Ideas for IELTS Essay Topics





Useful Ideas & Vocabulary for over 150 IELTS Essay Topics.

For Academic & GT IELTS Writing Task 2.

IELTS Liz

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This book contains useful ideas for essay topics which can be used for IELTS writing task 2. The ideas presented are not intended to influence any person's personal opinions and do not represent the opinions of the author.

Message from IELTS Liz



I hope you find this e-book useful not only for your IELTS exam preparation but also for your English language development as a whole. I believe that the joy of learning a language never stops. For this reason, I have tried to fill this e-book with as much useful and interesting language as possible. I hope you will continue learning from it well after you have received your IELTS results and moved forward with your future plans.

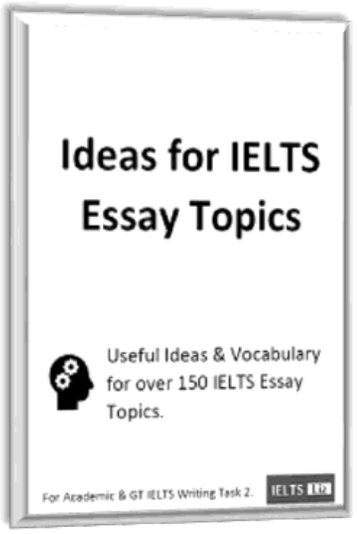
To help you prepare ideas for IELTS writing task 2, I have tried to cover all the main topics that commonly appear. These topics are presented in a way to help you develop range and accuracy in your English vocabulary. I hope you enjoy the exercises.

Please watch the introduction video that comes with this e-book. It will give you an insight into how to use these materials appropriately to improve your score in IELTS writing task 2.

The keys to success in IELTS are adequate preparation, strong English and confidence. This e-book will help you take one very large step along that road. I wish you lots of luck in your test. You can do it!

All the best
Liz

About "Ideas for IELTS Essay Topics"



This e-book is for IELTS candidates taking either the Academic or General Training writing task 2 test.

The aim of the book is:

1. to provide you with useful ideas that you can use in your IELTS writing task 2 essay.
2. to help you learn topic related vocabulary for your essay.
3. to help you develop accuracy and awareness of collocations and use of English language through exercises.

Without ideas for topics it is difficult for any IELTS candidate to score well in writing task 2. You are marked on your ability to present and explain relevant ideas that directly address the issue in the essay question. This book will help you gain useful ideas that you can use in your IELTS essay.

You will find a list of common topics and subtopics listed on the contents page. Each main topic covers the most common sub-topics that appear in IELTS writing task 2. There are 30 main topics in total with ideas for over 150 essay topics.

The ideas are presented as simple exercises to help you think more carefully about the ideas and to help you focus on essential vocabulary for that topic. Once you have completed the exercises, you should review them carefully to learn and remember the ideas.

Please watch the Information video that comes with this e-book to learn more about how to use these materials.

Can I use these ideas in my essay?

Of course, you can. These ideas are for you to learn and use. You can use the ideas and the vocabulary from this book in your essay.

Can I memorise sentences from this book to use in my essay?

No. It is not a good idea to memorise full sentences for your essay. IELTS is an English test that is aimed to assess your own level of English, not your ability to memorise someone else's English. This means you can learn the ideas and learn the vocabulary, but in the test you must present the ideas by creating your own sentences.

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ADVERTISING

Companies Sponsoring Sports Events for Advertising Purposes

For	Against
• Sports teams or players are given free equipment which they could not afford otherwise. • Players can focus on their sport instead of being distracted by financial worries. • Companies can link their name to successful players. • People think positively of companies that donate products and equipment. • Sports fans are more interested in the event than in the sponsors' advertising messages. • Sports sponsorship provides increased media exposure for a company and its brands.	• Some companies advertise products harmful to health. • Tobacco companies, among others, should not be allowed to sponsor sports events. • Companies can showcase their products. • If the player is unsuccessful, it might affect product sales. • The company's reputation can be too tightly linked to a player's reputation. • A player who does drugs or misbehaves will have negative consequences for the company and vice versa.

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

Check the meaning of the words underlined and practise using them.

Advertising Targeting Children

Problem		Solution
Advertising food and drinks that have high levels of fat and sugar causes child obesity.	⇨	Food advertisements should encourage children to eat only healthy foods.

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Little children pester their parents to buy the products advertised on TV and social media.	⇨	Some countries have already banned advertising targeted at young children.
Children are unable to differentiate between the actual TV programmes and commercials.	⇨	It should be illegal to use children's film heroes and favourite cartoon characters in advertisements.
Children have not yet learnt that things cost money or that money needs to be earned.	⇨	Instead of consumerism, advertising could promote creativity and values such as friendship and honesty.
Advertising gives children the illusion that everyone has free access to all material things.	⇨	Both schools and parents need to teach children critical thinking skills.

Sentence Completion Exercise: Complete these definitions with a suitable word from the sentences about children and advertising.

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1 _ _ _ _ _ is an economic system that encourages people to buy more and more things.

2 _ _ _ _ _ is the fact of being very fat, in a way that can be harmful to health.

3 An _ _ _ _ _ is something that seems to be true or real, but is not.

4 If you _ _ _ _ _ between two things, you can recognise or show the difference between them.

5 If you _ _ _ _ _ someone for something or to do something, you ask them all the time in a way that is very annoying.

6 To _ _ _ _ _ something means to prohibit it officially.

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Advertising Fast Food

For	Against
• Freedom of choice is one of the key principles of a democratic society. • For many people, fast food is more affordable than health food. • Without advertising, people would not be able to make informed choices. • Nowadays, many fast food products have a 'diet' version and a 'classic' version. • Effective advertising helps us understand the difference between fast food and junk food.	• Studies have shown a clear link between the regular consumption of fast food and obesity. • What people need is more information about how to eat a balanced and healthy diet. • There is no need to advertise fast food because it is already everywhere: in school canteens, in supermarkets and in the high street. • Fast food is unhealthy and advertising it is irresponsible. • Advertising should encourage people to keep fit, not to ruin their health.

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Matching Exercise: Match these sentence halves.

1 If you **make an informed choice** or **decision**,

2 An **irresponsible** action

3 A **balanced diet**

4 If you say that something is **affordable**,

5 If you say that there is **a clear link** between two things or events,

a) is done without thinking about the possible bad consequences.

b) you mean that you have enough money to buy it.

c) you mean that there is a connection between them that is easy to see.

d) it is based on knowledge of the situation.

e) is one that gives your body the nutrients it needs to function properly.

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Advertising Encourages Spending

Encourages Unnecessary Spending	Provides Information on Products
• Advertising is often for products and services that we do not really need. • A lot of adverts create **artificial wants**. • People often buy things only because of the image of power, success and **glamour** associated with them. • Children are easily influenced by commercials and then pester their parents to buy certain products. • The ultimate aim of advertising is to subtly persuade people to buy things.	• Adverts help people save money by informing them about real **bargains**. • Catalogues and brochures enable people to compare products and services at leisure. • If you do not have time to **shop around,** you can **rely on** advertising to learn about new products. • Advertisements inform consumers about the environmental **impact** of products. • Consumers can easily find out if a company supports **fair trade**.

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Sentence Completion Exercise: Study the words in **bold** in the sentences above. Then use those words to complete the following sentences.

1 Advertisements featuring women very often use images of _ _ _ _ _ and luxury.

2 _ _ _ _ _ ensures that producers and workers in the developing world are paid decently.

3 People often buy things not because of real needs, but due to _ _ _ _ _

4 People who have time to _ _ _ _ _ often manage to pick up some really good _ _ _ _ _.

5 Some countries have laws to prevent and control the negative _ _ _ _ _ of advertising.

6 Today, a large number of consumers _ _ _ _ _ social networks to guide their purchase decisions.

Types of Advertising

See answer key for a list of types of advertising.

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ANIMALS

Protecting Wild Animals

For	Against
• People have a responsibility to protect the species on this planet. • Loss of species can disrupt the balance of the ecosystem. • Biodiversity is essential _ _ _ (1) the well-being of the planet. • New medicines and treatments can be found by studying animal species. • It is the only way some species can be protected _ _ _ (2) extinction.	• It is too costly. It involves law enforcement, research and security. • Humans should be prioritised _ _ _ (3) animals. • Money should be spent _ _ _ (4) education and healthcare for people. • Species will become extinct. It is part _ _ _ (5) life. • Not all animals are worth saving. Some animals are dangerous.

Sentence Completion Exercise: Complete these arguments *for* and *against* protecting wild animals with the correct prepositions.

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Animal Testing

1 Animal suffering can be kept to a minimum.

2 Animal testing does not mean it is 100% safe for humans.

3 Animals are often killed during testing.

4 Animals frequently suffer extreme pain.

5 Animals have rights as well as humans.

6 Drugs must be tested for side effects and safety reasons.

7 It can be costly to run experiments on animals.

8 It is better for an animal to suffer than for a human to die.

9 Research can lead to new treatments and save lives.

10 Testing medicines on animals ensures the medicine is safe for human use.

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1 Categorisation Exercise: Mark the arguments above *for* (+) or *against* (-) animal testing.

2 Collocations Exercise: Match items 1 – 3 with items a) – c) to make common collocations. Then read the sentences above again to check your answers.

1 to suffer	**a)** experiments
2 to run	**b)** side effects
3 to test for	**c)** pain

Decrease in Some Animal Species

1. Declining numbers due to illegal hunting or poaching.
2. Endangered animal products are used in traditional medicines or the fashion industry.
3. Loss of habitat due to deforestation and human habitation.
4. Low breeding numbers.

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a) Develop breeding programmes for endangered species.

b) Educate people to avoid buying products made from certain species.

c) House people away from animal habitats.

d) Organise guards to protect animals, and have harsher punishment for poaching and illegal hunting.

Matching Exercise: Match each problem (1-4) to the appropriate solution (a-d).

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Zoos

For	Against
• Zoos provide a safe environment for endangered _ _ _ _ _ (1). • Zoos educate people to respect wild animals. • Zoos offer professionally-run breeding programmes. • Zoos provide opportunities for people to have contact with wild animals. • Zoos sometimes provide rehabilitation programmes for animals going back into the _ _ _ _ _ (2). • Animals should have the right to live in their natural _ _ _ _ _ (3).	• Some animals suffer _ _ _ _ _ (4) at the hands of zoo keepers, staff or visitors. • Holding wild animals in _ _ _ _ _ (5) is wrong. • People do not learn to respect animals if these are held behind bars. • The _ _ _ _ _ (6) and enclosures are often too small for the animals. • Some animals live in social groups in the wild and cannot adapt to a solitary life in a zoo. • Zoos are artificial environments that constrain an animal's natural behavior.

captivity	cruelty	habitat	species	cages	wild

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete the arguments *for* and *against* zoos.

Man's Relationship with Animals

Past		Present
Animals were used predominantly for agricultural purposes.	⇨	In the developed world, farmers now use machines for agriculture.
Man's diet often tended to be meat-based.	⇨	There are many vegetarians and vegans nowadays.

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Wild animals were hunted for food or sport.	⇨	Many animal species are now protected by law, and hunting them is illegal.
In earlier times, horses, oxen and dogs were working animals.	⇨	Dogs can be trained to guide or rescue people and also to track down criminals.
Animals were essentially a source of food.	⇨	Some animals are being used as companions.
All animals used to be wild.	⇨	A large number of animal species have become domesticated.

1 Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the pair of statements which does not provide a Past/Present contrast.

2 Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 people or animals to spend a lot of time with

2 an animal that has been tamed or is kept as a pet

3 people who do not eat or use products derived from animals

4 to detect or uncover

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ART

Art : things such as paintings, sculptures, drawings, etc that are made for people to look at and admire or think about.

The arts: art, music, dance, theatre, film, literature, etc all considered together.

Supporting the Arts

For	Against
• Art is a way to express ideas and communicate concepts. • The government is responsible for protecting culture. • People can learn from art and be inspired by it. • Art encourages creativity and promotes harmony in society. • Art teaches people about their own culture and history. • Without government funding, some artists would not be able to work. • Most artists do not make enough money to support themselves.	• Art does not play a vital role in society. • Artists should earn their own living. • Funding could be better granted to more pressing social issues. • The healthcare system needs more funding than the arts. • Education should be prioritised over art. • People's basic needs should be put before luxuries such as art. • There are enough wealthy patrons around to subsidise the arts.

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Collocations Exercise: Match the verbs 1 – 5 with the nouns a) – e) to make common collocations. Answers can be checked in Exercise 2.

1 to promote	**a)** the arts
2 to encourage	**b)** harmony
3 to grant	**c)** concepts
4 to communicate	**d)** creativity
5 to subsidise	**e)** funding to sb/sth

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Censoring the Arts

1 Matching and Categorising Exercise: Match these sentence halves. Are the completed sentences *for* (+) or *against* (-) censoring the arts? See the Answer Key for more ideas for this topic.

1 Some art criticises religion	**a)** creativity without any restrictions.
2 Children need to be protected	**b)** whether a work of art is suitable or not.
3 Art should encourage	**c)** and is deeply offensive.
4 People can decide for themselves	**d)** from certain forms of art that are unsuitable.

2 Collocations Exercise: Match the verbs 1 – 4 with the nouns a) – d) to make common collocations.

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1 to fuel	**a)** hatred
2 to incite	**b)** guidelines
3 to develop	**c)** violence
4 to work within	**d)** original ideas

Children Learning Art

For	Against
• Children learn to express themselves through creativity. • Children enjoy creating images. • Children can learn about the history through art. (1)	• Art is not an essential subject for children to learn it. (3) • Art will not help children develop useful skills. • Art will not help for children find a job later on. (4)

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• Art can teach a children about their culture. (2) • Children can develop social skills by doing art projects.	• The school curriculum should focus on core subjects such as maths and science. • Children can pursue their interest in art at the home. (5)

Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

Free Admission to Art Galleries and Museums

For	Against
• Free entry enables the general public to _ _ _ _ _ (1) about their own history. • Children will be _ _ _ _ _ (2) to visit. • It helps promote a country's cultural heritage. • It promotes national pride. • Art should be accessible to people of all income groups.	• The money can be used to _ _ _ _ _ (3) and protect works of art. • People _ _ _ _ _ (4) what they pay for. • The income from entry fees means that the government has more money to spend on more vital areas. • Free admission leads to overcrowding, which soon discourages art-loving visitors. • The money generated from entry fees can _ _ _ _ _ (5) for insufficient government subsidies.

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restore respect compensate encourage learn

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use *the correct form* of the verbs in the box to complete these arguments *for* and *against* free admission to art galleries and museums.

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BUILDINGS AND HOUSING

Renting or Buying Houses

Renting	Buying
• It is more economical in the short term. • People can easily downsize when money is short. • People are not affected by changing house prices. • People can relocate more easily for work. • The landlord is responsible for repairs and maintenance, not the tenant.	• Monthly mortgage payments benefit home owners not landlords. • Buying can be an investment if house prices rise. • You renovate and decorate as you want. • You cannot be asked to move. • Your property becomes a reflection of your lifestyle, a place you can really call 'home'.

1 Sentence Completion Exercise: Complete these definitions with a suitable word from the sentences about renting / buying a house.

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1 A _ _ _ _ _ is money you borrow from a bank to buy a house.

2 A _ _ _ _ _ is someone who pays for the place they live in.

3 If people or businesses _ _ _ _ _, they move to a different place.

4 If you _ _ _ _ _, you move to a smaller house or flat.

5 Something that is _ _ _ _ _ is not too expensive, so that you are able to buy it.

2 Synonyms Exercise: Find the odd-one-out in each of the groups of synonyms below.

1 rise / go up / climb / increase / steep

2 cheap / affordable / thrifty / low-cost

3 enrich / spruce up / do up / decorate

4 homeless / strapped for cash / stone-broke / hard up

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Planting Trees or Building Houses

Planting Trees	Building Houses
• Green spaces are necessary for people's wellbeing. • Improving living conditions can reduce crime rates. • Trees buffer sound. • Trees are an essential part of a city's ecosystem. • Trees are necessary for urban wildlife.	• Overpopulation is a problem in most cities. • Poor living conditions can result in serious health concerns. • Urban space is limited and housing is more essential than trees. • Without affordable housing, cities are unable to develop further. • Housing is a basic human need.

1 Sentence Building Exercise: Put the words and phrases in the correct order to make sentences.

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1 will / without / living conditions / suitable / deteriorate / housing

2 oxygen / which / trees / air pollution / produce / counteracts

3 and / areas / relaxation / parks / for / provide / exercise

4 suitable / lack / overpopulation / of / to / housing / leads / a

2 Question: Do these sentences support planting trees or building houses?

Building Houses in Urban or Rural Areas

Building in Urban Areas	Building in Rural Areas
• More housing in cities will promote a bigger workforce. • Workers will not need to _ _ _ _ _ (1) long distances to get to work.	• New towns can be properly planned in the countryside. • Rural areas offer healthier living conditions without _ _ _ _ _ (3) pollution

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- People will be able to walk or cycle to work.
- Walking to work will benefit the environment.
- Many cities have _ _ _ _ _ (2) areas that could be turned into housing or public spaces.
- More people will have access to public facilities such as libraries and sports centres, as these are often located in urban areas.

or _ _ _ _ _ (4) problems.

- The countryside is a better place for children to be brought up in.
- Urban areas should be used for economic development rather than housing.
- Land in rural areas is cheaper, which will _ _ _ _ _ (5) the cost of housing.
- New job opportunities will _ _ _ _ _ (6) for rural residents.

widespread	commute	sanitation	derelict	open up	reduce

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete the sentences.

Protecting Old Buildings

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1 A building is not necessarily valuable just because it is old.

2 Buildings offer an insight into a country's past.

3 Land in cities is needed for businesses and commerce.

4 Many old buildings are aesthetically pleasing to the eye.

5 There are financial advantages to attracting tourists.

6 Old buildings represent the cultural identity of a country.

7 Space is needed for housing to deal with overcrowding.

8 The historical or cultural value of a building is more important than its age.

9 Tourists are drawn toward old historical buildings.

10 Urban space can be better used to promote development.

Categorisation Exercise: Mark the above arguments for (+) or against (-) protecting old buildings.

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Open Plan Office Designs

1 Matching and Categorising Exercise: Match these sentence halves. Are the completed sentences for (+) or against (-) an open plan office design? See the answer key for more ideas for this topic.

1 Illness can spread more easily

2 It can sometimes feel

3 It offers a flexible

4 Staff can be affected by

5 Without walls, there will be

a) other people's mess and clutter.

b) more communication between staff.

c) when everyone works in close proximity.

d) workspace for a high turnover of staff.

e) disorganised with a lack of hierarchy.

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BUSINESS

The Closure of Small Businesses

For	Against
• Local businesses do not offer as broad a range of products as bigger businesses do. • Large, international businesses provide more job opportunities. • Globalisation renders international companies inevitable.	• Small businesses are more aware of local needs and demand for specific products or services. • Local businesses support local communities and get involved in their activities. • Local businesses build a sense of community.

Vocabulary Exercise: Complete the explanations with appropriate words and phrases from the sentences.

1 'A _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of products' means the same as 'a wide selection of products'.

2 If something is _ _ _ _ _, it cannot be avoided or prevented.

3 If you _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ in an activity or in an event, you take part in it, or you are connected with it in some way.

4 'To _ _ _ _ _' means 'to cause someone or something to be in a particular state'.

5 'To be _ _ _ _ _ of something' means 'to know that it exists'.

Problems with International Businesses for Local Communities

Problem		Solutions
Local businesses cannot compete with large, international businesses.	⇨	Local businesses should be subsidised by the government.

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Large businesses do not shape the local community, whereas local businesses do.	⇨	Big companies should work alongside local businesses to support the community.
The burden of high taxation makes it difficult for many small businesses to survive.	⇨	Global corporations should be granted further tax cuts.
Local communities lose their uniqueness as international companies are the same the world over.	⇨	Local people should remain loyal to local businesses.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the pair of statements where the solution to the stated problem does not make sense.

Businesses Providing Sports Facilities for Employees

For	Against
• Staff have the chance to improve their health. • Healthy staff means increased productivity. • It provides an incentive for staff to remain loyal to the company. • It can encourage new staff to join the company.	• A person's health is their own responsibility, not a company's problem. • Sports facilities are too expensive for small businesses. • It would be better for companies to spend more money on other aspects of work, such as salary increases, bonuses and extra time off. • Paid maternity and paternity leave is a much better incentive than sports facilities.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences that mean:

1 time that a parent can spend away from their job when they have a new baby.

2 things like swimming pools, tennis courts, gyms, etc.

3 something that encourages a person to do something.

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4 an amount of money added as a reward to someone's usual pay.

