countryside.
- As Brownmiller has remarked, women, on the whole, have not achieved economic equality with men in our society.
- As Joseph Heller once observed, success and failure can be equally difficult to deal with.
- As Skinner (1948) states, verbal behaviour develops according to the same principles as any other behaviour.
- As Edward Said argues: European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient (Said 1995).

**(10) *it is argued / alleged (that...) / it could be argued (that...)***

- It is argued that the ECB focuses to excess on price stability and not enough on growth.
- So, it is argued, more risk-averse investors will buy dollars.
- It could be argued that these criteria are too rigid.
- This, it could be argued, is a simple political choice: the French would rather have more leisure time than faster economic growth.
- It was alleged that policemen had accepted bribes.
- Because of this, it is alleged, the arms race is fuelled into ever more expensive, dangerous and faster spirals.
- This, it is alleged, undermines the rule of law.

**(11) *as sb says / points out / notes / remarks***

- It is important to remember, as Alan Kay says, "the main difference between scientists and engineers is that engineers want to make things and scientists want to understand them."

- As Professor Richard Dawkins points out, this process is influenced by environmental factors.

**(12) *it is popularly believed / thought that...***

- It is popularly believed / thought that wealth will bring happiness.

**(13) *contrary to popular belief / opinion***

- Contrary to popular belief, wealth does not necessarily bring happiness.

**(14) *to have / hold an opinion / view (of / on / about) / to have / hold / take the opinion / view that... / to be of the opinion that...***

- Everybody has a different opinion of what America represents.
- Voters tend to have a low opinion of politicians.
- Teenage girls generally have a higher opinion of themselves as learners than boys, according to a recent study.
- They held the same opinions on many issues.
- He has / holds / takes the view that education should be available to all.
- Until then, most scientists were of the opinion that these variations in weather were compatible with established climate patterns.

**(15) *to give / express / voice an opinion / view (on / about sth)***

- The commission has yet to give its opinion / view on the matter.
- Other writers have expressed similar opinions / views on the subject.
- In his speech he was simply voicing an opinion / view that was held by many people at the time.

**(16) *to make your views known (about something)***

- Old people seldom have the opportunity to make their views known.

## 8.32. Reference

**(1) *above / above-mentioned* (formal)**

- Students often have difficulty with verbs of motion, as the above example shows.
- For the above reasons, the management has no choice but to close the factory.
- This procedure is described above.
- The above-mentioned article contains some inaccuracies.

**(2) *previous* (= a previous part of an essay, report etc comes before this one)**

- The results of this study were discussed in a previous section.

- As was mentioned in the previous chapter, these changes occurred over a long period of time.

(3) ***preceding*** (= the preceding part of an essay, report etc comes immediately before this one)

- In the preceding pages, she describes the history of the island.
- These meetings were mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

(4) ***earlier***

- As was mentioned earlier, at that time most people could not expect to live beyond the age of 65.
- As outlined earlier, an alternative theory was becoming widely accepted in the 1920s.
- It is extremely important, therefore, to follow the general principles on project planning that we described earlier in the chapter.

(5) ***as has been seen / it has been seen that...***

- Matisse, as has been seen, was inspired by the work of Cezanne.
- It has been seen that there are a number of problems with this type of approach.

(6) ***the former*** (formal) (= the first of the two things or people that you have just mentioned)

- There were two possible ways of dealing with the situation: try to negotiate with the terrorists, or launch an immediate attack. The government chose the former.

(7) ***the latter*** (formal) (= the second of the two things or people that you have just mentioned)

- Two treaties were signed, in 1990 and 1998, but only the latter agreement was considered valid.
- The people are either Albanians or Serbs. The latter regard Kosovo as a sacred part of historic Serbia.
- Where unemployment and crime are high, it can be assumed that the latter is due to the former.

(8) ***below***

- The reasons that lay behind this decision are discussed below.
- Details of courses are listed below.
- Below / Given below is a short account of the events that led up to the crisis.
- For further information on this subject, see below.

**(9) *there are several / a number of reasons / points etc***

- Women are more likely to suffer from depression than men. There are a number of reasons for this.
- There are several points to keep in mind when writing business letters: try to be brief, always be polite, and make sure that you use the correct job title.

