

WEB POST: OPINION ARTICLE / OPINION ESSAY

Writing Module - Part 2

TASK

You will **write a web post (opinion article / opinion essay)** for an English language magazine, newsletter or website on a topic of general interest based on the reading of a short text outlining a scenario. You will respond **using the information in the scenario** and the **three bullet points**.

The **aim** of an article is to **present** an argument or **point of view** by answering a provided question in the task by **discussing** the **three bullet points**.

Before writing, you should **decide on your point of view** and make a plan of your ideas, putting them in a logical order.

STYLE

Formal language: you must use full forms; do not use contractions, slang words, or exclamation marks.

TIME

30 minutes.

LENGTH

At least 180 words.

STRUCTURE

1. Introduction (1st Paragraph)
2. Argument of the first bullet point (2nd Paragraph)
3. Argument of the second bullet point (3rd Paragraph)
4. Argument of the third bullet point (4th Paragraph)
5. Conclusion (5th Paragraph)

1. Introduction

In the **first paragraph**, you must **present** what the topic is. You must present a **balanced argument**. You must introduce the topic without expressing your personal opinion directly. **How?**

○ **Expressing a general viewpoint - Background:** you must present a general background to express why the topic is important with a **balanced statement** or **worrying fact** to introduce the topic and get the reader's attention.

- It is widely believed that ...
- Generally speaking, ...
- By large and far, ...
- It is often *thought /said/ asserted / claimed* that ...
- It is universally acknowledged that ...
- It is a common belief/knowledge that
- It is a well-known fact that ...
- A problem that is often debated nowadays is that of ...
- Nowadays, more and more ___ are ...
- These days, there is a common opinion that
- There has been a lot of *discussion of / debate over / controversy over* ...
- In our globalized world, it is a fact that ...
- It is questionable whether ... or not.

○ **Expressing a general viewpoint – For/Against Argument:** you must express a specific argument on the topic (either *agreement* or *disagreement*) but without expressing your personal opinion.

- However, there is strong argument that
- As will be seen, this brings up to the question of whether ...
- Nonetheless, it stands to reason that ...
- Accordingly, this raises the issue of whether ...
- Taking these facts into consideration, _____.
- While _____, it is undeniable to accept that ...
- Whereas _____, it is also true that ...



Example:

By large and far, switching on lights and machines is something we regard as normal in our everyday lives. A problem that is often debated nowadays is that of if we really need to use so much electricity. Accordingly, this brings up the issue of whether nowadays we must restrict the use of electricity.

2. Argument of the first bullet point

3. Argument of the second bullet point

4. Argument of the third bullet point

In the **second, third and fourth paragraphs**, you must present express your opinion (*agreement* or *disagreement*) with the topic by **arguing the first bullet point**.

- First, you must **start** the paragraph by writing a **“listing” connector** or **“transition” connector**.

- **“Listing” connectors** (see “Conjunctions & Linking words” list):

- First and foremost, ...
- First of all, ...
- In the first place, ...
- To start with, ...
- Secondly, ...
- Last but not least, ...

- **“Transition” connectors** (see “Conjunctions & Linking words” list):

- Furthermore,
- Besides,
- In addition to this, ...
- Moreover, ...

- Next, you must **use** a **clear topic sentence** to present the argument. A ‘topic sentence’ is the first sentence of the paragraph that tells the reader what the paragraph is about.

- **Topic sentences:**

- It is important to point out that ...

- There are thought/said to be many people who ...
 - It is claimed/believed/reported/thought/known that
 - It is necessary to highlight that ...
 - Another point to take into account is ...
 - Another reason to consider is the fact that ...
 - Another issue to take into consideration is ...
 - A further idea to bear in mind is ...
- Afterwards, you must justify your argument by using **clear** and **persuasive language** to get your point across and persuade the reader to agree with you. You should **use linking words** (see “Conjunctions & Linking words” list) to link your ideas that support your argument in the paragraph – cause, result, emphasis, contrast, etc.

○ **Persuasive language:**

- It goes without saying that ...
- Not only ..., but also ...
- Without doubt, ...
- It is highly likely that ...
- Few people would disagree that ...
- Most people are in agreement on this issue because ...
- More and more people agree that ...
- It turns out to be clear that ...
- There is no doubt that /about ...
- It can be clearly seen that ...
- There is no reason why ...
- To some extent/degree ...
- It is safe to say that ...
- When it comes to ...
- Provided that ...
- Given that ...
- As might be expected, ...
- There is no point / use in (verb+ing)

- It is no use/point (verb+ing)
 - By all accounts,
- If possible, you must **give examples** that help you make your point.

○ **Concluding sentences** (see “Conjunctions & Linking words” list):

- For instance, ...
 - For example, ...
 - To illustrate, ...
 - ... such as ...
- Finally, you must write a **concluding sentence** that emphasizes your argument.

○ **Concluding sentences:**

- In short, what we should do is ...
- Clearly, we need to ...
- For this reason, ...
- Therefore, ...
- As expressed, ...
- Thus, ...
- In general, ...
- Basically, ...
- Essentially, ...

Example:

***First and foremost, it is important to point out that** we should introduce measures to make people aware of how much electricity they use. **Few people would disagree that** we could, **for example**, introduce legislation to install a meter in every home so that people could see how much electricity they use. **As a result**, this might encourage people to take measures to reduce how much electricity they use. **Clearly, we need to** introduce ways to prevent people from using an above average amount of electricity.*

5. Conclusion

In this **fifth paragraph**, you should **restate** and **summarize** your **opinion**.

- First, you will **conclude** the topic by writing a “conclusion” connector and giving a **summary of the main idea**.

- **‘Conclusion’ connectors** (see “Conjunctions & Linking words” list):

- In conclusion,
- All things considered,
- To sum up,
- All in all,

- **Summarizing ideas:**

- It has been shown that ...
- It seems to be that ...
- The question we need to ask ourselves is what ...

- Besides, you should either **express your own view** based on the balanced argument in your writing or give the reader something to think about. Remember to say why you think so; justify your personal opinion.

- **Expressing personal opinion** (see “Expressing Opinion” list):

Example:

All things considered, it seems to be that reducing our consumption of electricity is a priority. The way I see it, I strongly believe that it would protect our natural resources provided that this could reduce global warming. Therefore, as far as I am concerned, it would save all of us money.