5 time when you are allowed not to be at work.

Businesses should Support Local Communities

For	Against
• It ensures the cooperation of the community. • A _ _ _ _ _ (1) community is essential for good business. • It offers a chance for marketing and promotion. • People realise that not all businesses are run with the sole purpose of making as much profit as _ _ _ _ _ (2) for their owners.	• Communities should be supported by the government, not by businesses. • Most businesses do not have the funds _ _ _ _ _ (3). • Businesses should focus on their own growth. • International companies should not be _ _ _ _ _ (4) for solving local problems

IELTS Liz

available	possible	responsible	thriving

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete the arguments *for* and *against* the idea that businesses should support local communities.

Marketing is the Key to Success

For	Against
• Marketing helps promote products to the public.	• Well-trained, competent staff are the key to success.

Matching and Categorising Exercise: Match these sentence halves. Are the completed sentences *for* (+) or *against* (-) the key role of marketing?

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1 Without good budgeting,	**a)** to buy and increases sales.
2 Unless people hear about a product,	**b)** should sell itself.
3 Marketing encourages people	**c)** better known and raise their profile.
4 Companies can become	**d)** public access to a business.
5 A good product	**e)** they are unlikely to buy it.
6 A good location is essential for	**f)** a business can go bankrupt.

People Buying Things They Do Not Need

Cause	Effect
• Advertising influences people and encourages them to buy things • Some people always want the latest model of anything in order to enhance their self-image. • People like to compete with their neighbours to have the latest gadgets – the "Keeping up with the Joneses" syndrome. • Some people become addicted to shopping and fashion. • People who are unhappy think 'retail therapy' will help them.	• Consumerism can boost the economy. It can create business and jobs. (+) • People can keep pace with the fast-changing technology. (+) • People may overspend and get into debt. (-) • Society becomes a 'throw-away society' producing unnecessary waste. (-) • Increased demand for products can result in more low-quality products being made. (-)

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Collocations Exercise: Match the verbs 1 – 5 with the phrases a) – e) to make common collocations.

1 to enhance	**a)** into debt
2 to keep up with	**b** one's self-image

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3 to become addicted	**c)** pace with the technology
4 to keep	**d)** to something
5 to get	**e)** the Joneses

Note: The above topic is based on consumerism.

Business & Staff Uniforms

For	Against
• A branded work uniform sets a company apart from its competitors. • It promotes equality between a staff. (1) • Uniforms look professional and project a good image. • It fosters solidarity between staff and makes them feel part of a team. • Some uniforms they are essential for hygiene or safety reasons. (2)	• People should have the right to wear what they want. • Uncomfortable uniforms can have a negative effect and on work performance. (3) • It is better to have a dress code than for a uniform. (4) • Some uniforms are not flattering for some employees. • Some staff do not like wearing the uniforms. (5)

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 - 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

Business Success is Measured by Money

1 Good customer feedback shows that people are satisfied with the product or service offered.

2 A successful business must make a profit.

3 If a business fails to make money, it will close.

4 Job satisfaction in running a business is a sign of success.

5 No company can be successful if they are failing financially.

6 Shareholders naturally expect a company to make a profit.

7 The number of customers shows the potential of a healthy company.

8 The reach of a company is more important than the money it makes.

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9 Employee performance is a good way to measure productivity and efficiency.

Categorisation Exercise: Mark the arguments above *for* (+) or *against* (-) the idea that business success is measured by money. There are four of each.

Family-run Businesses are Best

For	Against
• Work schedules can be adjusted and cover more easily found. • Family members trust each other. • Decisions will be made that benefit the entire family. • Family members have a shorter learning curve because they have grown up with the business. • Non-family employees may find it difficult to integrate. • The business can be passed down through the generations. • Directors and managers who are family members will work harder and be more dedicated. • The work atmosphere will be more relaxed.	• Not all family members will have the same aims for the company. • Family members might not have the required skills to be successful managers or directors resulting in mediocre business performance. • Business disputes can lead to family conflicts because issues become subjective rather than objective. • Family businesses are usually a lot less bureaucratic. • There might be a bias toward promoting family members ahead of non-related staff. • Ideas may become stale and fresh perspectives might be difficult to find.

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

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CHARACTER & PEOPLE

Success: Is it Innate or Achieved?

Innate	Learned
• Imagination and creativity are inborn qualities necessary for success. • Being naturally gifted makes you successful earlier in life, and success breeds success. • Some people are born with talent, which gives them a head start in life. • There are many examples of child prodigies. Mozart could compose music at the age of five. • It is undeniable that some people have natural abilities that make them successful.	• Some very talented people are lazy and do not achieve anything in life. • We can learn a lot from our mistakes. • Success results from determination and hard work. • Giftedness is not a guarantee for success later in life. • The more effort we put in, the more we practise a skill, the better we become.

IELTS Liz

Sentence Completion Exercise: Complete these definitions with a suitable expression from the sentences about success.

1 A _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ is a young child who is extremely skilled in something.

2 A _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ is an advantage that you have over other people.

3 If you say that something is _ _ _ _ _, you are absolutely sure that it is true.

4 '_ _ _ _ _' means the same as 'causes'.

5 '_ _ _ _ _' means the same as 'innate'.

6 '_ _ _ _ _' means the same as 'talented'.

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Celebrities are Role Models and Should Behave Well in Public

Agree	Disagree
• Celebrities should behave responsibly because they exert an enormous influence on teenagers. • Celebrities are always in the spotlight. • Young people need positive role models in order to live with hope, integrity and compassion. • Young people need to see that you can be very successful and a very good person at the same time. • Celebrities are needed to compensate for the lack of positive role models among politicians and business people.	• A celebrity's job is to entertain people, not to set a moral example. • Some stars only want to gain a lot of publicity and achieve fame. • Parents and teachers rather than celebrities should be role models. • Like everyone else, celebrities may have moral shortcomings or make the wrong life choices. • Celebrities do not ask people to worship them.

IELTS Liz

Collocations Exercise: Match the verbs 1 – 5 with the nouns a) – e) to make common collocations used in the sentences about celebrities.

1 to set	**a)** fame
2 to live with	**b** a moral example
3 to gain	**c)** an influence
4 to exert	**d)** publicity
5 to achieve	**e)** integrity

Leadership: Are Leadership Skills Innate or Learned?

Innate	Learned
• Some people are born with a _ _ _ _ _ (1) personality.	• _ _ _ _ _ (5) to stand up for what you believe in can be learned through training and practice.

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• Having a powerful presence is not something that can be learned. • Being _ _ _ _ _ (2) and having good _ _ _ _ _ (3) skills to influence people through words is essential for a leader. • People cannot learn to be positive, inspiring or enthusiastic. • Some people are genetically _ _ _ _ _ (4) to become leaders.	• Some people only become leaders later in life. • Life experience is important for leaders to learn essential skills. • Leadership requires _ _ _ _ _ (6), which can be developed and learned over time. • Leadership consists of several skills which can all be learned and developed.

confidence	oratory	charismatic	predisposed	articulate	assertiveness

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the correct words in the box to complete the sentences above.

Change: Some People Like Change while Others do Not

IELTS Liz

Change	No change
• People prefer to experience different aspects of life by changing their environment. • Change is a healthy way to live and grow. • Change is unavoidable. • Change makes life more interesting. • Getting into a rut leads to dissatisfaction.	• People prefer to avoid change to stay within their comfort zone. • Change is often considered unsafe and unpredictable. • Change can cause anxiety and worry. • Some people only thrive in a stable environment. • Many people find happiness in a stable relationship and a stable job.

Matching Exercise: Match the sentence halves below.

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Ideas for IELTS Essay Topics

1 Your **comfort zone**

2 Dissatisfaction

3 If you **get into a rut**,

4 If you say that something is **unavoidable**,

5 If you say that something is **unpredictable**,

6 If a company, a person, etc **thrives**,

a) is the feeling you have when you are not pleased or successful.

b) you mean that it cannot be made to stop happening.

c) they become successful or strong and healthy.

d) is the range of situations in which you feel confident and at ease.

e) you start living in a fixed way that you find boring and cannot easily change.

f) you mean that you cannot say in advance whether it will happen or what it will be like.

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CRIME & PUNISHMENT

Increase in Crime Rates

Causes

1 A lack of police on the streets can result in more opportunistic crime.
2 All too often, criminals get off very lightly.
3 Poverty encourages some people to turn to crime in order to pay bills and meet family responsibilities.
4 Unemployment can lead people to crime due to financial pressure and also lack of structure in their daily lives.
5 Young people can easily turn to crime from peer pressure or lack of parental guidance.

Solutions

a) Harsher punishment can deter people from crime.
b) Offering training programmes can stimulate employment, bring hope and give structure to people's lives.
c) Schools and parents should teach young people to shun criminal and anti-social behaviour.
d) Seeing more police officers on the beat might put people off criminal behaviour.
e) The government should increase social benefits to alleviate poverty.

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Matching Exercise: Match each cause (**1** – **5**) with its solution (**a** – **e**).

Long Term Prison Sentences

1 Criminals are locked away and society is effectively protected.

2 Criminals leaving prison after long periods of incarceration find it hard to adapt to life on the outside.

3 It keeps criminals off the streets and prevents them from re-offending so often.

4 A lengthy punishment illustrates that the crime is wrong.

5 Offenders are deterred by long sentences.

6 Criminals receive punishment only rather than training or rehabilitation programmes.

7 Taxpayers must foot the bill for long term accommodation.

Categorisation Exercise: Label the arguments above for (+) or against (-) long term prison sentences.

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Re-Offending After Release from Prison

Causes	Solutions
• People with a criminal record are not accepted by society. • Ex-convicts are unable to find paid employment. • They are conditioned by life in prison and cannot adapt to life outside prison. • Criminal behaviour is a mindset. • Peer pressure from other offenders has a negative effect.	• Ex-convicts should receive counselling before re-entering society. • Training programmes in prison can help offenders develop new skills. • Criminals must be rehabilitated to avoid anti-social behaviour. • Rehabilitation programmes should help them make the right choices in life. • Rehabilitation programmes should tackle the social exclusion of offenders and their families.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find the odd-one-out in each of these groups of words and phrases. Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.

IELTS Liz

1 a criminal / an offender / a prosecutor / a delinquent / a lawbreaker

2 to imprison / to incarcerate / to put behind bars / to jail / to sentence

3 to break the law / to commit an offence / to turn to crime / to go on trial / to get into trouble /

Internet Crime / Cybercrime

Types of Crimes	Solutions
• Hacking computers and databases to obtain financial and private information. • Hacking people's emails and computers to hold them for ransom. • Money laundering online.	• People need to take responsibility for their own internet security. • People should not pay a company that they do not know. • The government needs stricter control of the internet.

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• Fraudulent companies selling online. • Racial and sexual harassment. • Targeting and exploiting children.	• Parents need to monitor their children's online activities. • People should buy good anti-virus software and use strong passwords. • Parents need to talk to children about the internet and its dangers.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 behaviour intended to trouble or annoy someone

2 dishonest and illegal

3 gaining unauthorised access to a computer system

4 money to be paid to a criminal in order to get back something they have stolen

5 processing money that has been obtained illegally through legitimate businesses or banks so that it seems to have been obtained legally

6 to watch and check carefully for a period of time.

IELTS Liz

Advanced Technology to Solve & Prevent Crime

For	Against
• Criminals or criminal groups can be tracked by electronic surveillance. • Data mapping allows the police to access information. • Online chatter can be monitored in real-time. • Plans for crime can be uncovered online. • Bystanders can record crimes in action on their smart phones.	• Many low-tech crimes are still being committed. • Some crimes are spur of the moment and cannot be tracked beforehand. • Re-education is the best prevention of crime. • The internet is too vast to effectively control or monitor.

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	• Some criminals have better technological skills than the police.

1 Police can gain _ _ _ _ _ to information online by data mapping.

2 Not all crimes being _ _ _ _ _ are high tech.

3 Police can _ _ _ _ _ online communication channels.

4. Unpremeditated crimes cannot be prevented by electronic _ _ _ _ _.

Collocations Exercise: Complete the sentences above using words from the table.

Fixed Punishment for all Crimes

For	Against
• Punishment will be objective and not depend on the judge's opinion. • It means that being able to afford a good **defence attorney** will not affect the punishment given, which leads to greater equality. • It saves time in court and is more cost effective. • It is a more effective **deterrent** when people know the exact consequences for the crime they commit. • It prevents any **corruption** within the legal system affecting the punishment given. • It prevents criminal slipping through **loopholes** in the law.	• Not all crimes are committed under the same circumstances. • A person who plans a violent crime with clear intention should not receive the same punishment as someone who acts in **self-defence**. • Personal circumstances, such as extreme poverty or mental health, should be taken into account. • Not all people who commit a crime are violent or aggressive by nature. • A person who has never committed a crime should not receive the same punishment as a **repeat offender** with a long prison record.

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Sentence Completion Exercise: Study the words in **bold** in the sentences above. Then use those words to complete the following sentences.

1 At his trial, Alex Verknoopf pleaded _ _ _ _ _ and was jailed for four years for manslaughter.

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2 It may well be that the prospect of being caught and punished is a more potent _ _ _ _ _ than the prospect of a harsh sentence.

3 People often get worried when a _ _ _ _ _ is released back into their community.

4 Tax avoiders sometimes use the services of accountants to locate and exploit _ _ _ _ _ in the tax system for them.

5 The job of a _ _ _ _ _ is to fight for their client no matter what.

6 Youth unemployment, organised crime, _ _ _ _ _ and a stagnating economy are the main problems facing our country.

Juvenile Crime

Causes	Solutions
• Violence in the media can affect young people's attitudes and behaviour. • Lack of parental guidance can lead teenagers to delinquency. • Peer pressure and gangs can _ _ _ _ _ (1) an adverse influence on the young. • Lack of interests and direction can _ _ _ _ _ (2) youngsters astray. • Domestic violence can force young people onto the streets and into bad company.	• _ _ _ _ _ (3) the viewing time of violent films and online games. • Parents must set clear guidelines and rules. • _ _ _ _ _ (4) parents to take an active role in their child's life. • The government should have supervised social clubs where youths can go in their free time. • Encourage youngsters to _ _ _ _ _ (5) a sport or a hobby. • Set up more helplines and support groups for young people from troubled family backgrounds. • Schools should organise more interesting and involving extracurricular activities.

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encourage	exert	lead	limit	take up

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the correct form of the verbs in the box to complete the sentences about juvenile crime.

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Juveniles Receiving Adult Punishment

For	Against
• Juveniles need to know that the law is serious and punishment is a good way to teach them this. • Violent crime should carry the harshest sentence. • Teenagers are fully aware of their actions and know the rules of society. • People with a violent nature should be removed from society as early as possible. • Adult sentences are too severe for youngsters.	• Juveniles are not fully responsible for their actions. • Teenagers need re-education and re-socialisation, not punishment. • A crime is a crime regardless of age. • Bad behaviour is easier to change when a person is young. • Youngsters might be negatively influenced by time in adult prisons.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

IELTS LIZ

The Death Penalty

Note:

the death penalty (with "the)

~~the~~ capital punishment (without "the")

For	Against
Capital punishment deters criminals from _ _ _ _ (1) crime.	Innocent people wrongly _ _ _ _ _ (3) might be killed.
It sends a clear message that crime is _ _ _ (2) wrong.	Executing someone is _ _ _ _ _ (4) to killing or murdering someone.
It eliminates the possibility of criminals re-offending.	There is no pain free way to kill someone.

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It is a cost-effective punishment and a cheaper alternative to prison	It is better to re-educate and _ _ _ _ _ (5) criminals.
Criminals who commit heinous crimes should be put to death to protect society.	The death penalty does not effectively reduce the crime rate.

equivalent	contemplating	convicted	morally	re-socialise

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the verbs in the box to complete the sentences.

Responsibility for Crime in Society

The Government	Individuals
• The government has the responsibility to allocate more funds to policing the streets. • The government should set up a more counter-terrorist units. (1) • Cybercrime units should be better funded. • Only the government has the ability to alter society on a national scale through the implementation of new laws and stricter punishment. • The government is responsible for keeping the public informed about risks and how important those risks can be reduced. (2)	• Individuals should ensure their belongings and its house are secure on a daily basis. (3) • It is only the individual's responsibility to change their passwords regularly and keep their online transactions secure. • People should learn self-defence and they be aware of their safety on the streets. (4) • People should take responsibility for protecting their own neighbourhood by reporting suspicious behaviour and setting up neighbourhood watch schemes. • People should avoid making choices that put them at the risk such as walking alone late at night. (5)

Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

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Broadcasting Criminal Trials on TV

For	Against
• The public **have a right to** information, so they can form their own opinions. • The public can learn about court proceedings and the legal system in their country. • Seeing the criminal **on trial** might **act as a deterrent to** others contemplating crime.	• Public and media pressure might **influence** the outcome. • Public opinion might invalidate the jury's role in the long run. • Legal representatives might use TV as an opportunity to **promote** themselves rather than focus on the task in hand. • It might turn criminals into TV stars, which might **negatively** influence young people.

Vocabulary Exercise: Study the words and phrases in **bold** in the sentences above. Then match each one to the word or phrase (**a** - **j**) that has a similar meaning in the context of the sentence. You will only need six of the ten words and phrases given.

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a) adversely

b) affect

c) are entitled to

d) being convicted

e) being tried

f) determine

g) discourage

h) encourage

i) inevitably

j) sell

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ECONOMY AND MONEY

Gap between Rich and Poor

Problem		Solution
The distribution of global wealth is unequal.	⇨	Wealth should be equally distributed.
As the rich grow richer, poverty worsens in poor countries.	⇨	Developed countries should provide financial support to poor countries.
Some countries cannot even cater for basic human needs.	⇨	Improving road infrastructure would boost the economy.
The richest 1% own half of the world's wealth while poorer people cannot even afford health care or education.	⇨	Taxes on wealth could be used to fund health care and education for all.
People leave poor countries to be educated in developed countries.	⇨	Rich countries should offer training programmes in poor countries.
Some people do not return to their own country after graduation, which can cause a brain drain.	⇨	People should agree to return to their country of origin after education.
Low wages cause many professionals in developing countries to migrate.	⇨	Developing countries should provide more job incentives for educated people.
Poverty will increase in less developed countries.	⇨	More countries need to implement a proper minimum wage policy.

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the sentence which does *not* state a solution directly relevant to the problem.

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Rich Countries should Support Poor Countries

For	Against
• Poor countries need investment to develop. • Without financial help, poor countries cannot get out of the circle of poverty. • Rich countries can benefit from creating new markets. • Poor or rich, people should help each other.	• Rich countries have their own issues to deal with. • Countries should solve their own problems by themselves. • Poor countries may grow dependent on rich countries. • The best form of aid is to help people to help themselves.

Vocabulary Exercise: Mark each adjective below "+" if it denotes a desirable quality, and "-" an undesirable one. Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.

affluent
developed
economically backward
high-income
industrially advanced
underprivileged
resplendent
impoverished

destitute
poverty-stricken
laborious
prosperous
opulent
underdeveloped
wealthy
benign

IELTS Liz

Which three adjectives are not used to describe a country as 'poor' or 'rich'?

Personal Debt

Problem		Solution
People are being encouraged to use credit cards.	⇨	Banks should be stricter about issuing loans.

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People overspend without banks stopping them.	⇨	Banks should set credit limits depending on people's history of debt management.
Some people are addicted to using their credit cards.	⇨	Banks should monitor people's accumulation of debt better.
Advertising entices people to spend indiscriminately.	⇨	School should teach children about the problems incurred by debt .
Advertising tempts people to squander money on unnecessary items.	⇨	People should be taught how to budget sensibly.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 to make people want to have or to do something, especially something wrong or unnecessary

2 to plan and control how much money you spend

3 to spend more money than you can afford

4 to try to persuade someone to do something

5 to waste

IELTS Liz

Using Credit Cards

NB: 'A debt' [Countable] is a sum of money that you owe, whereas 'debt' [Uncountable] is the state of owing money.

For	Against
• Credit cards offer flexibility of spending.	• People overspend or can be addicted to spending.

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• People do not need to wait for payday to buy what they need. • Cards are useful in emergency situations. • Cards can allow gradual payments. • Cards encourage people to spend, which benefits business.	• People are tempted to buy things they do not need. • People run up debts. • People may turn to loan sharks for help in debt repayments. • Debt puts strain on families. • Debt can cause problems for a country's economy.