**(10) *as follows***

- The objectives of the study are as follows: firstly to find out whether there was a demand for this type of service, and secondly to establish how much people were willing to pay for it.
- The three elements are as follows: economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

**(11) *following example / reason / point etc / the following***

- Consider the following example.
- Your report should discuss the following: initial hypothesis; the experiment; analysis of the results.
- The following is a brief summary of the main sources of grants for postgraduate students.
- The following are some of the things that people said about the book.

**(12) *there follows sth***

- There follows a simple example of this kind of organization of ideas and information.

**(13) *as we shall see***

- As we shall see later, their views differ in several important respects.
- This idea is probably wrong, as we shall see.

**(14) *with respect / regard / reference to / in regard / reference to***

- I am writing with respect / regard / reference to your recently published article on vivisection.
- Dear Sir, I am writing with regard to your advertisement in the *Times*.
- I am writing to you with regard to your letter of 15 March.
- I am writing to you in reference to the job opening in your department.

### **8.33. Partly correct statement**

**(1) *up to a point***

- And, up to a point, the conventional wisdom is right.

- Self-expression is good up to a point but you can't just let these kids run wild.
- The new traffic scheme worked up to a point, but it had its problems.
- The curriculum would follow the classical model, though only up to a point.
- Of course there is some truth in all this, but only up to a point.

**(2) *to an extent / degree / to some / a certain extent / degree / to a limited extent***

- I do agree with him to an extent.
- We all to some extent remember the good times and forget the bad.
- To a degree, it is possible to educate oneself.
- What you say is true to some degree.
- To some degree I think that's right, but there are other factors which affect the situation.

**(3) *in a sense***

- In a sense, both of them are right.

**(4) *in a / one way***

- In a / one way, this is true but computers will always need human input.
- It is comforting, in a way, reminding me of the mystery of life and of how people endure adversities.

### **8.34. Alternative**

**(1) *or / either ... or***

- Payment can be made by cash, cheque or credit card.
- There is very little difference between the two species of bird, either in size or colour.

**(2) *(or) alternatively*** (= used when giving another choice apart from the one you have already mentioned)

- For a master's degree, 12 months' full-time study is normally required, or alternatively 24 months of part-time study.
- You can go up into the mountains. Alternatively, you can stroll around one of Switzerland's delightful cities where the old mixes with the new.

**(3) *on the one hand ... (but) on the other (hand)***

- On the one hand, the internet gives students access to information on every imaginable topic. On the other, there is a lot of material on the internet that is very unsuitable for students.

- On the one hand, it is important not to limit individual freedom too much, but on the other hand, people have the right to be able to live their lives in peace.

### 8.35. Addition

#### (1) *and*

- She studied physics and biology at university.
- The information was checked and then rechecked.
- His stay in London was both happy and successful.

#### (2) *also*

- Smoking causes lung cancer. It has also been linked to heart disease.
- Although most of her books are for adults, she also writes for children.
- The country's mineral resources consist not only of diamonds but also of oil.

#### (3) *too / as well / as well as*

- Wind energy is cheap. It is good for the environment too.
- The long hours at work began to affect his health. They affected his personal life as well.
- As well as being an artist and designer, Morris was also a political thinker.
- There are sports facilities available for girls as well as boys.

#### (4) *similarly / likewise*

- The cost of food and clothing has come down in recent years. Similarly, fuel prices have fallen quite considerably.
- High inflation usually leads to high interest rates. Similarly, interest rates decline when inflation is low.
- Brushing your teeth daily is fundamental for good oral hygiene; similarly / likewise, not eating food containing sugar in-between meals also promotes oral hygiene.
- The V-2 was not an ordinary weapon: it could only be used against cities. Likewise the atom bomb.
- The character of the lake has changed and the character of the surrounding area likewise.
- All attempts by the Socialists to woo him back were spurned. Similar overtures from the right have likewise been rejected.

**(5) *in addition (to [doing] sth)***

- A fifth of the world's population lives on less than \$1 a day. In addition, over 100 million children are living on the streets.
- Over 600 people will lose their jobs, in addition to the 400 people who left the company last year.
- In addition to being a major oil producer, Nigeria is home to over 110 million people.

**(6) *besides (sth) / (doing sth)***

- The house was out of our price range and too big anyway. Besides, I'd grown fond of our little rented house.
- Besides making money, the company aims to set high standards of quality and design.
- People choose jobs for other reasons besides money.
- I think she has many good qualities besides being very beautiful.
- The area has stunning scenery, beautiful beaches, and much more besides.