Vocabulary Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete these synonymous expressions.

be faced	clear	fall into	heavily	incur

1 to have huge debts = to _ _ _ _ _ with massive debts

2 to run up debts = to _ _ _ _ _ debts

3 to repay one's debts = to _ _ _ _ _ one's debts

4 to get into debt = to _ _ _ _ _ debt

5 to be deeply in debt = to be _ _ _ _ _ in debt

IELTS Liz

Saving Money is Good for a Country's Economy

Saving	Spending
• If spending is based on the credit, it will result in increased debt. (1) • A country which has too much debt has financial problems. • Saving for an old age is essential and eases the strain on social welfare. (2) • Old people without enough of money drain a country's economy. (3)	• Increased spending reflects the consumers confidence in a country's economy. • When people spend money, it stimulates with the economy. (4) • Consumer spending can be considered the driving force behind an economy. • New businesses will open to cope with increased customer demand.

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• An increase in savings allows banks more flexibility in lending money for investment.	• More jobs will they be created as more businesses open. (5)

Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

IELTS Liz

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EDUCATION

Discipline in Schools

Separating Naughty Students	Other Methods
• Removing problematic students offers an immediate solution to discipline problems. • Students _ _ _ _ _ (1) their studies with little interruption. • Other students will not suffer because of classroom disruption. • Naughty students may need special support away from the class.	• Schools should review the reasons for _ _ _ _ _ (2) behaviour. • Parents should be contacted if their child _ _ _ _ _ (3) at school. • Teachers should _ _ _ _ _ (4) students in front of others as an example. • Classroom assistants can support difficult students without removing them from the classroom. • Punishment can be _ _ _ _ _ (5) as a deterrent.

IELTS LIZ

administered	discipline	misbehaves	disruptive	resume

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete the sentences above.

Parents Should Push Children to Do Well

1 Too much pressure will have a detrimental impact on children.

2 Some children need an extra push and encouragement to perform well.

3 Some children commit suicide.

4 Parents want the best for their child and understand the importance of educational achievement.

5 Parents understand how much competition there is in the world.

6 Parents should be actively involved in their child's education.

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7 Learning should be enjoyable, not stressful.

8 Encouragement should be gentle, not forceful.

9 Children may suffer from stress and anxiety which can lead to more serious mental health problems.

10 Children may rebel and refuse to cooperate.

11 Children do not understand the value of education due to a limited experience of the world.

12 Children are too young to handle pressure well.

Categorisation Exercise: Mark the arguments above (+) if there are *in favour of* the idea that parents should push their children to do well at school, or (-) if they are *against* it.

Art and Music at School are a Waste of Time

Agree	Disagree
• Art and music offer a creative _ _ _ _ _ (1). • Children have the chance to express themselves through other means. • Art and music are an essential part of any civilisation. • Children can learn about history through art. • Children need to develop a broad _ _ _ _ _ (2) of skills. • Children learn to appreciate other _ _ _ _ _ (3) of communication.	• Art and music are overrated and do not prepare children for future careers. • Children would be better off learning IT or other useful _ _ _ _ _ (4). • Art and music are not functional to the society. • Science is more useful as it can lead to the _ _ _ _ _ (5) of medicine and disease. • Not all students are gifted in part and music, and do not benefit from learning them. • Being articulate and capable of mathematical _ _ _ _ _ (6) are more important than to be able to draw or sing.

IELTS Liz

study forms outlet calculations range skills

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Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the nouns in the box to complete the sentences about children learning art and music at school.

Streaming

Grouping Students into Different Classes based on Ability

For	Against
• Students of the same level can learn at the same pace. • Students with less ability are not left behind. • Students who need to go more slowly are not made to feel inadequate. • Advanced students can be challenged with more difficult materials. • There is less disruption in class from bad behaviour as lessons are tailored to meet students' needs.	• Streaming brings about labelling. • Students in the lower class are stigmatised. • Students of different levels are not able to help each other as they are separated. • Gifted students do not learn the skill of helping others. • Students in the lower group may feel content to stay at that level rather than try to challenge themselves.

IELTS Liz

Sentence Building Exercise: Put the words and phrases in the correct order to make sentences.

1 a / class / difficult / is / it / mixed-ability / teach / to / very

2 end up / they are / students / not / the bottom class / believing / smart / in

Question: Are these sentences *for* or *against* streaming?

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Exams as a Means of Assessment

For	Against
• It is a controlled way to assess a person. • The questions have been reviewed by experienced exam makers. • It is a time-effective way to assess a person's abilities and knowledge. • The controlled conditions avoid cheating or plagiarism. • Scoring is simplified. • It can be a national standardised way to assess students. • Results can be compared nationally.	• Some people suffer from nerves when they are under pressure. • Nerves make people perform worse than usual. • It is wrong to assess people when they are not performing their best. • Continuous assessment over the year is a better representation of people's work. • Exams do not assess ability, only knowledge. • A person's potential cannot be assessed in an exam. • Students may only study to pass tests rather than to learn. • Students cannot get feedback on their mistakes from exams.

IELTS Liz

Collocations Exercise: Match items 1 – 5 with items a) – e) to make common collocations. Then read the sentences above again to check your answers.

1 to prevent	**a)** from nerves
2 to simplify	**b)** one's best
3 to standardise	**c)** scoring
4 to perform	**d)** plagiarism
5 to suffer	**e)** assessment

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Wearing Uniforms at School

For	Against
• Uniforms promote equality. • Rich and poor both wear the same clothing. • Discrimination can be avoided. • Uniforms promote unity within the school as students feel they are all part of the same group. • They are more cost-effective for parents. • Students can focus on their studies rather than on their image. • There is less peer pressure to conform. • They support discipline.	• Uniforms do not help students increase their grades. • Schools should encourage children to explore their differences. • School uniforms make it difficult for students from other schools to mix. • Uniforms do not allow for individuality. • Uniforms encourage conformity, which can restrict a child's development. • Lack of individual expression can lead to rebellion. • Rich and poor will still be easily differentiated even with uniforms.

IELTS Liz

Collocations Exercise: In each group, identify the word which does not normally collocate with the keyword in **bold**. Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.

1 to promote / achieve / conform / fight for / increase **equality**

2 to encourage / focus on / continue / resume / complete / interrupt **one's studies**

3 to avoid / behave / fight / stop / experience **discrimination**

4 to support / keep / enforce / accept / commit / tighten / relax **discipline**

Obligatory Extra-Curricular Activities

For	Against
• Extra-curricular activities help students develop their character.	• Students should be allowed to choose their own extra activities.

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• Some students prefer to focus only on their academic subjects. • Unlike extra activities, academic subjects do not teach students social skills and team work. • Extra-curricular activities, such as community service and sport, can be beneficial to students.	• Forcing extra-curricular activities on students does not promote independence or autonomy. • Adding pressure to students is not healthy for them. • Some students are already overloaded with homework. • Students benefit from activities that are not academic.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

Check the meaning of the words underlined.

Studying Abroad

IELTS Liz

Matching and Categorising Exercise: Match these sentence halves. Are the completed sentences *for* (+) or *against* (-) studying abroad? See the Answer Key for more ideas for this topic.

1 Not all students can thrive	**a)** culture shock and struggle to adapt to a new culture.
2 Students may suffer from	**b)** self-reliance and a sense of independence.
3 Students will have access	**c)** away from their home and family support.
4 Students will learn	**d)** to superior facilities and tutors.

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Home Schooling

NB: This means educating a child at home rather than at school.

For	Against
• It is useful for families who live far from good schooling or need to move often. • Class schedules can be easily changed. • Lessons can be tailored to the child. • Children can get as much support and help as they need. • A child's interests can be incorporated into the lesson to make it more interesting. • Children will not be bullied or experience peer pressure. • Religion can be incorporated into the curriculum. • The speed of learning can be altered to suit the child.	• Children do not have the chance to interact with other children. • They lose the opportunity to develop important social skills and make friends. • The child might be lonely due to a lack of school friends. • The parent-child relationship might be affected by the additional role of teacher. • Parent and child may spend too much time together. • One parent will not be able to work and earn money. • Children will have limited resources and sports facilities.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: The words in *italics* all appear in the sentences *for* and *against* home schooling. Choose the best option (**a**, **b** or **c**) to complete the following statements.

1 If you *tailor* something to someone's needs, you...

a) describe it in great detail

b) adapt it to make it more suitable

c) ask people to tell you what they want.

2 If someone *bullies* you, they...

a) frighten you and threaten to hurt you

b) lie to you and make false promises

c) tell other people when you do something wrong.

3 If a child does something because of *peer pressure*, they do it because...

a) the teacher has ordered them to

b) they are afraid their parents will punish them

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c) everyone else in their group does it.

4 The school *curriculum* is...

a) a room where corporal punishment is administered

b) a person who assists the head

c) all the subjects taught by a school.

5 If you *interact* with other people, you...

a) communicate with them

b) make contact with them when they are far away

c) make them do what you want.

Corporal Punishment in School

For	Against
• Physical punishment is the strongest deterrent. • Students will think twice before breaking the rules. • After receiving corporal punishment, students have a deep respect for authority. • It is a quick and effective punishment that stops bad behaviour. • Children learn quickly between what is right and what is considered wrong.	• Children should not be hit. • Children should feel safe in their learning environment. • Children learn to loathe authority and might rebel. • It teaches children that physical punishment is acceptable. • Children might grow up and use physical punishment on their own children. • This perpetuates a cycle of abuse. • This type of punishment is belittling, controlling and affects a person's self-esteem.

IELTS Liz

Sentence Completion Exercise: Complete these definitions with a suitable word or phrase from the sentences about corporal punishment in school.

1 A _ _ _ _ _ is something that discourages you from doing something that could have bad consequences.

2 If someone _ _ _ _ _ the _ _ _ _ _, they disobey.

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3 If you _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ before doing something, you think carefully because it might have bad consequences.

4 If you _ _ _ _ _ something, you dislike it intensely.

5 Something _ _ _ _ _ makes you feel unimportant or worthless.

6 'To _ _ _ _ _ something' means 'to cause something to continue indefinitely'.

7 Your _ _ _ _ _ is what you think of your abilities and how you feel about yourself generally.

Single-Sex Schools

For	Against
• Children are better able to relax around other children of the same sex. • Girls will not feel intimidated by boys. • Some girls they mature faster than boys. (1) • Children will be able to concentrate more on the education. (2) • Lessons can be tailored to one gender.	• Same sex schools do not prepare a children for the real world. (3) • Children need experience of interacting with the opposite sex. • Children have much to learn about the opposite sex. • Boys and girls think differently and this is for good to experience. (4) • There is no any evidence that single sex schools result in better educational grades. (5)

IELTS Liz

Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

A Good Teacher needs to be Intelligent

Agree	Other Requirements
• A teacher must have a good knowledge base in their subject.	• Teachers need to be able to communicate effectively.

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• A teacher's primary role is to impart information and knowledge. • Students prefer teachers who are passionate about their subject area. • A student's level of knowledge is in great part dependent on their teacher's level.	• Students need to be motivated or inspired by a teacher. • Teachers need to know how to discipline students. • Teachers need good classroom management skills. • Teachers should be a good role model. • Teachers need clearly defined goals for each lesson.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the argument which is irrelevant.

More Boys than Girls Study Science

Reasons	Solutions
• Boys and girls often differ in what they are **drawn to** and what they find easy or difficult. • More boys than girls develop an early interest in science and technology. • The world of science is often **depicted** as a man's world. • There are still many negative stereotypes about girls' abilities in science and maths. • Even today, most people implicitly associate 'male' with 'science' and 'female' with 'arts'. • Boys have more confidence than girls that they can succeed in science subjects.	• Schools should encourage all children to develop both their spatial and verbal skills. • Parents should avoid **reinforcing** stereotypes such as giving 'a chemistry set to Tom and a doll to Lucy'. • University science departments need to **ensure** that women are not under-represented. • We need to remember that girls generally do as well as or even **outperform** boys in science classwork. • More work needs to be done to **tackle** gender stereotypes. • When more women choose to go into science, girls will gain more self-confidence.

Sentence Completion Exercise: Study the words in **bold** in the sentences above. Then use those words to complete the following sentences.

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1 According to a recent study, public-school students _ _ _ _ _ their private-school classmates on maths tests.

2 In advertising, women have long been _ _ _ _ _ as delicate, fragile and sexy.

3 Misbehaviour in class is a common problem, and there are many different ways to _ _ _ _ _ it.

4 More people would be _ _ _ _ _ teaching if discipline was less of a problem in schools.

5 Parents, teachers and employers need to find ways to stop _ _ _ _ _ gender stereotypes.

6 The education reform wants to _ _ _ _ _ that all boys and girls have all the support they need to become successful science students.

Traditional Classroom / Online Learning

Traditional Classroom	Online Education
• Teachers can provide help to individual students. • Students can have face-to-face interaction with other students and their professor. • Students can collaborate on projects. • Teachers can provide instant feedback and support in the classroom. • Classrooms give students a sense of unity and encouragement. • Classrooms provide structured learning and an easy-to-follow schedule. • Students are reminded of deadlines.	• It allows for a flexible class schedule, which is ideal for working people. • People are able to work full time whilst studying. • Online learning is usually cost-effective. • Mature students do not need to study alongside immature, younger students. • Online courses allow students to study at their own pace. • Students can take breaks in their study schedule to suit their needs. • Students can speed up their learning to complete a course sooner. • It offers more diverse methods of learning.

IELTS LIZ

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 a feeling of being joined together

2 able to change or to be changed easily

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3 immediate comments or advice on work you have done (two words)

4 to make someone remember to do something

5 to make something go faster

6 to work with other people for a certain purpose.

Types of Online Learning

- Self-education using materials found online.
- Asynchronous training which is pre-recorded without live interaction.
- Synchronous training which is done in real time online in virtual classrooms.
- Online college or university courses.
- Educational apps, YouTube tutorials, Videos, CDs.

Education should be Free for Everyone

IELTS Liz

For

1 (a) **Not everyone** / (b) **Everyone** should have equal rights to education.

2 Education (a) **should not be** / (b) **should** *be* accessible only to wealthy people.

3 Free education (a) ***allows*** / (b) **denies** poor people as well as the rich access to education.

4 (a) **Fewer** / (b) **More** educated people can help a country develop and prosper.

Against

5 It is a financial (a) **strain** / (b) **boon** for some countries to offer free education to all people.

6 The government would need to (a) **decrease** / (b) **increase** taxes to afford it.

7 It would be better if (a) **not only** / (b) **only** gifted individuals were entitled to free education.

8 Students (a) **will not** / (b) **will only** appreciate and value education if it is free.

Sentence Completion Exercise: Choose the correct option (a) or (b) in **bold** to present arguments *for* and *against* free education.

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ENVIRONMENT

Pollution

Causes	Solutions
• Fossil fuels such as natural gas, oil and coal are used in electricity generation for industrial and private consumption. • Carbon dioxide is emitted from the burning of fossil fuels. • Power plants generate electricity but also produce carbon dioxide. • Road traffic emissions from petrol or diesel engines increase carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides. • A tax increase on budget airlines would lead to a reduction in the number of flights. • Chemicals used in agriculture, such as pesticides and insecticides, are released into the air. • Cleaning products and paints cause indoor air pollution.	• Industries should be encouraged to use sustainable green energy. • Emissions from industries should be monitored more closely, and fines for exceeding the legal limit should be increased. • People can boycott products from companies known to pollute. • Limit the number of cars on the road by increasing petrol tax, improving public transport and setting up traffic-free zones in city centres. • People should control the use of energy in the home and avoid using products containing VOCs or other air pollutants. • People should be encouraged to recycle more. • An increase in the number of cars and low-cost airlines has contributed to air pollution.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

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Natural Beauty Spots

Why They are Important	Solutions to Protect Them
• Natural beauty spots are tourist attractions which _ _ _ _ _ (1) a country's economy. • Natural beauty spots provide peaceful places for locals to enjoy. • Places of natural beauty are often biodiverse, which promotes a healthy ecosystem. • Natural beauty spots are a source of national pride and identity.	• Stricter laws should be introduced to _ _ _ _ _ (2) natural beauty spots from industrial pollution. • Laws should _ _ _ _ _ (3) using areas near beauty spots for the development of industry. • Harsher fines and punishment can be _ _ _ _ _ (4) for those who litter. • Human habitation should not be allowed to _ _ _ _ _ (5) on natural beauty spots. • Poaching and illegal hunting should be more strictly controlled.

IELTS Liz

boost	encroach	impose	prohibit	protect

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the correct form of the verbs in the box to complete the sentences about natural beauty spots.

Deforestation

Causes

- The spread of human habitation and urbanisation is one of the main causes of deforestation.
- Some land is no longer fertile due to pollution, so forests must make way for agricultural plantations.
- As the world's population grows, there is need for more agricultural land.
- Some forests are destroyed by wildfires or overgrazing.
- An estimated 18 million acres of forest are destroyed each year.
- Logging operations cut down many trees for paper production and wood.

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Problems

- The lack of habitat for millions of species can result in the extinction of some species and in an ecological imbalance.
- It can cause an increase in global warming as there are not enough trees to absorb greenhouse gases.
- Trees are an essential part of the water cycle. Less water in the air means less water is returned to the soil, leading to soil erosion and barren land.
- Indigenous people can lose their homeland.

Solutions

- The government needs to curb the felling of trees by introducing better laws.
- Ban the cutting down of forests.
- Government should ensure reforestation of areas that have been affected.
- People can also contribute by recycling paper products, unsubscribing from physical junk mail and putting a "no junk mail" sticker on their letterbox.
- Introduce better farming methods to prevent felling trees for farm land.
- Crop rotation means land is used more effectively.

Sentence Completion Exercise: Complete these definitions with a suitable word from the sentences about deforestation.

1 _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ are letters advertising products or services which are sent to people although they did not ask to receive them.

2 _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ is a method of farming where you grow different plants one after the other in order to keep the soil fertile.

IELTS Liz

3 _ _ _ _ _ is a situation in which too many farm animals eat the grass in a particular area, which is bad for the environment.

4 _ _ _ _ _ is the business of felling trees in order to use their wood.

5 _ _ _ _ _ is the opposite of fertile.

6 If you _ _ _ _ _ from a mailing list, you ask the sender to remove your name from the list.

7 If you _ _ _ _ _ something that is not wanted, you control or limit it.

Resource Depletion

Causes	Solutions
• The world's population is growing, and demand is growing with it. • The world does not have enough resources to support a rapidly growing population.	• The world needs to start saving water. • Recycling should not only be encouraged but should be mandatory in certain countries.

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- Currently, humanity uses 50% of the world's fresh water.
- In 40 years, the world will have consumed 80% of the fresh water available.
- Mineral and oil reserves are fast depleting.
- Human beings are over-exploiting their own planet.
- Pollution is having an adverse effect on the world's resources.
- Soil depletion has a direct impact on the quantity and quality of food produced for our growing population.

- Food waste should be collected for compost.
- Compost can be used to nourish the soil and reverse soil depletion.
- The government should control the amount of electricity used.
- Children should be taught about resource depletion.
- Sustainable green sources of energy should be promoted and subsidised by the government.
- Individual people should make the right choices to recycle, reduce energy consumption and purchase only environmentally friendly products.
- Unwanted or unsold food should be redistributed.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 compulsory, obligatory

2 decaying organic material used as fertilizer for growing plants

3 getting smaller and smaller in amount or size (e.g. money, energy supplies, etc)

4 harmful, negative; the opposite of beneficial

5 produced using the sun, wind, etc rather than fossil fuels that cannot be replaced

6 supported financially.

Who should Take Responsibility for Solving Environmental Issues?

Individuals	The Government
• The government cannot oversee or control the actions of all individuals.	• The government can impose tighter controls on companies that do not treat or dispose of waste effectively.

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- Even with laws to protect the environment, individuals must cooperate.
- People should actively reduce the amount of energy they use on a daily basis.
- People should recycle plastics and other materials more.
- People need to be responsible and buy products that do not harm the environment.

- Only governments can change laws and ensure that they are enforced.
- The government has the financial means to tackle nationwide pollution and other environmental problems.
- The government can collect information on a national scale to see the whole picture and take effective steps to deal with the problems.

alleviate	anticipate	be faced with	deal with	ignore	solve	tackle

Collocations Exercise: Use the correct form of the verbs in the box to complete these explanations.

1 If you _ _ _ _ _ a difficult problem, you try to deal with it.

2 If you _ _ _ _ _ a problem, it is going to affect you and you have to deal with it.

IELTS Liz

3 If you _ _ _ _ _ a problem, you find a successful way to deal with it.

4 If you _ _ _ _ _ a problem, you make it less difficult to deal with.

5 If you _ _ _ _ _ a problem, you pay no attention to it.

6 If you _ _ _ _ _ a problem, you take action in preparation for it because you think that it will happen.

7 If you _ _ _ _ _ a problem, you take the necessary action in order to solve it.

Solving Environmental Problems Globally or Domestically?