**(7) *furthermore / moreover* (formal)**

- The drug has strong side effects. Furthermore, it can be addictive.
- Ireland's economy has grown far faster than those of its neighbours. Moreover, inflation has stayed low.

**(8) *(and) what is more***

- What is more, your choice of career is a fundamental decision which will influence the rest of your life.
- Many more institutions, especially banks, were allowed to lend money for mortgages, and what was more, banks could lend out more money than they actually held.
- You should remember it, and what's more, you should get it right.

**(9) *not to mention sth / to say nothing of sth / let alone* (used after a negative statement)**

- Big 4-wheel-drive vehicles cause so much environmental damage through pollution, not to mention the danger they pose to pedestrians and cyclists.
- Pollution has a negative effect on the health of everyone living in the city, not to mention the damage to the environment.
- Pollution affects the soil, to say nothing of its impact on wildlife.
- But these images were not arbitrary, let alone trivial.
- It's unwise to let policy be influenced, let alone jeopardized, by outraged personal pride.

**(10) *both ... and***

- Any such action would have to be approved by both American and Saudi leaders.
- The results of the research are both impressive and alarming.
- Now women work both before and after having their children.

**(11) *not only ... but also***

- Not only is your choice of career a fundamental decision, but it is also one that will influence the rest of your life.

### **8.36. Negative addition**

**(1) *neither ... nor***

- The party and its leaders were defended neither by white nor blue-collar workers.
- The president spoke neither for nor against economic reform.
- Neither smoking nor consuming too much alcohol are considered healthy.

**(2) *neither / nor***

- Smoking is not considered healthy; neither / nor is consuming too much alcohol.
- The authorities were not sympathetic to the students' demands, neither would they tolerate any disruption.
- He doesn't want to live in the country when he grows up, nor does he want to live in the city.

**(3) *either***

- Smoking is not considered healthy and consuming too much alcohol isn't, either.
- Sir Bernard never recovered from the loss either.

### **8.37. Example**

**(1) *to give an example (of sth / sb) / to give the example of sb / sth / to give sth as an example***

- He gives several examples of the ways that big corporations can influence government policy.
- The doctors gave numerous examples of patients being expelled from hospital.

- The writer gives the example of Johnny Saxon who, three years after winning the world boxing title, was charged with burglary.
- He gives as an example the island of Aru in southeast Indonesia, where the number of turtles has decreased dramatically.

**(2) *to cite sth / to cite an example / sth is cited as sth / to cite sb / sth as an example of sth***

- She cited three reasons why people get into debt.
- She cites a number of recent examples to support her theory.
- There are many similar examples that could be cited.
- Just a few examples may be cited to highlight this problem.
- Several factors have been cited as the cause of the unrest.
- Sendak cites Tolstoy as an example of an author who needs no illustrator.
- The company cited a 12% decline in new orders as evidence that overall demand for its products was falling.

**(3) *to exemplify sth / sth is exemplified by / in sth***

- I will exemplify my point with a story.
- Problems are exemplified in the report.
- A general concept can be exemplified by any number of particular instances which need not stand in any causal relation with each other.
- The modern spirit of revolt was best exemplified by the work of Kafka and Freud.
- This is exemplified in Trudeau's conception which decouples culture and politics.

**(4) *to illustrate sth (with sth) / to serve to illustrate sth / sth can be illustrated by sth / to illustrate that... / how... / as sth illustrates***

- Let me give an example to illustrate the point.
- The example of the United States illustrates this point.
- The following examples illustrate our approach to customer service.
- This latest conflict further illustrates the weakness of the UN.
- She illustrated her discussion with diagrams.
- A simple example should serve to illustrate the complexities and the paradoxes of this conflict.
- This point can be illustrated by two brief examples.
- This change is neatly illustrated by what has happened to the Arab League.
- This dispute illustrates that the regime is deeply divided.
- The following examples illustrate how this operates in practice.

- As this story illustrates, some stars have become as bored as audiences by Hollywood extravagance.

**(5) *to be shown by sth / as is shown by sth***

- The people who live there are quite rich. This is shown by the size of their houses.
- Metal tools were produced here for thousands of years, as is shown by weapons discovered in ancient tombs

**(6) *this is true of sth***

- Many writers have suffered from discrimination. This was true of Oscar Wilde, and also of André Gide.

**(7) *to be / stand as a good / perfect / typical / classic / obvious / relevant example (of sth)***

- Her case is a classic example of this kind of problem.
- The United Kingdom is a good example of a country that consists of several smaller states.
- Symphonies 103 and 104 stand as perfect examples of early symphonic construction.

**(8) *to be a case in point***

- Many native English plants and animals are under threat. The red squirrel is a case in point.
- The government has consistently ignored basic human rights. A case in point is the recent killing of 10 political prisoners.

**(9) *to take / consider sth***

- Science has yet to answer some important questions. Take, for instance, the theory that the universe started with the 'big bang'. What came before the big bang?
- Many students are bored with their studies. Consider the case of Christina. She is a hard-working student who plans to go to college. Yet she says of her education, "It's not like I'm thinking a lot here."

**(10) *by way of illustration* (formal) (= used especially when you are going to give a long example that shows what you mean)**

- Revolutions often lead to dictatorships. By way of illustration, consider the events that followed the French Revolution.
- Plants have been used in Cambodia in many ways for many centuries. By way of illustration, of the 2,300 species of plants in Cambodia,

approximately 40 percent have a traditional use, primarily as food and medicine.

**(11) *for example / instance***

- There is a great deal we can do to reduce the amount of pollution we produce. For example / instance, we can use our cars less, and use public transport instead.
- We need to rethink the way we consume energy. Take, for instance, our approach to transport.
- Our climate is already showing signs of change. Last year, for instance, was one of the hottest summers on record.
- Many countries, for example Mexico and Japan, have a lot of earthquakes.

**(12) *such as / like sth***

- By providing incentives such as / like day-care centres working mothers are encouraged to resume their careers.
- The factory produced electrical goods such as / like washing machines and cookers.
- Girls do better than boys in subjects such as / like English.

**(13) *including***

- She has many interests, including opera and ballet.
- The company produces 340 drugs and cosmetic products, including penicillin, antibiotics and aspirins.
- Eight people, including two children, were injured in the explosion.

**(14) *to name but a few*** (= used after examples of something, when saying that there are many more that you could mention)

- He wrote several famous books: "1984", "Animal Farm", and "The Road to Wigan Pier", to name but a few.
- We saw designs by Karl Lagerfeld, Yves Saint Laurent, and Sonia Rykiel, to name but a few.

**(15) *and so on / forth / etc***

- They have a right to their own culture, their own religion, their own language, and so on / forth.
- The children can take part in music, dance, painting, etc.

### 8.38. Exception

**(1) *except (for) sth / apart / aside from sth / but (for) sth***

- He collected every edition of the magazine *except (for) / apart from / but (for)* one.
- Most of the critics liked the play, *except for* one critic on the *Los Angeles Times*.
- *Except for* a few years in the early sixties and seventies, inflation has been a continuing feature of American life since World War II.
- *Except in* an emergency, these doors must remain closed.
- The government has few options *except to* keep interest rates high.
- The area looks very much like the state of Iowa, *except that* it is surrounded by beautiful snow-covered mountains.
- The films were all made in Hollywood, *apart from* one, which was made in the UK.
- The weather was not very good in the first week. *Apart from* that, it was a good holiday.
- *Aside from* one or two minor errors, this is an excellent piece of research.
- There is nothing *but* trees, for mile after mile.
- All *but* a few of her family died of the disease.
- There's no alternative *but to* scrap the whole plan and start again.

**(2) *excluding / not including sb / sth***

- The aircraft carries 461 people *excluding* the crew and cabin staff.
- The average cost, *excluding / not including* insurance, is around \$600 a year.
- Television is watched in 97 per cent of American homes (*excluding* Alaska and Hawaii).
- *Excluding* students, the total number of unemployed rose from 2 million to 2.3 million.

**(3) *with the exception of sb / sth* (formal)**

- Denmark has more wind turbines than any other place in the world, *with the exception of* California.
- *With the exception of* skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women.

**(4) *other than sth / sb / other than to do sth / that...* (= except, used especially in negative sentences)**

- He had no interests *other than* teaching.
- We never go to church *other than* for funerals and weddings.

- Some airlines will not allow you to take pets other than dogs, cats and birds.
- I had no ambitions other than to have a happy life and be free.
- Daley has said little about his childhood, other than that it was happy and normal.