Domestically	Globally
• Some pollution, such as river water pollution, is a localised problem. • The government knows best how to tackle their own domestic pollution problems.	• Developed countries are more responsible for global warming than other countries. • Global warming affects all countries around the world and needs a joint

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• The government of each country should be responsible for educating their own people about conserving energy and the importance of recycling. • Local residents need to take responsibility for their actions. • Only domestic governments can improve waste disposal and sanitation. • Better public transport policies aiming to help reduce gas emissions must be implemented domestically.	effort to tackle it. • The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions needs to be agreed at international conferences or summits. • Air pollution and marine pollution affects more than one country at a time. • Tackling environmental problems is a financial burden many countries cannot afford on their own.

Matching Exercise: Match these sentence halves. Then study the expressions in **bold**.

1 It **is the responsibility of** each one of us	**a)** addressing the issue of climate change.
2 The Environmental Protection Agency **has responsibility for**	**b)** of the world's carbon emissions.
3 Too many companies are reluctant to **take responsibility for**	**c)** to make sure that we keep our cities clean.
4 Tourism **is responsible for** almost one tenth	**d)** the environmental impact of their activities.

IELTS Liz

Declining Biodiversity

Decline in Plant and Animal Species

Causes	Problems
• Declining biodiversity is caused by the destruction of animal and plant habitat. • Due to industry, growing human population and agriculture, more land is needed.	• As certain species decline in numbers, the ecosystem is thrown out of a balance. (3) • Maintaining the balance of the ecosystem is essential for the welfare of

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- As forest and other natural areas are claimed, plants and animals lose their habitat.
- Illegal hunting and poaching reduces some animal numbers to the endangered levels. (1)
- Pollution has affected plant and animal numbers.
- Plant and animal species depend on each other.
- If one species declines, it can affect other species which are dependent on it.
- Over-fishing can cause a lack of biodiversity in the oceans.
- Global warming and climate change have not had an impact on plant and animal species. (2)

our planet.

- Once a species is lost, it never cannot be brought back. (4)
- Loss of plant and animal species can affect our medical research and the development of treatments.
- Biodiversity is essential for human health in terms of food and health care.
- We should preserve the diversity of our planet's plants and animals as for future generations to enjoy. (5)

IELTS Liz

Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

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FAMILY

Parents or Teachers Should Discipline Children

Parents	Teachers
• Parents know their children better than teachers.	• Teachers must maintain discipline in their classroom.
• Parents might be able to understand reasons behind bad behaviour.	• Students should learn correct conduct at school.
• Parents need to be responsible for their child's conduct at home.	• Teachers are qualified in different discipline techniques.
• Parents are ultimately responsible for the upbringing of their child.	• If teachers do not discipline a naughty child, other children will suffer from the disruption.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find the odd-one-out in each of these groups of words and phrases. Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.IELTS Liz

1 bad behaviour / obedience / misbehaviour / unruliness

2 to lack discipline / to keep discipline / to impose discipline / to maintain discipline

3 to discipline sb / / to penalise sb / to punish sb / to reward sb

4 disobedient / disruptive / well-behaved / naughty / unruly

Family Size: Families are Smaller than Before

Bigger Families Previously	Smaller Families Nowadays
• A bigger family meant more children to help and earn money.	• Smaller families are more geographically mobile and can move city more easily to find work.
• Agricultural families relied on children as farmhands.	• The cost of bringing up children has risen.

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- Having more children was important because the infant mortality rate was higher.
- Many children provided security for parents in their old age in a time without social benefits.
- Having many children was sometimes considered to be prestigious.
- Mothers often work and do not have time to take care of large families.
- Modern life is geared towards small families.
- Women have access to birth control.
- Women have more awareness and choice these days.

Vocabulary Exercise: Match the words and phrases from the sentences with their definitions.

1 mortality rate

2 infant

3 geared towards

4 bringing up

5 birth control

6 prestigious

a) a baby or very young child

b) contraception

c) inspiring respect

d) organised in a way that is suitable for a particular situation or purpose

e) raising

f) the number of people who die in a particular group during a particular period of time

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Women Having Children Later in Life

Reasons	Effects
• Working women prefer to focus on building their career and climbing the career ladder.	• The child, as a young adult, may feel the burden of taking care of elderly parents.
• Some couples prefer having financial stability before having and raising a child.	• The age gap is bigger between parent and child which can lead to difficulties relating to each other.
• The increase in divorce can affect when a woman decides to have children.	• Older parents get tired more easily which can restrict their enjoyment and

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- Advances in technology, such as IVF, help older women become pregnant.

participation in parenthood.

- There is an increased chance of health complications with the baby.

Collocations Exercise: Match the verbs 1 – 5 with the nouns a) – e) to make common collocations. Then read the sentences above to check your answers.

1 to build	**a)** financial stability
2 to climb	**b)** birth
3 to restrict	**c)** one's career
4 to give	**d)** participation
5 to have	**e)** the career ladder

Childless Marriages

For	Against
• Married couples can focus on their careers. • Children change a marriage and add too many _ _ _ _ _ (1). • Without children, there is more freedom. • Children are a financial _ _ _ _ _ (2). • Childless couples can spend more time _ _ _ _ _ (3) to each other.	• It is hard to relate to other married couples whose lives _ _ _ _ _ (4) around their children. • A family unit cannot be considered a family without children. • Some societies view childless couples as _ _ _ _ _ (5). • Some childless couples did not choose this and suffer without children. • Without children there is a lack of support in old age. • Children are the glue that holds the family together.

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abnormal	burden	devoted	responsibilities	revolve

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete the arguments *for* and *against* childless marriages.

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Divorce

For	Against
• It is better for parents to separate than to argue all the time. • An unhappy marriage can cause a child to suffer distress and witness unpleasant scenes. • Divorce is no longer stigmatised in society. • Children are unsure of who they might live with afterwards. • A happy parent is a good parent.	• The process of divorce can be stressful for children. • Children feel insecure as their family falls apart. • Each parent can devote quality time to their children rather than quantity. • Children may miss the other parent after the divorce. • Some divorce settlements result in hostility between parents. • Children may feel caught between both parents

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1 Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

2 Matching Exercise: Match the items 1 – 5 with the items a) – e) based on the information given in the ideas above.

1 to witness	**a)** two people
2 to be	**b)** insecure
3 to feel	**c)** hostility
4 to result in	**d)** scenes
5 to be caught between	**e)** stigmatised

Single Parent Families

For	Against
• Children do not need two parents to have a stable upbringing.	• The financial strain is sometimes placed on only one parent.

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• Children benefit from a loving environment provided by one parent. • Single parent families are preferable to a dysfunctional marriage. • Children from dysfunctional marriages can suffer emotional distress. • Children may have more responsibilities in the house, which helps their development.	• The children might miss the influence of having parents of each gender around. • Children are not given a role model for a healthy adult relationship. • Children are not able to grow up understanding adult relationships. • Children are not able to witness how adults work through difficulties and disagreements. • Children have no other parent to turn to for comfort or support.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 a feeling of extreme unhappiness (two words)

2 a person who someone admires and whose behaviour, attitudes, etc they try to copy (two words)

3 not working properly or normally (one word)

4 the way your parents taught you to behave when you were growing up (one word)

5 worry and pressure caused by lack of money (two words)

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Children Spending More Time with Grandparents

Matching and Categorising Exercise: Match these sentence halves. Are the completed sentences *for* (+) or *against* (-) children spending more time with grandparents? See the Answer Key for six more ideas for this topic.

1 Both child and grandparents

2 Children might be confused if

3 Grandparents can offer children

a) they are relied on for child care too often.

b) can enjoy a closer relationship.

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4 Grandparents might feel exploited if

c) a different perspective on life.

d) grandparents say one thing and parents another.

Both Parents Working

For	Against
• Some families need two incomes for financial stability. • Children benefit from the extra family and income. (1) • Children learn to appreciate the value of the money. • Children might need to take more of responsibilities in the home. (2) • Additional responsibilities help children mature more quickly. • Some parents are happier if they have a working life as well as a family life. • Children benefit from having a healthy, happy parents. (3)	• Children with both parents working lack parental guidance. • Parents do not have the time available to care for their children sufficiently. • Children might lack support with a homework and other personal issues. (4) • Parents struggle to cope when a child is sick as they must both go to work. • Parents might argue about whose job it is most important and who takes time off for domestic issues. (5) • Children sometimes feel abandoned.

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

Care of the Elderly: Families Should be Responsible

1 Elderly people have paid taxes which should be used for their care.

2 Elderly people thrive better when cared for by people who love them.

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3 Family should support one another whatever the situation.

4 Family understand the needs of the elderly best.

5 Grandparents have looked after their child in the past, now the children should look after them.

6 If both adults work, there may be no one at home to provide the necessary support.

7 Nursing homes and retirement homes are structured to provide the right support and care.

8 Retirement homes provide support but not the love that the elderly person needs.

9 Some families do not have the extra finances available.

10 Some elderly people require specialised care that the family cannot provide.

11 The elderly should be surrounded by familiar objects and people.

12 The family are not trained to take care of elderly people.

Categorisation Exercise: Mark the arguments above (+) if they are *for* the idea of the family being responsible for the care of the elderly or (-) if they are *against* it.

Researching Family History

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For	Against
• Finding out about ancestors is a type of self-discovery. • Knowing about their ancestors helps people feel part of a larger family. • Family history can reveal hereditary medical conditions which might be prevalent among the current generation. • Knowing if cancer, for example, is common in their family can help people take the necessary preventive measures. • Researching family history can show cultural history. • There might be common skills to discover within a family's history.	• It is better for people to focus on present family members rather than those in the past. • Unpleasant information might be unearthed. • A past member of the family might have been an embarrassment which is best forgotten. • People might discover secrets that are damaging to family members today. • The past is best left in the past. • Hereditary diseases do not necessarily reoccur and may cause undue stress and worry.

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Vocabulary Exercise: The words in *italics* all appear in the sentences *for* and *against* researching family history. Choose the best option (**a**, **b** or **c**) to complete the following statements.

1 Your *ancestors* are...

a) your close friends

b) relatives who lived a long time ago

c) places where your parents and grandparents were born.

2 A *hereditary* disease...

a) is passed to a child by its parents

b) requires a surgical intervention

c) affects the heart and the arteries.

3 A condition or belief that is *prevalent* is...

a) rare

b) new

c) common.

4 *Preventive* measures or actions are intended to...

a) cure a disease very quickly

b) replace medical insurance

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c) stop something bad from happening.

5 If you *unearth* evidence or information about something bad, you...

a) try to keep it secret

b) discover it after careful searching

c) share it with all the print and electronic media.

6 If you say that somebody is an *embarrassment* to you, you mean that they make you feel...

a) nervous and uncomfortable

b) sad and angry

.c) proud and happy.

7 If something is *damaging* to someone, it affects them...

a) for a very long time

b) in a bad way

c) both physically and mentally.

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FOOD

GM Foods

(GM = genetically modified, i.e. scientifically produced)

For	Against
• Cheaper, more abundant crops will help alleviate the problem of hunger in the world. • Through genetic modification, foods can be given more flavour and a better texture. • Crops can be made more resistant to harmful insects and fungi. • Genetically modified foods can be given a longer shelf life. • The nutritional value of food can be increased.	• GMOs pose a serious threat to the environment. • Food production will become an industry dominated by a few powerful biotech companies. • GM seeds will travel to neighbouring fields and threaten non-GM crops. • GM foods will eventually affect our organism adversely. • People prefer foods that have not been tampered with in laboratories.

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Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 damaging

2 in a bad or unfavourable way

3 in the end

4 the taste of a food or drink

5 the way something feels in your mouth when you are eating it

6 to interfere with something, usually without permission

7 to make something bad or painful more bearable

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Factory Farming: Intensive Animal Farming

For

1 Factory farming is an (a) **efficient** (b) **inefficient** and space-saving way of producing food.

2 Animals in factory farms are (a) **unsafe** / (b) **safe** and well looked after.

3 Intensive animal farming (a) **minimises** / (b) **maximises** output.

4 Production (a) **costs** / (b) **levels** are greatly reduced.

5 It is the best way to meet the (a) **dwindling** / (b) **growing** demand for cheap meat worldwide.

Against

6 Animals live in cramped and (a) **hygienic** / (b) **unhygienic** conditions.

7 Forests are being (a) **razed** / (b) **planted** as more land is needed to grow plants to feed industrially reared animals.

8 The (a) **insufficient** / (b) **intensive** use of antibiotics in industrial farming poses a threat to human health.

9 Animals are (a) **often** / (b) **rarely** genetically manipulated to produce more eggs or milk or to grow bigger.

10 Even livestock animals are (a) **meant** / (b) **not meant** to live freely outdoors

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Sentence Completion Exercise: Choose the option (a) or (b) that makes sense to present arguments *for* and *against* intensive animal farming.

Fast Foods should be Banned

Agree	Disagree
• Eating a lot of fast food can cause health problems such as obesity. • The fast food industry has developed very healthy alternatives. • Fast foods contain a large amount of additives, saturated fats and sugars.	• Fast food is more affordable than so-called health food. • Informing is a more effective policy than prohibiting. • People who work full-time cannot cook every day.

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• Fast foods get so much publicity that people forget about traditional foods. • Workers in the fast food industry are often ruthlessly exploited by their employers.	• Nobody wants the government to prescribe their diet. • Fast food is only bad if you have too much of it. • The nutritional value of fast food is quite low and it does not satisfy hunger.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

Packaged Food

Ready Meals & Prepared Foods

For	Against
• Ready meals are a real boon for working couples. • We can discover dishes from all over the world. • Prepared foods are always readily available and are economical. • Instead of wasting time cooking every day, we could devote more time to our children or our hobby. • Ready meals are prepared and packaged under the most hygienic conditions.	• Packaged food contains a lot of additives and preservatives. • Home cooked meals are healthier than industrially produced foods. • Packaging waste poses a serious threat to the environment. • Most people have a need to take pride in food they have prepared themselves. • Convenience foods lose a lot of nutrients during processing.

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Collocations Exercise: Match the verbs 1 – 5 with the nouns a) – e) to make common collocations used in the sentences about packaged food.

1 to pose	**a)** time (to something)
2 to take	**b)** a threat

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3 to lose	**c)** additives
4 to devote	**d)** pride (in something)
5 to contain	**e)** nutrients

Future World Food Shortage

Causes	Solutions
• Climate change is responsible for _ _ _ _ _ (1) and other extreme weather conditions. • Population increases faster than food production. • Farmers in developing countries use outdated farming methods. • The cost of some basic _ _ _ _ _ (2) such as rice has risen so much that many people can no longer afford them. • The global financial crisis has caused some countries to invest less in agriculture.	• Governments should adopt strict _ _ _ _ _ (3) to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases. • Rich countries should help poorer countries to use clean _ _ _ _ _ (4). • World governments and agencies need to work together to deal with climate change at a global level. • Deforestation and _ _ _ _ _ (5) need to be tightly controlled. • Eating less meat would result in more land being available to grow crops for humans.

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commodities	drought	energy	measures	overgrazing

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete the sentences about a possible future world food shortage.

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Vegetarian Diet

For	Against
• It is high time we stopped killing the animals unnecessarily. (1) • A well-planned vegetarian diet contains all the nutrients we need. • It is naturally high in fibre and low in saturated fats, which helps prevent cancer. • It reduces the risk of heart disease. • Growing vegetables and cereals for ourselves rather than for a cattle will greatly reduce the human impact on the environment. (2)	• A varied and balanced diet it is the key to good health. (3) • We are by nature omnivorous rather than herbivorous. • Without meat, we cannot get the amount of protein we need to grow and remain strong and healthy. • Humans have been eaten meat since prehistoric times. (4) • Meat products have taste delicious, while vegetables and cereals are often bland. (5)

Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

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Preservatives in Food

1 If no food could be preserved, millions would die from starvation.

2 In many countries, additives must _ _ _ _ _ (1) to a list of government directives.

3 In many countries, the government does not have the resources to properly _ _ _ _ _ (2) the substances added to foods.

4 Many additives _ _ _ _ _ (3) allergic reactions.

5 Nobody knows exactly what the effect of preservatives will be in the long term.

6 Public health agencies carefully _ _ _ _ _ (4) the preservatives that can be used in food processing.

7 Some preservatives are carcinogenic.

8 Studies about the dangers of preservatives have produced inconsistent results.

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9 Today, very few people have the chance to eat only what they can grow themselves.

10 Without preservatives, many foods would _ _ _ _ _ (5) before reaching the consumer.

monitor	adhere	trigger	decay	regulate

1 Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the verbs in the box to complete the sentences above about preservatives in food.

2 Mark the arguments above '+' if they are *for* the use of preservatives in food and '-' if they are *against*.

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HEALTH

Funding Prevention or Cure?

Prevention	Cure
• Health is the greatest asset of a nation, so the state needs to look after it. • Effective health and safety measures at work save lives and save employers money. • Early cancer detection of tests should be free for everyone. (1) • People can easily be encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. • If preventive care services are not funded, so a lot fewer people will have access to them. (2)	• Many people suffer from an injury or an illness that could not have been prevented and therefore it needs to be treated. (3) • Conditions in state hospitals reflect the degree of civilisation in a society. • A lot of hereditary diseases can be cured, but only for a few of them can be prevented. (4) • Funding cuts to public hospitals endanger patients and a result in overburdened medical staff. (5) • Public money is better spent on health care than on showcase projects such as high-speed rail networks.

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

Growing Number of Overweight People

Causes		Solutions
Fast food outlets are ubiquitous nowadays.	⇨	Fast food restaurants could easily offer healthy alternatives.
Many people consume more calories than they burn through physical activity.	⇨	People should avoid overeating and take more exercise.

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Our lifestyle has become far too sedentary.	⇨	Taking up an outdoor sport or a physical activity like gardening or walking can compensate for a sedentary lifestyle.
Food advertising often encourages people to buy sugary drinks, high-fat snacks and other unhealthy foods.	⇨	Junk food advertising should be tightly controlled or banned altogether.
Processed foods are often tastier and less nutritious than whole foods and so promote overeating.	⇨	The public needs to be made aware of the health risks posed by engineered foods.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 containing many of the substances we need to stay healthy; nourishing

2 found everywhere; omnipresent

3 having had its genetic structure changed

4 involving a lot of sitting and very little exercise

5 to balance or counteract the effects of something bad

6 to prohibit something legally or officially

7 to start doing a particular activity or job.

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Responsibility for Public Health

For Government Responsibility	For Individual's Responsibility
• Citizens expect decent health care in return for the taxes they pay. • Affordable health care is a basic human right. • People are free to choose a healthy diet and to take regular exercise. • Public health care is too serious a matter to be placed exclusively in the hands of profit-oriented organisations.	• In many countries, citizens contribute to the funding of public health through income tax. • Our health is our biggest asset, so it is our personal responsibility to maintain it. • Funding public health offers excellent return on investment. • We often know instinctively which foods and activities are beneficial to our

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- The government can introduce taxes and regulations to guide people towards healthier choices.

health and which ones are detrimental.

- In the end, it is only up to us whether or not we heed the advice given by health agencies and doctors.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

Fewer People Walk these Days

Why Few People Walk		Solution to Problem
Most people live too far away from their workplace to walk.	⇨	With a better public transport system, commuters could at least walk or cycle to the nearest station.
Walking is seen as something you do out of necessity and not for fun.	⇨	Travel agencies could _ _ _ _ _ (3) a wider range of walking holidays.
Walking is not glamorous – after all, 'pedestrian' also means 'commonplace, unimaginative'.	⇨	The positive impact of walking on the environment needs to be _ _ _ _ _ (4) more.
People have _ _ _ _ _ (1) slaves to their car.	⇨	The public needs to be better _ _ _ _ _ (5) about the incredible health benefits of walking.
Sprawling suburbs have made walking impractical and _ _ _ _ _ (2) car dependency.	⇨	It is time to _ _ _ _ _ (6) our cities and create more walkable neighbourhoods.

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become	emphasise	increase	inform	offer	reshape

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the correct form of the verbs in the box to complete the sentences about the declining number of people who walk.

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INTERNET & COMPUTERS

Social Media Benefit Communication

Agree	Disagree
• Social media make spoken and written communication between people possible anytime, anywhere.	• Social media encourage people to use a telegraphic style and resort to emoticons to express their feelings.
• Thanks to social media, everyone can find countless like-minded people worldwide and network with them.	• Being constantly online cuts people off from their immediate surroundings and disrupts face-to-face communication.
• As more and more people are online all the time, messages are often answered almost immediately.	• How many 'likes' our posts get has become more important than saying anything truly meaningful.
• People across the globe can connect with anyone to share their thoughts, photographs and life experiences.	• People react quickly to express their opinion but only rarely engage in a constructive dialogue online.
• Social media provide a platform for people to discuss local or international issues and influence political decisions.	• Anonymity and the absence of face-to-face interaction can promote an uncivil or even aggressive style of communication.

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Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 a forum

2 impolite

3 innumerable

4 worldwide

5 to prevent something from continuing as usual or expected

6 to do or use something because it seems to be the only thing available.

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Computers will Replace Teachers

Agree	Disagree
• Computers cost less than teachers. • Using affordable computers makes the education accessible to those in a reduced financial situation. (1) • Computers are reliable. They are always on time, never be sick and do not make mistakes. (2) • Teachers vary in skill. Not all teachers are good at their job. • Computers can be programmed to be interactive and a fun way to learn. • Computers have already become valuable teaching tools in the classroom.	• Computers are unable to give feedback to students or help them identify for their talents. (3) • Lessons are set and cannot be adapted to student needs. • Computers are not able to understand individual and differences in learning. (4) • Teachers can offer various perspectives to problems depending on the student. • Computers are only as good as the people who programme them. • Teachers get to know students individually and take into an account their background. (5) • Teachers can help students learn beyond the basic curriculum and develop qualities such as a sense of right and wrong. • Computers are unable to inspire.

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

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The Internet Brings People Closer Together

For	Against
• You can make affordable or free voice and video calls to friends, relatives and colleagues all over the world. • Social networking platforms enable you to _ _ _ _ _ (1) a global community of people who share similar interests. • With the internet, _ _ _ _ _ (2) down long-lost friends is relatively simple. • With your mobile device, you can _ _ _ _ _ (3) everyone on what you are doing and where you are at this very moment. • Social media help you discover friends you never thought you had.	• We should remember that only about half of the world's population has internet access. • The more time you spend online, the less you _ _ _ _ _ (4) with the people in your immediate surroundings. • Our everyday reality is gradually being _ _ _ _ _ (5) by virtual worlds. • The internet _ _ _ _ _ (6) us further apart when we use it to communicate with our neighbours or our office colleagues. • Social media platforms are too often used to _ _ _ _ _ (7) malicious gossip or false information.

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drive interact join spread supplant track update

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the correct form of the verbs in the box to complete the sentences about the internet and people.

Risks for Children Online

Problems	Solutions
• Children who are victims of cyberbullying can fall into severe depression. • Teens can challenge each other to come into contact with strangers who	• Parents need to keep an eye on their children's online activities and talk to them about the dangers involved in using the internet. • Online safety is a component of internet literacy and should be taught

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turn out to be online predators. • It is all too easy to access inappropriate websites and explicit images and videos. • Computer games are addictive and cause children to neglect their homework. • Children may inadvertently reveal personal information, which could result in identity theft.	in each and every school. • Parents and children need to spend more time engaging in leisure activities together. • Parents need to talk openly to their children about how to stay safe online. • Children need to be taught how to recognise and report inappropriate online behaviour.

Collocations Exercise: Match items 1 – 6 with items a) – f) to make common collocations from the sentences above. Then read the sentences again to check your answers.

1 to access	**a)** leisure activities
2 to come into	**b)** personal information
3 to engage in	**c)** depression
4 to fall into	**d)** a website
5 to neglect	**e)** contact with somebody
6 to reveal	**f)** one's homework

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Security Online

Problems	Solutions
• Hackers can get access to computer systems to steal private data and personal information.	• All devices should be equipped with a firewall and reliable anti-virus software.

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• Petty cybercriminals spread malware and computer viruses just for fun. • Businesses often connect their computers into networks, which means malicious attacks can rapidly affect all users. • Computer users fall prey to phishing and are deceived into revealing confidential information. • People can be easily tricked into following a link or opening an e-mail attachment, in this way giving criminals access to their system.	• Passwords need to be strong and changed regularly. • We should never follow a link or open an attachment from a suspicious or unwanted e-mail. • We should make sure we use a secure internet connection. • We should not share posts from social media indiscriminately.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find the odd-one-out in each of these groups of words and phrases. Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.

1 phishing / hacking / e-mail attachment / malicious attack / virus / malware

2 secure internet connection / firewall / strong password / anti-virus software / confidential information

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3 to fall prey (to sb/sth) / to deceive sb / to steal (data, etc) / to trick sb / to spread (a virus, etc)

Online Shopping

For	Against
• The range of products available online is practically unlimited. • Virtually any product you can think of can be delivered straight to your doorstep. • Consumers can easily compare prices. • Consumers no longer have to spend the best part of the weekend queueing in crowded shopping centres.	• There is no face-to-face interaction with knowledgeable and helpful sales staff, which is part of the pleasure of shopping. • Fraud and security breaches remain cause for concern for both consumers and retailers. • Online retailers are open 24/7.

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• Shipping is sometimes as expensive as the item you order.	• You cannot try on or finger the clothes you buy. • Once a retailer has got your address, they keep bombarding you with unsolicited e-mails and special offers.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

Meeting People Online

For	Against
• What people share and post online gives you a very good insight into their mind and character. • Online dating websites have already enabled thousands of people worldwide to find their soulmate. • We have become too busy to spend time meeting new people and getting to know them properly. • You can meet so many new people online that you can choose who you really like and who you would like to get in touch with. • Chatting with people online removes the pressure of face-to-face interaction.	• Online predators make friends with people online and then try to scam them. • People with bad intentions can track you down once they know your name and the town you live in. • There is no way to know who the person you meet online really is. • Subscription fees to sites which check for fake user profiles and offer more security can be exorbitant. • Meeting different people online can become so addictive that we may end up cutting ourselves off from the real world.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 made-up	**3** stress	**5** to deceive
2 partner	**4** to contact	**6** very expensive

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LANGUAGE

English as the Only Global Language

For	Against
• It will have a beneficial effect on communication between people from different countries. • Misunderstandings will be eradicated. • Cultural differences will be explained more easily. • Trade will increase between countries. • People will be brought closer together. • Conflict between countries can be more easily avoided.	• Losing a language means losing a culture. • When countries share the same language, they will become more similar and less unique. • People will have no reason to travel abroad if countries are similar. • The tourist trade might suffer, which can affect some countries dependent on that income. • Language includes history which should never be forgotten. • A single language will not necessarily mean less conflict.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary - Easily confused words: *affect* vs *effect*

- **affect** is usually a verb; it means *to produce a change in sb or sth, to have an influence on sb or sth.*
  Here are some expressions that are similar in meaning to *affect* : *to have an effect on / to have an influence on / to have an impact on / to have implications for.*
- **effect** is usually a noun; it means *a change caused by sth, the result of sth.*

Complete these sentences with *effect* or with the correct form of *affect*.

1 Business communication can be adversely _ _ _ _ _ by cultural misunderstandings.

2 Speaking the same language as your business partner will have a positive _ _ _ _ _ on the negotiations.

3 Bilingualism exerts a profound _ _ _ _ _ on the brain.

4 The growth of English as a lingua franca has _ _ _ _ _ education and business.

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Free Online Translation Renders Learning Foreign Languages Obsolete

Agree	Disagree
• Computers provide instant translation for languages. • Computers make fewer mistakes than humans in translation. • Languages take years to learn but only minutes for computers to translate. • Computers offer impartial translations. • Voice-to-voice translator apps already enable communication between millions of people with no knowledge of foreign languages.	• Computers will not be programmed for regional variations of language. • If the internet crashes, people will need language skills to communicate. • The internet is not accessible in some places in the world. • Learning a language allows for closer contact with local people. • Learning a language helps people understand a culture.

IELTS Liz

Collocations Exercise: Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

accurate	machine	simultaneous	voice-to-voice	approximate

1 _ _ _ _ _ translation is the same as *speech-to-speech* translation; the software takes the spoken word in one language and then vocalises it in another language.

2 An _ _ _ _ _ translation is the same as a *correct* translation.

3 An _ _ _ _ _ translation is the same as a *rough* translation.

4 *Automatic* translation is the same as _ _ _ _ _ translation – it is simply translation carried out by a computer.

5 In _ _ _ _ _ interpretation, the interpreter translates the speaker's words while the speaker is talking.

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Learning a Foreign Language at Primary School

For	Against
• At a young age, children absorb information more easily. • Older children are cognitively more mature and are therefore able to learn more with less input. • Children are already in the language acquisition stage, making learning a foreign language easier. • Children are naturally enthusiastic and can develop an interest in foreign languages through fun and games. • Children enjoy language classes because they are usually very different from classes in other subjects.	• Children should focus on their own language first. • Children may confuse languages if they try to learn their own language and a foreign one at the same time. • Not all countries have the facilities and teachers to offer a foreign language at primary school. • Many children lose interest in foreign languages as soon as they are tested like in other school subjects. • Learning becomes more difficult as a child ages.

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

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LEISURE

Shopping as a Leisure Activity

Reasons for Popularity	Other Activities
• Advertising on TV and in magazines tempts people to buy products and luxury items they do not need. • Peer pressure forces people to keep up with latest trends. • People buy on impulse due to the atmosphere and background music in shops. • Shopping malls offer all day facilities to encourage people to spend more time there. • Some people find shopping therapeutic because they can take their mind off their problems. • Credit cards have made it easier for people to go on a shopping spree.	• Sport is a hobby that people can enjoy whilst improving their health. • People have a chance to be more social and can improve their self-esteem. • Some interests, such as photography or art, offer a creative outlet. • Recreation activities can make life more fulfilling. • People can discover new skills they were not aware of. • Some hobbies, such as chess, keep people mentally astute. • Doing volunteer work for charities can be rewarding for the individual and beneficial for society. • Some pastimes can open up a whole new life for people.

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Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 an unrestrained activity

2 sharp or clever

3 a sudden strong urge

4 fashions

5 the ambience

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The Value of Free Time

For	Against
• People need a chance to_ _ _ _ _ (1) from stress and recharge their batteries. • Constant work can result in _ _ _ _ _ (2) and affect our mental wellbeing. • A healthy _ _ _ _ _ (3) balance can improve a person's quality of life. • People are more productive at work if they enjoy their free time. • Families can benefit from spending more social time together. • Free time can help people develop useful skills through hobbies.	• People should focus on work to earn money for their future financial stability. • Free time does not help pay the bills. • Free time can be expensive. People do not earn money during their free time and some recreational activities can be expensive. • People with too much time on their _ _ _ _ _ (4) can become depressed. • People can become _ _ _ _ _ (5) if they have nothing to do. • Work provides structure to the day.

IELTS Liz

lethargic	hands	unwind	burnout	work-life

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete the sentences about the value of free time.

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MEDIA & TV

Violence in the Media Promotes Violence in Society

For	Against
• Children who are exposed to violence on TV tend to play much more aggressively. • Violent films and video games may incite teenagers to commit criminal offences. • A sizeable proportion of films offer free advertising for guns and propaganda for violence. • Mass murderers make the headlines and become the heroes of disaffected youths. • Some studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between watching violent films and physical aggression against another person.	• Millions of people watch graphically violent films every day, but few become killers. • Extreme poverty and despair are more likely than violent films on TV to drive a person to commit acts of violence. • In many countries, violent crime is decreasing although violence continues to be omnipresent in the media. • Violent behaviour is a complex issue with a host of risk factors. • Media violence has a greater impact on our thinking and emotions than on our behaviour.

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Sentence Completion Exercise: Complete these definitions with a suitable word or phrase from the sentences above. Use the correct form of the word or phrase.

1 If something has a great _ _ _ _ _ on a person or situation, it affects them deeply.

2 If there is a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ between two variables, one decreases when the other increases and vice versa.

3 If you _ _ _ _ _ someone to something or to do something, you encourage them to do something unpleasant, unlawful or violent.

4 Someone or something that _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ gets a lot of publicity from the media.

5 Something that is _ _ _ _ _ is present everywhere or seems to be present everywhere.

6 We say that young people are _ _ _ _ _ when they no longer support society's values.

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Famous People Have a Right to Privacy from the Press

For	Against
• Privacy is one of the basic human rights. • Paparazzi are a nuisance and only **pander** to a voyeuristic audience. • **Media intrusion** into the lives of celebrities is downright immoral. • There is a huge difference between what is in the public interest and what the public are interested in. • The law needs to give privacy greater protection in order to **counter** the media's frequent invasions of privacy.	• Our parliamentary representatives should willingly be open to **scrutiny** at all times. • Many pop and movie stars actually like their private lives to be put **on display** in order to gain more public attention and promote their work. • From a legal perspective, the right to free expression is as important as the right to privacy. • The public interest in the private lives of those in power is entirely **legitimate**. • Ordinary people have a right to know whether or not public figures meet acceptable moral standards.

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Sentence Completion Exercise: Study the words in **bold** in the sentences above. Then use those words to complete the following sentences.

1 Whenever journalists _ _ _ _ _ to politicians, they lose their credibility.

2 There is an urgent need to protect the public from unwarranted _ _ _ _ _.

3 Some websites guarantee that your personal information will only be collected, used and disclosed with your knowledge and for _ _ _ __ purposes.

4 Some social networking sites' privacy practices have recently come under intense _ _ _ _ _.

5 Journalists have a duty to expose and _ _ _ _ _ injustice wherever and whenever it happens.

6 His persistent refusal to put his private life _ _ _ _ _ only made him seem more interesting.

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No Future for Radio

For	Against
• In the age of visual media, radio is gradually becoming obsolete. • People have become image- and screen-obsessed, so audio and print media will disappear unless they adapt. • To attract more listeners, radio will have to find news ways of broadcasting content and become more visual. • Many radio stations are out of touch with their audience and fail to improve on-air content. • To discover new songs and artists, young people prefer to turn to sites like YouTube.	• Radio can catch our imagination much more than visual media. • Listening to the radio in their car will remain the commuter's favourite activity for decades to come. • Radio broadcasting technology keeps developing all the time. • More and more people enjoy listening to the radio online via a computer or smartphone. • With connected cars, listening to internet radio while driving is now more popular than ever.

IELTS Liz

addicted captivate cease to exist devise disconnected from
do not draw outdated through tuning in

Vocabulary Exercise: Match these words and phrases from the sentences above with a synonymous word or phrase from the box.

obsolete	_ _ _ _ _	out of touch with	_ _ _ _ _
obsessed	_ _ _ _ _	fail to	_ _ _ _ _
disappear	_ _ _ _ _	catch	_ _ _ _ _
attract	_ _ _ _ _	listening	_ _ _ _ _
find	_ _ _ _ _	via	_ _ _ _ _

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Children Watching TV

For	Against
• Watching TV is a popular pastime for children whose parents cannot afford to let them take up a sport or join a hobby club. • When children watch TV with their parents, family bonds can be strengthened. • Children can access an extensive range of documentary and educational programmes in the comfort of their home. • Unlike surfing the Web or playing computer games, watching TV is often a whole-family activity. • Watching good entertainment programmes can be a source of relief to children who are ill or under stress.	• Watching TV rapidly becomes an addiction which is then hard to overcome. • Children need to interact with other people in order to develop linguistically, socially and emotionally. • Children are unable to make sense of all the violence they see on TV. • The more children watch TV, the less they exercise and the more junk food they eat. • TV viewing takes away time from reading and from doing homework.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: In each of these groups, cross out the item which does not *normally* form a collocation with the verb given.

1 to access: one's voicemail / a programme / a power failure / a file / information / a folder / a URL

2 to overcome: an addiction / one's shyness / resistance / difficulties / satisfaction / a problem

3 to strengthen: one's problems / a bond / a relationship / one's position / ties

4 to take up: a job / acting / a sport / a hobby / painting / a post / a lecture

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TV Influences Culture

For	Against
• Many people worldwide have learnt English through watching subtitled TV shows. • The huge number of violent films on TV has _ _ _ _ _ (1) people to violence. • Regular viewers end up thinking reality should be like what they see on TV, which _ _ _ _ _ (2) their values and their behaviour. • Lifestyle programmes from developed economies such as the UK are in high demand in emerging markets. • Some TV shows _ _ _ _ _ (3) controversial relationships as acceptable, which has the power to shape viewers' attitudes.	• Television merely _ _ _ _ _ (4) changing social and cultural values. • Culture is not monolithic and society is fragmented, so TV could not possibly influence all their constituent groups. • Sitcoms and reality shows hold up a mirror to society, so in fact culture influences TV. • TV's dependence on viewer ratings and advertising revenue means that it cannot _ _ _ _ _ (5) to risk challenging the prevailing values. • Culture is dynamic and keeps transforming itself, while many TV shows just _ _ _ _ _ (6) to preserve conventionality and the status quo.

IELTS Liz

affect afford aim desensitise portray reflect

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the correct form of the verbs in the box to complete the sentences about TV and culture.

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MUSIC IDEAS

Role of Music

For Individuals	For Society
• Music can stimulate our imagination and be a source of inspiration. • It is often said that music reduces stress and anxiety. • Many people find relief from pain and worry in music. • Listening to music can inspire people to create music themselves. • Music fulfils a basic human need for rhythm, melody and aesthetic pleasure.	• Music can affect the mood and the behaviour of a whole nation. • Music has a unique ability to unite people across age, gender and social divides. • In some countries, the music industry plays a significant role in the economy. • The music of a country is part of its culture and is imbued with its beliefs and ideologies. • Music can be used to create a cultural identity, a sense of belonging to a group.

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Collocations Exercise: Match items 1 – 4 with items a) – d) to make common collocations. Then read the sentences above again to check your answers.

1 to find	**a)** a need
2 to fulfil	**b)** relief (from pain, anxiety, etc)
3 to reduce	**c)** the imagination
4 to stimulate	**d)** stress

Now match the verbs 5 – 8 with items a) – d) above to make other collocations that are similar in meaning:

5 to fire **6** to get **7** to alleviate **8** to meet.

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Traditional Music

For	Against
• Traditional music is a vital part of a country's cultural heritage and should be preserved. • The language and the traditional music of a country are the best expression of its spirit. • Traditional melodies are extremely **versatile** and can be played in different styles. • It is sometimes used to strengthen national unity. • It will always **transcend** fads and fashions.	• Because of its close ties to a specific culture, it can be difficult for traditional music to **appeal** to a diverse society. • It is sometimes perceived as **uninventive** and too predictable. • It is out of touch with the reality of contemporary society. • It can **nurture** an unhealthy sense of **nostalgia**. • Some people find it repetitive and limited in scope.

Sentence Completion Exercise: Study the words in **bold** in the sentences above, using a good dictionary to help you if necessary. Then use those words to complete the following sentences.

IELTS LIZ

1 Certain music genres such as indie and heavy metal _ _ _ _ _ mostly to the younger generation.

2 _ _ _ _ _ is sometimes described as an overly sentimental longing for some past period that you would like to return to.

3 Good music can _ _ _ _ _ cultural differences and language barriers.

4 I quite like traditional songs, although I sometimes find the lyrics _ _ _ _ _.

5 It is important for parents to _ _ _ _ _ a love for music in their child.

6 The acoustic guitar is one of the most _ _ _ _ _ music instruments: it is played by the campfire as often as in the concert hall.

International Music

1 Like global brands, international music makes the world seem uniform.

2 Its success is a testimony to the fact that there is much more that unite us than divide us.

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3 Its omnipresence and success can make people underestimate their own musical heritage.

4 It strengthens our feeling of belonging to a global community.

5 It stimulates our curiosity to discover other cultures.

6 It is often very commercial and dominated by some of the wealthiest economies.

7 It is a powerful global business that threatens traditional music.

8 It contributes to the spread of English as a global language.

9 It builds bridges between people across the globe.

10 In the process of trying to please everyone, it loses depth and character.

Categorisation Exercise: Mark the arguments above (+) if there are *in favour of* international music, or (-) if they are *against* it.

Stopping Free Music Downloads

For	Against
• Music piracy threatens the livelihood of creative artists. • Downloading has become so normal that people fail to see its ethical and copyright implications. • It is strictly illegal to download copyrighted music without the express permission of the author. • From an ethical perspective, there is no difference between downloading music illegally and stealing a CD from a shop. • Stream-ripping sites rob artists of the royalties they deserve, and on the other hand make a lot of money from advertising.	• Music downloads should only be stopped if they are illegal. • CDs are outrageously expensive, so many music lovers cannot afford them. • If downloads were made illegal, listeners would soon find new ways to rip music from certain sites for offline listening. • Most people who pirate music would not buy CDs anyway, so free downloads do not hurt the music industry. • It is more urgent to stop record companies from exploiting creative artists than to ban free downloads.

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Collocations Exercise: In each group, identify the word which does not normally collocate with the keyword or keyphrase in **bold**. Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.

1 from an ethical lookout / perspective / point of view / standpoint / viewpoint

2 extremely / incredibly / outrageously / ridiculously / strongly / **expensive**

3 affect / endanger / express / protect / secure / threaten **somebody's livelihood**

4 absolutely / quite / severely / strictly / totally **illegal**

IELTS Liz

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NEWS

News: Is All News True?