**(5) *in a few cases / in a small number of cases***

- In a few cases the information has gone missing from the files.
- Surgery can only help in a small number of cases.

**(6) *to be an exception / with an exception / apart from an exception / an exception to a rule / the exception, not the rule***

- The health of most of the patients improved, although there were one or two exceptions.
- New technology stocks have done badly in recent months, but Autonomy has been an exception.
- Most nurses are women; the most notable exceptions are psychiatric nurses.
- Not many first-rate writers have written about film. An important / significant / notable exception is Grahame Greene, who reviewed movies regularly between 1935 and 1940.
- The prisons are, with one exception, overcrowded and lacking in facilities for prisoners.
- With one or two notable exceptions, there are few women conductors.
- With a few minor exceptions, the new edition is much like the previous one.
- With few / rare exceptions, guests are booked for week-long visits.
- Apart from a few minor exceptions, the two countries' legal systems are very similar.
- The spelling of this word is an interesting exception to the rule.
- Successful two-career couples are still the exception, not the rule.

**(7) *without exception / to be no exception***

- All societies, without exception, share the same characteristics.
- Her books are always entertaining and this one is no exception.

### **8.39. Related**

**(1) *related (to sth) / connected (with sth) / linked (to / with sth)***

- These two problems are closely / directly / intimately / strongly related to each other.

- Education levels are strongly related to income.
- Experts believe that the large number of cancer cases in the area are directly related to the new nuclear power station.
- The report deals with homelessness and other related issues.
- Some people think that the stones are connected in some way with religious ceremonies.
- Individual performance is linked to the amount of effort that you put in.
- High levels of cholesterol are linked with an increased risk of heart disease.
- Our minds and our bodies are closely / directly / inextricably / intimately / strongly linked.
- The explosions are not thought to be linked in any way.
- Two closely linked factors produced this result.

**(2) to relate (to sth)**

- I don't understand how the two ideas / issues relate.
- The charges of fraud relate to events that took place over ten years ago.

**(3) to relate sth to / with sth / to connect sth / sb (with sth) / to link sth / sb (to / with sth)**

- Researchers are trying to relate low exam results to / with large class sizes.
- The report seeks to relate the rise in crime to an increase in unemployment.
- We offer courses that relate English literature to other subjects.
- She did not connect the two events in her mind.
- There is little evidence to connect them with the attack.
- There was no evidence then to connect smoking with lung cancer.
- Scientists now link certain types of cancer to / with the amount of junk food that people consume.
- The use of CFCs has been linked to / with the depletion of the ozone layer.
- Police have evidence linking Bates to / with a drug-importation operation.

**(4) (there is a) connection / link (between sth [and sth])**

- All the data we have suggests that there is a direct connection between the use of fossil fuels and the rise in global temperatures.
- Studies in the 1960s showed that there was a link between smoking and lung cancer.
- The connection between smoking and heart disease is well known.
- There are a number of links between the two theories.

- There's a direct link between diet and heart disease.
- The link between smoking and cancer was established / found / proved decades ago.
- They are studying the links between carbon emissions and climate change.

**(5) *(there is a) correlation (between sth [and sth])***

- a strong / high / significant / clear / close / direct / consistent correlation
- a positive / negative correlation
- There is a high correlation between smoking and lung cancer.
- Karimov claims to have discovered a direct correlation between nuclear tests in the area and earthquakes throughout the former Soviet Union.
- Researchers found a strong correlation between urban deprivation and poor health.
- There is a significant positive correlation between alcohol consumption and the incidence of the disease.
- Numerous studies have shown a consistent negative correlation between age and participation in sporting activities.

**(6) *interrelated / interconnected***

- Unemployment and inflation are interrelated.
- Many interrelated factors are at work here.
- The book consists of four interrelated / interconnected stories.

**(7) *to interrelate (with sth)***

- We will be discussing how the interests of state, parent and child interrelate.
- Each part of the course interrelates with all the others.

**(8) *interdependent***

- The parts of any living organism are interdependent.
- The economies of town and countryside were closely interdependent.
- We live in an increasingly interdependent world.

**(9) *(to be) associated (with sb / sth)***

- His social problems were associated with heavy drinking.
- Researchers discovered a gene associated with some forms of skin cancer.
- Salaries and associated costs have risen significantly over the past year.