Is All News True?	Function of the News
• It seems that we have officially entered the age of fake news and alternative facts. • Very few news media seem to be free from political bias. • In many countries around the world, news media have become instruments of propaganda. • News outlets are often tightly controlled, either by the government or by business interests. • If what happened can usually be described objectively, explaining how and why it happened necessarily involves subjectivity.	• The prime function of the news is to help people keep abreast of world events and current affairs. • Media outlets fulfil the fundamental human need to learn and share news. • Through public relations firms, news media shape public opinion. • News corporations may influence what is considered newsworthy in order to advance a particular agenda. • One of the chief purposes of the news media is to publicise government proclamations.

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Sentence Completion Exercise: Complete these definitions with a suitable word or phrase from the sentences about the news.

1 An event or a person that is _ _ _ _ _ is considered interesting enough to be reported in the media.

2 _ _ _ _ _ is prejudice against or in favour of a person or idea which may influence your judgement.

3 _ _ _ _ _ is the influence of personal opinions and feelings, rather than facts.

4 If you _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of a subject or situation, you make sure that you know the most recent facts about it.

5 If you _ _ _ _ _ a fact or an event, you make it widely known to the public.

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News Often Focuses on Bad News

Why	Solutions
• Some research suggests that we are more attracted to negative words in headlines. • Apparently, our brain has a negativity bias, which means we give more weight to negative events and thoughts than to positive ones. • News about conflicts and disasters tell us whether we are safe or need to react quickly to avoid danger. • In view of the powerful impact the news has on people, information and media literacy should be taught at school. • Earthquakes and plane crashes happen quickly, whereas good events often develop over a period of time.	• Whenever possible, editors should strive for a balance between negative and neutral or positive news. • People who have the final say on what goes into the news prefer negative coverage. • News media should focus more on the day-to-day concerns and achievements of local communities. • Grassroots movements and social media together could redefine the concept of news and newsworthiness. • People should be made aware of their hunger for sensational news and taught how to alleviate it.

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

Newspapers Will One Day Disappear

For	Against
• Competition from online media is squeezing out traditional print publishers. • Many newspapers have been forced to file for bankruptcy. • Increasingly, people are getting their news for free on the Internet.	• In some countries, free commuters' newspapers are proving hugely popular. • It may take time, but newspapers are bound to adapt to new technologies and create a new business model.

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• Newspapers are losing revenue from advertising and classified ads. • Even newspapers which have a digital edition are struggling for survival.	• In emerging economies, newspaper circulation is on the increase. • Newspapers will evolve and focus on background stories and analysis of global events instead of breaking news. • Sunday papers that focus on the news of the week are already highly popular in some parts of the world.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find the words and phrases in the sentences above that could be replaced with these:

1 developing markets

2 gratis

3 inform the authorities that they do not have enough money to pay their debts

4 information about something that has just happened

5 making less money

6 trying extremely hard to continue to exist

7 will certainly

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Online News is Reliable

Agree	Disagree
• Professional journalists see it as their duty to help the public differentiate between trustworthy and dubious news sources. • The multiplicity of news sites makes it possible to cross-reference what we read. • Even journalists now get some of their information from online sources.	• There are countless fake news and satire sites that the public mistake for genuine news sources. • Anonymous bloggers pass themselves off as journalists and spread news whose authenticity is hard to verify. • We should not blindly trust even reputable newspapers, let alone electronic news media.

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• Readers can react immediately to an online news item either to confirm or to contest its veracity. • Internet literacy is increasing, so people can easily tell whether an online news site is credible or not.	• Internet hoaxes spread like wildfire, and millions of readers fall for them. • The more any news item is repeated, the more people tend to believe its content is truthful.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find the odd-one-out in each of these groups of words and phrases. Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.

1 credible / implausible / reliable / trustworthy / truthful

2 dubious / fake / false / genuine / unreliable / untrue

3 authenticity / inaccuracy / truthfulness / veracity

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READING & BOOKS

Which are Best, e-Books or Paper Books?

e-Books	Paper Books
• They enable you to have immediate access to all the books in your personal library wherever you are. • You can access digital books on a wide variety of devices. • If you have eyesight problems, you can read them on a large PC monitor and adjust font size, colour and contrast. • People living in areas with no bookshops or postal services are no longer deprived of books. • Many e-book readers have a built-in dictionary, so you can look up any unfamiliar word.	• A physical book is less likely to get stolen than an e-reader. • The feel of a paper book, its weight and its smell are part of the enjoyment of reading. • A beautifully designed cover and quality paper make a book an object of desire. • Bookshop browsing provides more enjoyment and intellectual stimulation than scrolling through an online catalogue. • The print books on our shelves are permanent reminders of our intellectual journeys.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: Complete the explanations with appropriate words and phrases from the sentences.

1 A _ _ _ _ _ is something that makes you remember or think about something.

2 An _ _ _ _ _ of _ _ _ _ _ is something you really want to have or buy.

3 An e-book is the same as a _ _ _ _ _ book.

4 If you _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ a text on a computer screen, you move the text up or down to find the information you need.

5 If you are _ _ _ _ _ of something you need, you no longer have it or you are prevented from having it.

6 Paper books, _ _ _ _ _ books and _ _ _ _ _ books are the same things.

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Public Libraries

For	Against
• Public libraries make knowledge and information sources accessible to all. • They are welcoming places open to anyone irrespective of age, gender or social class.	• They lend resources and provide information but, unlike the Internet, they do not enable people to share. • They are sometimes patronized by shady characters who do not respect the rules of conduct.

Matching and Categorising Exercise: Match these sentence halves. Are the completed sentences *for* (+) or *against* (-) public libraries?

1 A public library is often

2 People can now access information

3 The books are often

4 There are more books available

5 They are a meeting place

6 They often host

a) cultural events and community activities.

b) damaged or stained.

c) for people who share similar interests.

d) online in the comfort of their own homes.

e) online than at the local library.

f) the heart and soul of a community.

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Reading Storybooks is a Waste of Time

Agree	Disagree
• Fiction disconnects the reader from reality and encourages them to live in a fantasy world of their own. • It is better for a child to interact with real people than to spend time with	• Storybooks for young children stimulate cognitive development. • Shared reading with children is a unique opportunity for parents to **bond with** them.

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story characters. • Some stories have a negative emotional **impact** on children. • Storybooks are often so beautifully illustrated that readers may **pay scant attention to** the written word. • Storybooks cannot compete with the appeal of videos.	• Reading aloud to children **fosters** the acquisition of literacy skills. • Good stories are both enjoyable and educational and **instil** a love of reading in children. • When we read a story, we can learn empathy as we **identify with** some of the characters and see the world through their eyes.

Sentence Completion Exercise: Study the words in **bold** in the sentences above. Then use those words to complete the following sentences.

1 A good teacher tries to _ _ _ _ _ confidence into his or her students.

2 Literature _ _ _ _ _ the emotional and cognitive development of children.

3 Reading a good story together is a great way to _ _ _ _ _ your child.

4 Stories can have an immediate _ _ _ _ _ on children's social behaviour.

5 Unfortunately, some patrons _ _ _ _ _ the library rules of conduct.

6 When we read a story, we sometimes _ _ _ _ _ the hero, sometimes with the villain.

IELTS Liz

Libraries should Spend more Money on Technology, not Books

Agree	Disagree
• There is obviously a limit to how many _ _ _ _ _ (1) books a library can store. • Libraries which offer free Internet access attract many more users. • Producing printed books puts a great strain on the environment and on _ _ _ _ _ (2) resources. • Digital resources are less _ _ _ _ _ (3) to natural disasters.	• Library patrons expect print versions of books and periodicals since they could access their _ _ _ _ _ (4) edition at home. • Many art and scientific books are not _ _ _ _ _ (5) in digital format. • Print books make people less screen _ _ _ _ _ (6). • Citizens do not want their local library to turn into yet another Internet café.

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• It has become impossible to do any serious research without access to digital resources.	• Public libraries are seriously underfunded and should not waste money on state-of-the-art technology.

available	dependent	digital	natural	physical	vulnerable

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete the arguments *for* and *against* the idea that libraries should spend more money on technology rather than books.

IELTS Liz

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SOCIETY

Littering

Causes	Solutions
• People do not have enough respect and do not feel personally responsible for the environment. • Some people are not aware of the effects littering can have. • Some people develop bad habits of dropping litter rather than disposing of it properly. • There are not enough easily available litter bins in cities and towns. • People feel there will be no consequences and they can get away with it. • Once litter starts to pile up, people feel less inclined to dispose of their own litter responsibly.	• There should be harsher punishment for people who litter and more street cameras to catch them in the act. • The government should provide more litter bins for public use. • Recycling should be encouraged and made more accessible. • The government should run a campaign against littering. • Children should be educated in schools about the effects of littering.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 severe

2 to be likely to behave in a particular way

3 to not suffer any bad consequences after doing something wrong

4 to see somebody while they are doing something wrong

5 to throw away something that you no longer need or want.

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Homelessness

Causes	Solutions
• Abusive home environments force some children to run away. • Some people cannot afford their own accommodation as house prices have soared beyond their means. • Some people are drug or alcohol addicts who struggle to function in normal society. • A lack of affordable housing can result in some people becoming homeless. • Domestic violence or mental health problems can drive people onto the streets. • Unemployment and poverty are common factors that push people into living on the streets.	• The government should provide permanent supportive housing for children and adults escaping abuse. • More free or affordable housing should be provided for people on low income and the unemployed. • People with drug problems should be given proper treatment. • Housing benefit should be provided for people without homes in order to reduce social exclusion. • Programs should be designed to help low-income people increase their income.

IELTS Liz

Collocations Exercise: Match items 1 – 6 with items a) – f) to make common collocations from the sentences above. Then read the sentences again to check your answers.

1 social

2 drug

3 permanent supportive

4 mental

5 housing

6 domestic

a) health

b) benefit

c) violence

d) exclusion

e) addict

f) housing

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The Importance of Traditional Lifestyles

Reasons for Preserving Traditional Lifestyles
• Traditional lifestyles often contain valuable knowledge of the natural world that must not be lost.
• Unique _ _ _ _ _ (1) of the world around us and our place in it are part of many traditional lifestyles.
• Traditional values such as patience, _ _ _ _ _ (2), respect for elders, loyalty and humility are still important in today's world.
• Traditional lifestyles are a direct link to our past and our cultural _ _ _ _ _ (3).
• Many countries rely on attracting tourists by offering traditional cultural experiences.
• We can gain useful insight into natural _ _ _ _ _ (4) that can help us deal with illness today by studying some traditional ways of life.
• Should the modern world crash, we will need to _ _ _ _ _ (5) the traditional ways of life.

IELTS Liz

remedies	perspectives	fall back on	selflessness	heritage

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete the sentences about the importance of traditional lifestyles.

Traditional Lifestyles are Being Lost

Causes	Solutions
• As people leave the countryside for cities to work, traditions are lost.	• The government should provide of financial support to keep local, rural

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- Globalisation has resulted in the loss of local traditions.
- The elderly are no longer a source of wisdom and for young people today who do not value their traditions. (1)
- The younger generation have more interest in modern lifestyles.
- The world is changing too fast to protect their traditional lifestyles. (2)

communities alive. (3)

- Schools and parents should encourage children to learn more from their grandparents.
- Schools should teach children about local traditions and ways of living on as part of the curriculum. (4)
- People should be made aware of the importance of keeping for traditional lifestyles. (5)
- TV programmes and soap operas should make a point of putting a positive spin on traditional lifestyles.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

IELTS Liz

People Moving from Rural to Urban Areas

Causes	Problems
• The majority of people relocate to find employment. • Rural areas offer limited opportunities for young people to better themselves. • Educational and medical facilities are of a better standard in urban areas. • Children will have brighter future prospects in a city.	• Cities will struggle with overpopulation. • There will be a lack of housing for people coming from rural areas into cities. • Unemployment in cities will increase. • Poverty will rise in urban areas as a result of unemployment. • Crime rates will increase in urban areas. • Underpopulation in rural areas will affect agricultural production and local communities.

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Vocabulary Exercise: Find the odd-one-out in each of these groups of words and phrases. Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.

1 to increase / to go up / to plummet / to rise / to grow / to climb

2 to fall / to decrease / to go down / to rocket / to decline / to drop

3 a lack of / too little / too few / not enough / insufficient / a glut of / a shortage of

4 a dearth of / a surfeit of / too many / a surplus of / too much

Society Needs Rules to Function

With rules	Without rules
• People need to know what behaviour is acceptable and what behaviour is not. • Individuals and society can function better when given guidelines. • Rules and punishment deter people from committing crime. • Rules protect vulnerable people and keep everyone safe.	• People would be able to hurt others with impunity. • There would be no safety in communities. • Children would grow up not knowing right from wrong. • Society would be thrown into complete disarray. • A society without rules is no longer a society.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 chaotic

2 defenceless

3 put (somebody) off (doing something)

4 without consequences

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Cultural Diversity

For	Against
• Variety is important in life. • People will learn to be more tolerant of other people's beliefs. • Children will learn that all people and beliefs are equal. • The world will become more peaceful and homogeneous. • Diversity means that society is rich and interesting. • Innovation can _ _ _ _ _ (1) new perspectives and different cultural outlooks. • Society will become more integrated.	• Society might start to _ _ _ _ _ (2) its cultural identity. • Cultures might start _ _ _ _ _ (3) each other for predominance. • Cultural clashes might _ _ _ _ _ (4) violence. • Some cultural groups may feel that others are _ _ _ _ _ (5) preferential treatment. • There may be a clash in religious beliefs.

IELTS Liz

compete against	give	lose	result in	stem from

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the correct form of the verbs in the box to complete the sentences about cultural diversity.

Happiness

Definitions vary

- Happiness is different for each person depending on their perspective and personal circumstances in life.
- Some people think happiness is a feeling rather than a state of a person's life.
- People living in poverty often define happiness as connected to money, while people who are sick define it as relating to health.

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- People from different social and cultural backgrounds have different values and needs.

Factors influencing happiness

Matching Exercise: Match these sentence halves to find five factors influencing happiness.

1 Having basic human needs met and having human rights upheld

2 Money can affect happiness, but how much money

3 Strong family ties are considered essential to happiness as human beings are

4 Some people think happiness

5 To lose health

a) is just a state of mind.

b) social creatures and not meant to live in isolation.

c) can be a source of misery and unhappiness.

d) is needed depends on each individual.

e) must be a prerequisite to happiness.

Utopia

IELTS Liz

Definition	Creating utopia
• Utopia is a perfect world where people feel happy and safe. • Crime rates are low or **non-existent**. • People feel a sense of community and trust one another. • Fear is not known in a utopian society. • People are able to **live life to the full** and enjoy perfect health. • A place without corruption, **greed** or selfishness.	• Provide people with education which helps them develop their own unique skills. • Provide free health care for all citizens regardless of income or age. • Teach children to obey laws to form a stable society and strong future generations. • Have police on the streets to deter crime and create a sense of security. • Promote family values and strong **bonds** between neighbours. • Create **close-knit** communities that support each other.

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Sentence Completion Exercise: Study the words in **bold** in the sentences above. Then use those words to complete the following sentences.

1 As long as people are motivated by _ _ _ _ _, there will be conflict and inequality.

2 Better health care and higher standards of living mean that in many countries elderly people can now _ _ _ _ _.

3 In an ideal world hatred, violence and poverty would be _ _ _ _ _.

4 In times of crisis, it helps to live in a _ _ _ _ _ community.

5 Trying to forge _ _ _ _ _ between the different communities should be the top priority of those in power.

The Generation Gap

Causes	Solutions
• People are no longer brought up in the same way as their parents were. • Young people are more at ease with modern technology and can keep pace with its development. • Technology has altered the way people communicate and interact with each other. • Free time activities have changed since the previous generation. • The wisdom of the elderly is no longer relevant in today's society.	• Parents need to actively engage their children in family social life. • Parents need to find a common ground on which to build a bond with their children. • Parents should encourage their children to spend time with their grandparents. • Schools can organise social projects to develop interaction between children and the older generation. • An interchange of knowledge between children and the elderly can bring modern technology and history together.

IELTS Liz

Sentence Completion Exercise: Complete these definitions with a suitable word from the sentences about the generation gap.

1 A _ _ _ _ _ is a close connection between two or more people.

2 If you _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ with someone who moves or something that changes, you move or develop as fast as them.

3 If you _ _ _ _ _ something, you change it slightly.

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4 If you are _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ with somebody or something, you are relaxed and comfortable.

Tighter Gun Control

For	Against
• People with mental health issues can pose a serious threat to society if they own a gun. • Banning guns or having stricter gun laws will not stop crime. • The freedom of gun ownership is outdated from a time when the common person was more at risk. • Gun ownership increases the possibility of violent crime. • A peaceful society will never be achieved as long as it is easy for people to buy deadly weapons.	• People should be allowed to have weapons to protect themselves with. • Many people own guns for sports or hunting which are harmless activities. • Most guns are not used as a form of self-defence. • There are more motor vehicle-related deaths than deaths from firearms.

IELTS Liz

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

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SPACE EXPLORATION

Spending Money on Space Exploration

For	Against
• Space exploration might lead to solutions to some of our planet's problems. • Man has always had a desire for adventure and exploration, and to surpass anything that previous generations had achieved. • Many people believe that the long-term survival of the human race depends on people being able to move off planet Earth. • Some technologies that we commonly use today were originally developed for space exploration. • The digital imaging processing developed by NASA to study pictures of the moon contributed to the development of the MRI scan. • Space exploration creates countless jobs.	• The taxpayers' money would be better spent on health and education. • Governments fund outer space research mainly with a view to achieving military dominance. • Space missions put astronauts' lives in danger and expose them to various health hazards. • It can be a source of conflict if countries use satellites to spy on each other. • Many social problems could be solved with only a fraction of the money squandered on space exploration.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 innumerable

2 something that may cause accidents or be dangerous

3 the fact of being more powerful or of having more influence than somebody else

4 to be better or greater than somebody or something else

5 to use (resources, money, opportunities, etc) in a wasteful or foolish way

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Sending Communications into Space

For	Against
• Establishing communication with aliens from space could give us access to unimagined knowledge and resources. • Trying to improve communication between cultures and countries would be more useful for mankind. • Scientists suggest that there could be other civilisations in our galaxy that we might be able to communicate with. • As we now have the potential to wipe ourselves off the face of the earth, we need to find other habitable planets. • If we received a response to a signal sent from Earth, our view of the universe would be utterly transformed.	• Even if there were living organisms in outer space, it is unlikely that we would know how to communicate with them. • An interstellar probe sent from Earth would probably contaminate any alien planet, or contaminate us on its return. • Earth-like planets are so far away that it would take hundreds or thousands of years for any message to reach them. • We have not even learnt how to communicate with all the species on Earth. • Sending signals into space is probably the best way to find out if there is life elsewhere in our galaxy.

IELTS Liz

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

Note:

communication (uncountable) = the process of sending and receiving information

communication (countable) = the ways of sending and receiving information

Space Tourism

For	Against
• Space is the final frontier for mankind to explore. • The nascent space tourism industry is already creating countless employment opportunities.	• Space tourism revenue can be used to finance the space industry's military ambitions. • Space tourism is an elite industry designed to indulge the whims of the super rich.

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- Advances in space tourism technology might lead to the creation of space settlements.
- A large number of people have already signed up for future space trips.
- The negative impact of global mass tourism renders the search for new destinations inevitable.

- There are still so many untrodden paths and hidden gems on our planet that escaping to the cosmos is unnecessary.
- Rocket emissions will further damage the ozone layer and aggravate global warming.
- The risks involved are currently so high that every space tourist is in fact dicing with death.

Vocabulary Exercise: The words in *italics* all appear in the sentences *for* and *against* space tourism. Choose the best option (**a**, **b** or **c**) to complete the following statements.

1 A *nascent* industry, democracy, science, etc is

a) just coming into existence

b) highly developed

c) experiencing difficulties

2 If something is *inevitable*, it is

a) unsuccessful

b) certain to happen

c) likely to fail

IELTS Liz

3 If you *indulge somebody's whims*, you

a) let them have whatever they fancy

b) try to make them feel important

c) criticise them for being moody

4 If someone or something *aggravates* a bad situation, they make it

a) widely known

b) last longer

c) worse

5 You say that someone is *dicing with death* if they are

a) taking a lot of safety precautions

b) not prepared to take risks

c) putting themselves in a dangerous situation

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SPORT & EXERCISE

International Sports Events

For	Against
• Highly publicised events often inspire people to take part in sport regularly. • They spread good cheer and optimism, which can give the economy a boost. • The host country is in the limelight and can enhance its image. • Mega sports events attract a large number of foreign visitors, which promotes retail trade and stimulates the economy. • Increased tourism and infrastructure development benefit the host nation.	• The money spent on state-of-the-art stadiums and arenas would be better spent on education and health services. • Hosting events like the World Cup may result in the country incurring huge debts. • After being the focus of the world for a few weeks, places where the events were held soon slip back into anonymity. • Events which draw huge crowds are often potential targets for a terrorist attack. • If the event is not well organised, the image of the host nation abroad will be tarnished.