**(10) *to associate sth with sth***

- Most people associate this brand with good quality.
- The study found that many people associate science with masculinity.

- Ads try to associate drinking with fun.

**(11) *(to be) be bound up with sth***

- His political philosophy was closely / inextricably / inseparably bound up with his religious beliefs.
- Human rights in general and the right to communicate in particular are bound up with the notion of democracy.

**(12) *to go together*** (= if two things go together, you usually find one with the other)

- Too often greed and politics seem to go together.
- Inflation and high unemployment usually go together.

**(13) *relevant (to sth) / pertinent (to sth)*** (formal) / ***germane (to sth)*** (formal)

- The point / argument is highly / particularly relevant to this discussion.
- Education should be relevant to the child's needs.
- The tribunal will look at all the relevant facts before making up its mind.
- The last point is particularly pertinent to today's discussion.
- The report was first published in the late 1980s, but its findings are still pertinent to today's situation.
- This raises a pertinent question. Why should we give politicians all this power?
- The scale of this process and its considerable effect on the cities raises a number of pertinent issues.
- I think it may be pertinent at this point to raise the question of how the new department will be funded.
- The chapters which are germane to the topic are chapters 11 and 12.
- These questions are especially germane in nuclear physics, where researchers are constantly looking for better methods of analysis.

**(14) *to have a / some bearing (on sth)***

- It has come to have a bearing on the larger questions of civilized survival.
- The observations on immortality in Chapter Thirteen may be seen to have some bearing on this.
- At first it was difficult to see how this discovery had any bearing on the problem.
- Advances in genetics are likely to have a direct / huge / important / significant bearing on discussions about individual freedom.

**(15) *to bear on sth***

- The country's national policy bears on these problems.

- We have seen in the present chapter that a number of forces bear on both supply and demand.
- This chapter has reviewed a wide range of research which may bear on relationships between subjective risk and memory for driving situations.

**(16) to the point**

- His writing is always concise and to the point.
- Her comments on my work were very apt and to the point.
- I think his suggestions are completely to the point and should be heard.
- Fat is one of the essential parts of our diet. More to the point, the fat in a meal slows the digestive process and gradually releases energy into your blood stream.
- She's very nice and, more to the point, she's very good at her job.

### **8.40. Not related**

**(1) *unrelated (to sth) / unconnected (with / to sth)***

- Research has shown that performance on these tests is apparently / completely / entirely / totally unrelated to intelligence.
- Police found the evidence while investigating an unrelated matter.
- It's no longer possible to argue that crime is unconnected with unemployment.
- Wolf's work is completely unconnected to the current study.
- The murders are probably unconnected.

**(2) *there is no relation / no connection / link (between sth [and sth])***

- Studies have shown that there is no relation between how much coffee you drink and how much food you eat.
- There is clearly no connection between the person's gender and their ability to do the job.

**(3) *to bear no relation to sth***

- This belief bears no relation to reality.
- The tax bears no relation to people's ability to pay.

**(4) *separate (from sth) / discrete (from sth) / distinct (from sth)***

- The cost of the treatment is an entirely separate issue / matter.
- Finance was kept separate from other functions of government.
- The nation was thus both a discrete political and economic concept.
- Psychiatry is discrete from psychology and psychotherapy.
- The two concepts are quite distinct (from each other).

- The region's linguistic and cultural identity is quite distinct from that of the rest of the country.
- They were classified into two distinct groups.
- These functions fall into three entirely distinct categories.

**(5) *irrelevant (to sth / sb)***

- largely / totally / completely irrelevant
- These documents are largely irrelevant to the present investigation.
- Most members of the public see these things as simply irrelevant to their daily lives.
- Making a large profit is irrelevant to us – the important thing is to make the book available to the largest possible audience
- We are focusing too much on irrelevant details.

**(6) *to have nothing to do with sth / sb***

- Intelligence has nothing to do with common sense.
- The reasons why they want to change the law have nothing to do with fighting terrorism.

**(7) *to have no bearing on sth***

- The new data had no bearing on the outcome of the research.
- A recruit's family background should have no bearing on his suitability for officer training.

**(8) *to be beyond / outside the scope of sth***

- These debates are outside the scope of this essay.
- A full discussion of that issue is beyond the scope of this book.
- A detailed examination of his theory is beyond the scope of this chapter.

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