IELTS Liz

Collocations Exercise: In each group, identify the verb which does not normally collocate with the noun in **bold**.

1 take part in (a) / do /achieve (a) / engage in (a) / play (a) / **sport**

2 clean up / enhance / improve / rise / **one's image**

3 improve / decrease / revive / kick-start / stimulate / strengthen / **the economy**

4 perform / hold / host / stage / organise / **an event**

5 amass / have / incur / borrow / run up / **debts**

6 attract / draw / pull in / evolve / **crowds**

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Dangerous Sports should be Banned

Agree	Disagree
• Extreme sports get far too much publicity compared with safe sports that can help us maintain and improve our health. • The true spirit of sport is to motivate all people to participate, not just a tiny minority of daredevils. • Sustaining a lifelong injury is too high a price to pay for a brief adrenaline rush. • Our health is our greatest asset, so sports that put it at risk should not be allowed. • It is selfish to risk one's life for pleasure.	• All sports are potentially dangerous, including some of the most popular ones. • Better coaching, stricter rules and enhanced sports equipment will greatly reduce the risk of injury. • Many more deaths are caused by road accidents than by playing sports, yet nobody would consider banning driving. • Extreme sports give people the opportunity to challenge themselves physically and psychologically. • Most people who take up a sport are aware of the risks associated with it.

IELTS Liz

Collocations Exercise: Match items 1 – 5 with items a) – e) to make common collocations from the sentences above. Then read the sentences again to check your answers.

1 to sustain	**a)** a sport
2 to put sb / sth	**b)** the risk (of) / a risk
3 to risk	**c)** at risk
4 to reduce	**d)** an injury
5 to take up	**e)** one's life

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Children should Learn Team Sports, not Individual Sports

(Cooperation *vs* Competition)

Agree	Disagree
• Learning team spirit makes us more adequate members of society. • Team sports _ _ _ _ _ (1) a sense of belonging and a sense of respect for both team mates and opponents. • Team mates learn to support each other to _ _ _ _ _ (2) a common goal. • Playing in a team gives children the opportunity to _ _ _ _ _ (3) with others and to get over their shyness. • Children generally have more fun when they engage in an activity with their peers rather than on their own.	• Individual sports are better at teaching children to _ _ _ _ _ (4) on their own skills and be independent-spirited. • In team sports it is easy to hide behind someone on a poor day. • Team sports often have fixed training schedules, which can create difficulties for both parents and children. • When children play a team sport, they have less time to _ _ _ _ _ (5) in sporting activities with their parents. • Children with a disability or a medical condition might _ _ _ _ _ (6) emotionally if they are forced to fit into a team.

IELTS Liz

achieve	engage	foster	interact	rely	suffer

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the verbs in the box to complete the sentences about team sports *vs* individual sports.

Governments should Build Sports Facilities for Top Athletes *vs* the Public

For Top Athletes	For the Public
• Top athletes are like ambassadors for their country and as such deserve top-notch training facilities.	• The health of the nation is worth a lot more than the gold medals won by a handful of star athletes.

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- If they are to compete successfully on the global stage, top athletes need a proper sports infrastructure.
- The success of star athletes motivates the masses to engage in sport.
- The countries with the largest number of top athletes are often those with the best sports facilities.
- Schools should be the main beneficiaries of public investment in sport.

- The success of top athletes brings prestige and worldwide attention to their country.
- Amateurs too need suitable venues and facilities.
- Some of the children of today will be the top athletes of tomorrow, so they need to be provided with facilities to get involved in sport.
- The declining number of people engaging in sport is in great part to be blamed on the lack of sports facilities.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

Watching Sport on TV is a Waste of Time

IELTS Liz

Agree	Disagree
• Doing sport improves our health, while **slouching** in front of the TV has the opposite effect. • Watching sport on TV easily becomes an addiction that makes our body stiff and rusty. • Watching sport indiscriminately **disrupts** family life and relationships. • TV viewing is a passive activity often accompanied by **compulsive** consumption of junk food. • If you love a sport, you could be outside actually playing it instead of being **slumped** in front of the TV.	• Not all sports fans have the chance to attend sports events • Watching our favourite teams or athletes on TV can inspire us to get actively involved in sport ourselves. • Television is a convenient and **affordable** way for armchair sports enthusiasts to keep their passion alive. • Many people who play a sport can improve their skills by watching others again and again. • Being **passionate** about something makes us happier human beings, and for many people following sport on TV is a real passion.

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Vocabulary Exercise: Complete these explanations with the correct form of the words in **bold** in the sentences above.

1 If someone or something _ _ _ _ _ an event or process, they cause difficulties that prevent it from continuing as usual.

2 If you _ _ _ _ _ somewhere, you sit down or fall there heavily.

3 If you _ _ _ _ _, you sit or stand with your head bent over and your shoulders hanging forward, so that you look bored, lazy or tired.

4 If you are _ _ _ _ _ about something, you have very strong feelings about it.

5 If you say that something is _ _ _ _ _, you mean that you have enough money to buy it.

6 The word '_ _ _ _ _' describes people or their behaviour when they cannot stop doing something wrong or harmful.

Who is Responsible for Children to Exercise?

Schools	Parents
• All schools should encourage students to take part in a sport.	• Parents should **set an example** for their children by engaging in a sporting activity.
• As the aim of school is to develop human potential, sport and physical education should have **pride of place** on the curriculum.	• Parents should **instil** a love of physical activity into their children to promote healthy development.
• For centuries, 'A healthy mind in a healthy body' has been the **motto** of many educational institutions.	• Family life can greatly benefit from parents and children being active together.
• For many children, school is the only place where they can get involved in sport.	• Considering the growing number of overweight and obese children, parents have a duty to ensure that their kids get plenty of exercise.
• Compulsory education should not favour academic subjects **at the expense of** sport.	• Parents **play in key role** in helping their kids find a sport that they enjoy.

Sentence Completion Exercise: Study the words and phrases in **bold** in the sentences above. Then use those words and phrases to complete the following sentences.

1 Posters of my daughter's favourite athletes have _ _ _ _ _ in her bedroom.

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2 Sport and exercise _ _ _ _ _ in the overall development of children.

3 Team sports _ _ _ _ _ both a spirit of competition and a sense of cooperation in children.

4 'Be a sport, not a bully' was the school's _ _ _ _ _.

5 The headmaster _ _ _ _ _ for his staff and for the students by taking part in the charity marathon.

6 The junior team have a lot of discipline, but _ _ _ _ _ enthusiasm.

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TECHNOLOGY

Banning Mobile Phones in Public Areas

For	Against
• Most public areas have free phones that can be used in case of emergency. • Mobile phones can be used to take photos and videos and so violate other people's privacy. • They are intrusive and have an adverse effect on the environment of other people. • In hospitals and airplanes, they can interfere with sensitive equipment. • They are a permanent distraction when they are allowed in the classroom.	• As public phone booths seem to be on the verge of extinction, it would be irresponsible to ban mobile phone use. • Mobile phones save lives as emergency services can easily locate you when you call. • Instead of imposing a ban, it would be more practical to have designated areas for cell phone users. • Many people think that a ban would curtail their personal freedom. • Cell phones are a relatively recent invention and people just need a little more time to learn how to use them properly in public.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 affecting someone's private life in an annoying way

2 negative; harmful

3 places set aside for a particular purpose

4 to act against something that should be treated with respect

5 to be at the point where something is about to happen

6 to reduce; to limit.

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Technology has Helped People Become more Social

Agree	Disagree
• Everyone can easily belong to multiple online communities. • Communication technologies _ _ _ _ _ (1) distances and enable everyone to connect around the globe. • Through social media, anyone can _ _ _ _ _ (2) a network of like-minded people. • Certain apps enable families and friends in different corners of the world to chat for free 24/7. • Many people have been able to _ _ _ _ _ (3) with long-lost friends through a social networking site.	• Phone calls and messages constantly _ _ _ _ _ (4) face-to-face conversations and friendly get-togethers. • Many people end up spending more time onscreen than in face-to-face interaction. • When in company, people cut themselves off from their surroundings and _ _ _ _ _ (5) phone calls and messages. • It is easy to _ _ _ _ _ (6) false information online in order to ruin someone's reputation. • Under the veil of anonymity, many people in chat rooms and on discussion boards easily become offensive.

IELTS Liz

abolish	build up	disrupt	disseminate	prioritise	reconnect

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the verbs in the box to complete the sentences about whether or not technology has helped people become more social.

The Gap between Old and Young has Widened due to Technology

Sentence Completion Exercise: Choose the correct option (a) or (b) in *italics* to present arguments *for* and *against* the idea that the gap between old and young people has widened because of technology.

For

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1 It is much easier for younger people to master new technology because they were (a) *born* / (b) *not born* in an environment where it was omnipresent.

2 Most schools now teach computer skills, whereas (a) *younger* / (b) *older* people have to start learning from scratch.

3 The relevance of new technology (a) *is* / (b) *is not* quite obvious if you have lived happily without a PC or mobile phone for forty years.

4 (a) *Many* / (b) *Few* adults have difficulty keeping abreast of technological change.

5 As parents and children spend (a) *less* / (b) *more* time onscreen and (a) *less* / (b) *more* with each other, the generation gap widens.

Against

6 Family bonds are (a) *weakened* / (b) *strengthened* when children teach their parents and grandparents how to use new technology.

7 Mobile phones and social media make it (a) *easier* / (b) *more difficult* for grandparents to keep in touch with their children and grandchildren.

8 Many elderly people (a) *wish* / (b) *do not wish* to keep on learning.

9 Technological skills and knowledge have (a) *never* / (b) *always* been passed down from one generation to the next.

10 Parents and children can play video games together, which (a) *fosters* / (b) *impedes* family bonding.

IELTS Liz

Mankind is Now Dependent on Modern Technology

1 'What's your wi-fi password?' is one of the first questions people ask when they visit you.

2 Digital detox holidays are growing in popularity.

3 For the majority of people, the issue is not dependency on modern technology but access to it.

4 Internet addiction is now recognised as a mental disorder.

5 Wishing to live with the times is not the same as dependency.

6 Less than half of the world's population use the Internet.

7 Many people have found ways to increase face-to-face time with family and friends.

8 People look at you strangely if you ask for directions in town or for a wake-up call at a hotel.

9 We drive everywhere, so walking and cycling have become hobbies or sports.

10 We tend to rely on technology more than before, but this does not mean that we cannot live without it.

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Categorisation Exercise: Mark the sentences above (+) if they *support* the argument that mankind is now dependent on technology, or (-) if they *do not*.

Technology Increases the Gap between Rich and Poor

Agree	Disagree
• The most sophisticated hospitals are private and cater mainly for wealthy patients. • Increasing the automation in manufacturing means many workers lose their jobs while factory owners increase profits. (1) • The use of cutting-edge technology in elite private schools gives children of wealthy parents a big advantage over poorer children. • Poorer people get into a debt to buy state-of-the-art digital devices. (2) • Highly profitable hi-tech companies relocate to developing countries where labour costs are lower.	• Thanks to technology, countries that were still underdeveloped half a century ago are now among the world's superpowers. • Increasingly, public places they offer free Internet access. (3) • Advances in aviation technology have made travelling by air very much more affordable. (4) • In countries without landline communications, mobile phones provide any access to jobs, education and healthcare. (5) • Advances in agricultural technology have improved the health and standard of living of people in developing countries.

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

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The Internet is Mankind's Most Important Invention

Agree	Disagree
• It is an inexhaustible source of knowledge and information. • It enables people around the globe to communicate in writing and speaking in real time. • Information can be disseminated faster than ever before. • Thanks to the Internet, universal access to education will soon be a reality. • The invention of the telephone, the light-bulb and the computer made the Internet possible.	• It was invented only three decades ago, so we can only speculate about its future impact. • Without the wheel, it is unlikely that mankind would ever have reached an advanced stage of technological development. • Only about half of the world's population has access to the Internet. • It is the first invention that turned our planet into a global village. • It is hard to imagine how our civilization would have evolved without the engine.

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

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TOURISM

Tourism

For	Against
• The tourist trade is a valuable source of income for many countries. • For some countries, tourism makes up a large proportion of the national income. • Increased demand from tourists can **boost** local economies and local businesses. • Job opportunities increase as more tourists visit local areas. • Tourism can also bring investment opportunities from wealthy foreign investors.	• Tourists can **influence** and even **alter** local culture. • Historical buildings can be damaged by large numbers of tourists. • Having a large tourist trade can **adversely** affect the environment by causing pollution. • Money from the tourist trade does not always benefit local communities. • Very often, it is only individual business owners who benefit from the tourist trade. • People who **rely** on the tourist trade will be affected by a world economic **downturn**.

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Vocabulary Exercise: Study the words in **bold** in the sentences above. Then match each one to the word (**a** - **j**) that has a similar meaning in the context of the sentence. You will only need six of the ten words given.

a) affect

b) change

c) depend

d) effect

e) negatively

f) radically

g) recession

h) recovery

i) stimulate

j) weaken

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Tourism Causes Damage to Historical Buildings

Causes	Solutions
• Many buildings were not built to accommodate such vast hordes of people. • The large numbers of people flooding into historical buildings will inevitably cause erosion. • Some people who visit historical buildings are not respectful and purposely cause damage.	• Increasing the entry fees means that more money will be available for restoration and conservation. • The number of people entering any historical building should be restricted. • More guards should be posted around historical buildings to prevent intentional damage.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find the odd-one-out in each of these groups of words.
Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.

1 inevitably / perforce / unavoidably / necessarily / regrettably

2 restricted / limited / curbed / recorded / reduced

3 irreparable / intentional / wilful / deliberate

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People Need to Learn the Language in order to Travel

For	Against
• Knowing the local language enables tourists to have a richer cultural experience by talking to local people about their country and history. • People will be able to communicate their needs, which is important while travelling, and organising transportation and accommodation.	• Package holidaymakers will have representatives of their country to welcome them and help them, which _ _ _ _ _ (4) learning a language unnecessary. • Not all people travelling abroad _ _ _ _ _ (5) cultural experiences or wish to interact with the local population.

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• Lack of effective communication may mean that misunderstandings with locals are not quickly _ _ _ _ _ (1). • It might be risky to _ _ _ _ _ (2) into some countries without being able to ask for help or to understand written notices and simple etiquette. • In some countries, menus are only available in the local language, so people with allergies would definitely need to be able to _ _ _ _ _ (3) about the ingredients of the dishes and meals on offer.	• Many people manage to communicate via translation apps. • Guidebooks usually contain enough information for people to get around and _ _ _ _ _ (6) without foreign language skills. • Not everyone has the time or means to learn a language before they travel abroad. • In some situations, body language, such as hand gestures and miming, can work just as well as verbal communication.

cope enquire render resolve seek venture

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the correct form of the verbs in the box to complete the sentences above.

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People should Adapt to the Culture of the Country they are Visiting

For	Against
• It is a sign of respect to follow the traditions and customs of a country. • By not adapting to the culture, it is possible to deeply offend or insult a local person, which could lead to an unpleasant situation. • Part of going abroad is to experience firsthand how other people live. • By adapting to a culture, people can be more easily accepted by locals, which	• It is not always easy to find access to all information about a country's cultural practices. • People's culture forms part of their identity, so they should not have to change it. • People should not have to adapt to any customs that might conflict with their religion.

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can enhance a person's travel experience. • In some countries, cultural rules are fixed, and non-compliance is punishable by law.	• Some countries depend on the tourist trade for their economy and should therefore accept tourists as they are, including the differences in culture. • It is unrealistic to expect that all foreigners entering a country will discard their own culture in favour of new and unfamiliar customs.

awkward chargeable clash directly enrich
established forgo gravely rely

Vocabulary Exercise: Match these words and phrases from the sentences above with a synonymous word or phrase from the box.

deeply	_ _ _ _ _	punishable by law	_ _ _ _ _
unpleasant	_ _ _ _ _	conflict	_ _ _ _ _
firsthand	_ _ _ _ _	depend	_ _ _ _ _
enhance	_ _ _ _ _	discard	_ _ _ _ _
fixed	_ _ _ _ _		

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People Do Not Need to Travel if They Have TV

For	Against
• Armchair travellers are spared all the hassle of planning a holiday. • Documentaries and specialised TV channels enable everyone to discover the world from the comfort of their own homes. • Many people actually watch programmes about places they have already been to, or which they intend to visit.	• Even the best HD images cannot replace the excitement of meeting new people and discovering their culture. • A good travel TV show can awaken our almost instinctive urge to discover new places. • Travelling is much more than a simple audio-visual experience. • You can see more of a country and learn more about it in a 30-minute documentary than you would during a

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• Travelling vicariously saves you money and reduces your carbon footprint. Travel TV channels offer a wealth of fascinating programmes that can captivate viewers more than direct experience.	month's holiday there. TV is no substitute for being under new skies and experiencing a new place with all your senses.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

Travelling in a Group or Alone

Group	Individually
• Group travel creates bonds between the people involved in the experience. • Group travel greatly reduces safety concerns. • Travelling with people from your country removes the stress of having to struggle in a foreign language all day long. • It is rare for all members of a group to share exactly the same interests, so there will always be someone who is dissatisfied. • Travelling always involves making a lot of decisions, which can be quite time consuming in a group. • When you are in a group, you are less open to people outside the group.	• The solo traveller does not depend on anyone and takes all decisions on their own. • Travelling on one's own is a great opportunity to develop one's self-confidence and develop as a person. • Solo travellers are more inclined to meet new people and make new friends. • Travelling solo can be more expensive as you cannot benefit from group discounts on transport, food or accommodation. • If you feel ill or lonely, there is nobody to cheer you up or support you. • A solo traveller can be an easy target for someone with bad intentions.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find the odd-one-out in each of these groups of words.
Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.

1 alone / by oneself / on one's own / solo / in company

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2 to cheer sb up / to comfort sb / to dishearten sb / to raise sb's spirits

3 concerns / measures / worries / risks / hazards

Ecotourism

For	Against
• Ecotourism is an easy way of getting actively and involved in caring for our environment. (1) • It enables tourists to learn about the flora and fauna of a specific location. • It protects the environment and boosts local economies. • It helps preserve local traditions and creates jobs for local people. • It can provide incentives for an environmental protection. (2)	• When indigenous cultures are regularly exposed to masses of tourists, their traditional cultural practices change or disappear. • Local people sometimes they revive ancient traditions only to provide photo opportunities. (3) • Local communities are sometimes displaced to make way for new hotels and by tourist attractions. (4) • 'Ecotourism' can become an empty slogan used by unscrupulous profit-making organisations to attract environmentally conscious tourists. • Local communities that depend excessively on ecotourism risk being shattered if there is another global economic in crisis. (5)

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Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

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TRANSPORT

Congestion in Cities

Causes

1 There has been an increase in the number of people owning a vehicle.

2 Fewer people are choosing to travel using public transport in favour of private transport.

3 The infrastructure of many major cities is inadequate to deal with the high volume of traffic.

4 Frequent roadworks result in roads being closed and congestion building in other areas of the city.

5 The same opening and closing times of business, services and shops cause mass rush-hour traffic.

6 There are few or no incentives for people to cycle.

Solutions

a) Build overpasses and underpasses to deal with roads that were never built to handle a large volume of traffic.

b) Encourage people to use bicycles by offering cheap bike rentals throughout the city centre.

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c) Improve the efficiency, reliability and comfort of public transport.

d) Raise the tax on privately owned vehicles to limit ownership.

e) Schedule roadworks for night time only when traffic flow is at a minimum.

f) Stagger opening and closing times to control traffic flow at peak times.

Matching Exercise: Match each cause (**1** – **6**) with its solution (**a** – **f**).

Is increasing Tax on Flights the Best Way to Reduce Air Travel?

Increasing Tax: Pros & Cons	Other possible solutions
• As cheap tickets and budget holidays abroad are the main reason people fly, increasing tax will increase airfares, which will deter people from choosing to travel by plane.	• Make other forms of transport, such as overnight trains or sleeper buses, more efficient and comfortable for passengers.

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• By raising the price of flights, the price of goods will also increase, which will be detrimental to the consumer. • As many countries rely on the money brought in by tourists who fly in from abroad, increasing the price of tickets will result in fewer visitors and possible economic problems. • Higher airfares will only affect lower-income families. • Higher taxes will discourage airlines from investing in cabin amenities.	• Lower the price of using other forms of transport. • Encourage people to holiday within their own country rather than abroad. • Reduce business travel by promoting video and web conferencing. • Increase investment in the rail infrastructure.

Vocabulary Exercise: Put in the missing letters in these verbs which all collocate with the noun *tax*. In each group, the verbs are full or partial synonyms.

1 to increase / r_ _ s_ / p_t -p / a tax

2 to decrease / c_t / l_w_r / r_d_c_ / s_ _sh / taxes

3 to put / _ntr_d_c_ / l_ _y / _mp_s_ / a tax

4 to evade / d_ _g_ / taxes

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Retaking the Driving Test Every Five Years

For	Against
• People develop bad driving habits and forget vital skills that a regular test would help to avoid. • Regular testing will ensure that people continue to be attentive and careful when driving. • Some people have developed health problems affecting their driving that would be flagged up more quickly with regular testing.	• It would be a financial strain on many people to retake their test so often. • For people who cannot afford to retake their test but rely on their car for work, their whole livelihood could be at stake. • There would be a strain on the government to provide more driving test facilities and more staff. • It is unlikely that a person's driving ability would be compromised over just

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- It helps people keep up to date with the development of technologies, speeds and facilities in cars.
- People will be retested on essential road rules which are easily forgotten after years of driving.
- As road systems develop and modernise, people will be able to learn the correct way to approach them.

five years.

- A better alternative might be to get people to undergo a full medical examination to assess their fitness to drive.

Vocabulary Exercise: The words in *italics* all appear in the sentences *for* and *against* retaking the driving test every five years. Choose the best option (**a**, **b** or **c**) to complete the following statements.

1 If you *flag something up*

a) you give it to someone in order to get rid of it

b) you try to make it better

c) you mention it so that other people know about it.

2 A *strain* on something is

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a) a force that causes a situation to improve

b) money put aside to buy something later

c) pressure caused by a difficult situation.

3 If something valuable is *at stake*,

a) other people would like to have it

b) it risks being lost or damaged

c) it is exchanged for something more valuable.

4 If you *compromise* something important,

a) you risk losing it or harming it

b) you give it away for something less important

c) you begin to understand how it works.

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Public Transport

Benefits	Problems
• Many people cannot afford their own private transport, which makes public transport **essential**. • Without public transport, many people would have problems travelling long distances to work. • Public transport allows many people to travel in just one vehicle, which helps reduce traffic congestion in city centres. • There are environmental benefits of many people using one vehicle in the form of a reduction in the consumption of fossil fuels. • Some public transport, such as inner-city trams, are highly energy efficient or use **sustainable** energy. • People can use their commuting time on public transport to make friends and socialise. • There are significantly fewer traffic accidents involving public transport compared to private transport.	• Public transport does not offer **flexible** routes, which means many destinations are not catered for. • Buses must take a long route to a destination to pick up passengers, which can make the journey too time-consuming for many people. • Overcrowding on public transport can make using it unpleasant for many or almost impossible for disabled people. • The punctuality of buses and trains is frequently **unreliable**. • Petty crime such as pickpocketing can be **rife** on some forms of public transport.

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Sentence Completion Exercise: Study the words in **bold** in the sentences above. Then use those words to complete the following sentences.

1 As citizens come to rely more on public transport, the reliability of the bus and tram services becomes _ _ _ _ _.

2 Commuters are beginning to desert the public transport system because they find it expensive, overcrowded and _ _ _ _ _.

3 Public transport has to be more financially _ _ _ _ _ if it is to realise its potential social and environmental benefits.

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4 Some cities have both fixed-route bus services during peak hours and _ _ _ _ _-route services during low demand periods.

5 Unfortunately, verbal aggression and even theft are _ _ _ _ _ on our trains and buses.

Increased Car Ownership

For	Against
• It allows people more freedom to travel as they can choose the route themselves and take detours when they want. • Private transport is quicker as there is no need for numerous stops to pick up passengers in out-of-the-way locations. • There is a positive correlation between increasing car ownership and economic growth: greater demand for cars can result in more car manufacturing, more jobs and more tax revenue. • Cars have built-in air conditioning, cushioned seats and other luxuries that make it a more comfortable way to travel.	• The number of cars on the road has a direct impact on air quality because exhaust fumes are a major contributor to air pollution. • As the number of cars rises, the demand for more fossil fuels increases, which causes more pollution as well as a depletion of the world's resources. • As car ownership increases, so too does the gap between rich and poor. • Some people buy cars they cannot afford on credit schemes to keep up with the Joneses, which can lead to more personal debt. • Cars also mean that people will incur extra expenses such as fuel costs, insurance and repairs.

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Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 a reduction in something (e.g. supplies, forests, ozone layer, etc)

2 money that the government receives from people

3 things like coal, gas, oil, etc formed underground from plant and animal remains

4 to go by a route which is not the shortest way, for example because you want to avoid a traffic jam

5 to lose, owe or have to pay money as a result of an action you have taken

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6 to want to buy the same expensive things as your neighbours or friends because you are worried about appearing socially inferior to them.

See the Answer Key for more ideas for this topic.

The Government should Spend More on Railways

For	Against
• Trains are much more environmentally friendly than cars and buses. • High-speed railways can link major cities and greatly reduce commuting time. • Efficient train services will encourage people to leave their cars at home, which will reduce road congestion and carbon emissions. • Increased investment in the rail infrastructure is necessary to put an end to train delays and increase passenger comfort. • The train is probably the safest and most stress-free mode of transport.	• Many areas, particularly in the countryside, are not served by public transport and can only be reached by car. • What is needed is a better road infrastructure in order to reduce traffic congestion and increase driving safety. • People want to stay in control of their lives and cannot be expected to depend on public transport whenever they need to go from one place to another. • Even in some economically advanced countries, trains are unreliable and overcrowded. • In most countries, motorists pay a road tax and therefore expect the road network to be maintained and extended.

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Collocations Exercise: In each group, identify the item which does not *normally* collocate with the word in **bold**.

1 railway / train / station / timetable / travel / network / infrastructure / motorist

2 CO_2 emissions / high-speed / state / electric / private / regional / **railway**

3 rail / infrastructure / service / depletion / network / transport / travel / passenger

4 train / delays / journey / travellers / timetable / fare / crossroads / line

5 road / congestion / network / highway / infrastructure / closure / access / development

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WATER

Oceans

Importance	Ways to protect our oceans
• Oceans cover more than two-thirds of our planet. • Oceans generate most of the oxygen we breathe and absorb carbon from the atmosphere. • Oceanic currents play a crucial role in regulating the earth's climate. • Seas and oceans are not only a source of fish, but also of algae and seaweed that have a high nutritional value. • Without international shipping, the world economy would collapse.	• New ways must be found to dispose of plastic waste so that it does not end up in the oceans. • Climate change must be tackled urgently to stop the destruction of coral reefs and other ecosystems. • Overfishing must be stopped in order to allow fish stocks to recover. • Everyone of us can support an organisation working to protect the oceans. • We can make a difference by using reusable plastic bags and refusing single-use plastics.

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Collocations Exercise: Match items 1 – 7 with items a) – g) to make common collocations that are used in the sentences above. Then read the sentences again to check your answers.

1 climate	**a)** change
2 coral	**b)** currents
3 fish	**c)** plastic bags
4 international	**d)** reefs
5 nutritional	**e)** shipping
6 oceanic	**f)** stocks
7 reusable	**g)** value

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Water Pollution

Causes	Problems
• In many countries, agricultural pollution is one of the main causes of water contamination. • Oil spillages make water unsafe to drink and also destroy ocean wildlife and the ecosystems that sustain them. • A lot of radioactive waste is not properly disposed of. • People dump a huge amount of waste into rivers, river banks and coastal waters. • Pesticides, fertilizers and animal waste seep into the soil and then into groundwater, rendering it unsafe for human consumption.	• Contaminated water makes people ill, and those living close to polluting industries are most at risk. • Cholera, typhoid and other diseases are spread by contaminated drinking water. • When heavy metals and nitrate fertilizers get into our drinking water supplies, they can cause cancer and disrupt our hormones. • Big fish like tuna accumulate high quantities of toxins from contaminated water. • As ocean water becomes more acidic, it is getting more difficult for coral and shellfish to survive.

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Vocabulary Exercise: In each of these groups, cross out the item which does not *normally* form a collocation with the word in **bold**.

1 dispose of / get rid of / pollute / dump / clean up / store / process / recycle **waste**

2 poisonous / radioactive / toxic / harmful / hazardous / wildlife / industrial **waste**

3 contaminate / reduce / minimise / tackle / combat / prevent / avoid / limit **pollution**

4 atmospheric / marine / water / river / industrial / consumption / chemical / nitrate **pollution**

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Marine Life

Importance	Ways to protect it
• Marine life is a major source of our animal protein and of products that are very useful in medicine. • The beauty of marine life _ _ _ _ _ (1) the tourist and leisure industry in many parts of the world. • Millions of jobs in fishing, aquaculture and tourism _ _ _ _ _ (2) marine life. • Ocean vegetation _ _ _ _ _ (3) a lot of carbon dioxide, so without it global climate change would be much worse. • Seaweed and algae could _ _ _ _ _ (4) hunger and malnutrition in the world.	• We can use reusable bags when shopping instead of plastic ones. • We can _ _ _ _ _ (5) our carbon footprint by driving less and using less electricity and water. • We can _ _ _ _ _ (6) beach and river bank clean-ups or help organise one. • We can use eco-friendly washing-up liquid, washing powder and personal care items. • There are many simple ways of conserving water like turning off the tap when brushing one's teeth.

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absorb	depend on	put an end to	reduce	support	take part in

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the correct form of the verbs in the box to complete the sentences about marine life.

Water Use should be Controlled by the Government

For	Against
• Too many citizens still think fresh water is an unlimited resource.	• Partnership with the private sector is often necessary to ensure efficient management of water resources.

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• Together, governments can develop agricultural policies that promote efficient water use on a global scale. • Governments could set maximum limits for water consumption. • It is the government's responsibility to prepare for droughts and other emergency situations. • Water agencies can educate citizens through programmes promoting water conservation and efficient water use.	• Rather than punish everyone with water restrictions, it would be better to reward people who manage to conserve water at home. • Ultimately, using water wisely is the responsibility of individuals. • It is mainly by raising taxes and cutting investment that public water utilities manage to keep prices relatively low. • In some countries, bureaucracy, mismanagement and corruption jeopardise public water systems.

encouraging endanger formulate impose
increasing penalise save slashing

Vocabulary Exercise: Match these words and phrases from the sentences above with a synonymous word or phrase from the box.

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develop	_ _ _ _ _	conserve	_ _ _ _ _
set	_ _ _ _ _	raising	_ _ _ _ _
promoting	_ _ _ _ _	cutting	_ _ _ _ _
punish	_ _ _ _ _	jeopardise	_ _ _ _ _

Drinking Water should be Free, not Sold (No Bottled Water)

For	Against
• Involving profit-making agencies in water management and distribution would exclude the poorest from essential services.	• In some of the most populous countries in the world, tap water is not safe for drinking unless it has been boiled. • Ordinary plastic bottles may take centuries to decompose, but there are

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- Water is a human right and should be affordable to all, like food and like the medicines we need when we are ill.
- Unlike the air that we breathe, water needs a costly infrastructure that has to be maintained permanently.
- Most brands of bottled water contain tiny plastic particles which we ingest when drinking.
- Every human being needs an adequate amount of safe fresh water in order not to die from dehydration.

now plastic-free biodegradable water bottles.

- To make tap water free, agencies might save money by reducing quality control costs.
- As the old saying goes, you get what you pay for.
- Disposable plastic water bottles have a disastrous effect on the environment.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

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WORK

The Best Way to Get a Good Job

Education	Experience
• You can get certain jobs without a formal degree but you will find it a struggle to advance professionally. • University graduates can be trusted with more responsible roles. • Obtaining an academic qualification is already proof that you are able to rise through the ranks. • In certain fields, having a degree will enable you to earn a higher salary right from the outset. • Some academic programmes require that students do an internship or a work placement in order to graduate.	• Employers often value experience over education especially in vocational fields. • One or two years of hands-on industry experience is usually an asset when applying for a job. • Landing your first job is a struggle if you do not have prior real-world experience. • There is so much competition among graduates that having some work experience will give you a head start over others. • Recruiters are more likely to hire an applicant with relevant work experience rather than one with an academic degree.

IELTS Liz

rate qualification practical getting from the start

evidence employ difficult an advantage advance professionally

Vocabulary Exercise: Match each of these words and phrases from the sentences above with the word or phrase from the box which could replace it in context.

a struggle	_ _ _ _ _	hands-on	_ _ _ _ _
proof	_ _ _ _ _	landing	_ _ _ _ _
rise through the ranks	_ _ _ _ _	a head start	_ _ _ _ _
from the outset	_ _ _ _ _	hire	_ _ _ _ _
value	_ _ _ _ _	degree	_ _ _ _ _

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Job Satisfaction

A realistic expectation	Unrealistic
• Many people work eight hours a day for over 40 years and rightly expect to derive a feeling of fulfilment from their job. • A job is more than a paycheque – it needs to be a source of pride and self-respect. • We can bring meaning and purpose to any job if we fully engage in our work and adopt a positive attitude towards colleagues and superiors. • It is legitimate to expect to feel respected in the workplace and appreciated for the quality of our work. • At work like in life in general, satisfaction also depends on intrinsic factors, not only extrinsic ones.	• Some people are unable to find contentment in anything they do. • With rising unemployment and fierce competition for jobs, the greatest satisfaction for many is simply to have a job. • Many people have to accept jobs that are completely unrelated to their studies. • Employees sometimes feel unfairly compensated for their work and are therefore demotivated. • Inhumane working conditions in certain industries more often lead to despair than to satisfaction.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: Find the odd-one-out in each of these groups of words and phrases. Use a good dictionary to help you if necessary.

1 satisfaction / fulfilment / competition / contentment / pleasure / happiness

2 pride / self-respect / motivation / appreciation / despair

3 compensation / pay / remuneration / salary / unemployment / wage

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Problems with Work-Life Balance

Causes	Solutions
• Some companies expect their workers to stay connected at home and to **be on call** at all hours of the day. • Working from home can **blur the boundaries** between our private and professional lives. • Many people are expected to take work home with them. • All the stress accumulated during the working day often makes it difficult to **wind down** at home. • The time spent commuting also **takes its toll** on our private life.	• Drawing up a list of priorities can improve our time management. • Taking enough exercise is essential to keep fit and have a fresh mind. • We need to set ourselves realistic short- and long-term goals and a time frame within which to attain them. • When we are at home, we should **make a point** of prioritising our family. • We should make an effort to maintain friendly relationships with colleagues and ask for help when we need it.

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Vocabulary Exercise: Study the phrases in **bold** in the sentences above. Then use the correct form of those phrases to complete the following explanations.

1 If something _ _ _ _ _ between two subjects, ideas, etc it makes the difference between them less clear.

2 If something _ _ _ _ _, it has a bad effect on something or someone, or it causes suffering or damage.

3 If you _ _ _ _ _ of doing something, you do it deliberately, you take particular care to do it.

4 If you _ _ _ _ _, you are available to work at any time when needed.

5 If you _ _ _ _ _, you relax after doing something that made you feel tired.

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Who should Have High Salaries

Doctors and Teachers	Sports and Showbiz Stars
• Public sector doctors and teachers provide indispensable services. • Health and education should be the top priorities of any government. • Doctors and teachers have spent a great deal of money on their studies and then often attend expensive professional training seminars. • Health care professionals deal with matters of the life and death on a regular basis. (1) • Teachers shape the future for millions of children and all over the world. (2)	• Showbiz and sports celebrities are a source of national pride. • Celebrities' salaries are not shouldered by the taxpayer. • Stars often have to pay exorbitant for agent fees. (3) • A professional athlete's career usually it ends when they are in their mid-thirties. (4) • Their generous salaries partly compensate for what they sacrifice and can all the training they have to undergo. (5)

IELTS Liz

Spot the Mistake Exercise: In arguments 1 – 5 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

Children and Part-Time Work

For	Against
• In certain environments, children spontaneously want to work alongside their parents. • In poorer countries, children often have to work part-time to help their parents make ends meet. • Starting to work at a young age prepares you more adequately for adult life.	• Work robs children of what makes childhood unique and beautiful. • Children could not possibly juggle a job with school duties and extracurricular activities. • Children are vulnerable and can easily be taken advantage of by employers.

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• It teaches children how to react and behave in situations they would not encounter at home or at school. • It makes children appreciate the value of hard work and money.	• Childhood is a time for learning, playing and for children to enjoy. • Having to work and go to school would greatly reduce the amount of time children can spend with their parents. • In some developing countries, children do manual labour under conditions which can be dangerous to their health or welfare.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 easily harmed or hurt

2 in a way that has not been planned but is just the result of an impulse

3 to have only just enough money to buy the things you need

4 to treat someone unfairly for one's own benefit

5 to try to fit two or more activities, jobs, etc into your life, especially if it is with difficulty.

IELTS Liz

Children and Work Exploitation (Child Labour)

Causes	Solutions
• Destitute families in underdeveloped countries often have no other choice but to make their children work for survival. • In some countries, access to compulsory free education is limited or nonexistent. • Adding another wage to a family's income can lighten the financial burden people carry.	• Interest payments on development loans to developing countries should be reduced. • Countries where workers' rights are fully respected should not trade with countries where those rights are repressed. • We should give the United Nations more power to enable it to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger worldwide. • Buying fairtrade products brings a better standard of living for poor

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• Child labour laws are often either not enforced or shamelessly violated. • As countries compete for jobs and investment, governments resist international standards in order to keep labour costs low.	people in developing countries. • Richer nations should provide financial support and encourage poorer ones to make education free and compulsory until age 15.

Collocations Exercise: Match items 1 – 5 with items a) – e) to make common collocations from the sentences above. Then read the sentences again to check your answers.

1 to enforce	**a)** hunger and poverty
2 to compete	**b)** a burden
3 to repress	**c)** for jobs
4 to eradicate	**d)** a law
5 to carry	**e)** someone's rights, liberties, etc

Teachers Do Not Want to Work in Rural Areas

IELTS LIZ

Reasons	Solutions
• In developing countries, the standard of living in rural areas is even lower than in cities. • Rural areas often lack an adequate health care and public transport infrastructure. • Schools in rural areas are often in poor repair and may lack even basic equipment and facilities. • Teachers in country schools sometimes earn much less than their counterparts in the city.	• Graduate teachers from rural areas should be supported in obtaining and retaining jobs in rural schools. • Teachers taking up a post in a remote location should be offered incentives such as a travel and relocation allowance. • Fringe benefits like free medical insurance and housing allowance would make jobs in remote areas more attractive. • Teacher training colleges could arrange for some of the teaching practice to

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• Many teachers feel daunted by the prospect of having to live in isolation.	take place in rural schools. • Rural schools should be better funded.

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 in bad condition

2 someone who has the same job as someone else, but in a different place

3 something that makes you want to work hard or do something new

4 something that you get for working, on top of your pay

5 to feel afraid, worried or less confident

6 to keep

Working Online from Home

Matching and Categorising Exercise: Match these sentence halves. Are the completed sentences *for* (+) or *against* (-) working from home?
IELTS Liz
See the Answer Key for more ideas for this topic.

1 A feeling of isolation and loneliness	**a)** co-workers and bosses is irreplaceable.
2 Conference calls are now possible	**b)** environment in any way you like.
3 Employees no longer waste	**c)** even with a basic home computer.
4 Face-to-face interaction with	**d)** often sets in after a while.
5 You can design your home office	**e)** the collective energy of the office.
6 You miss out on	**f)** time and energy commuting.

All Employees should have the Same Salary in a Company

Sentence Completion Exercise: Choose the correct option (a) or (b) in *italics* to present arguments for and against the idea that all employees in a company should have the same salary.

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For

1 It is (a) *immoral* / (b) *legitimate* that some people earn in a month what it takes other people in the same company a whole year to earn.

2 Income inequality is a (a) *rare* / (b) *frequent* cause of industrial action.

3 Too many companies have a rigid hierarchy with (a) *a dearth of* (b) *a surplus of* highly paid middle managers.

4 The concept of equal pay for equal work can (a) *put an end to* / (b) *widen* the gender pay gap.

5 Many companies have adopted a (a) *hierarchic* / (b) *flat* structure where all employees are involved in decision making and work towards a common goal.

Against

6 An employee's salary should be (a) *independent of* / (b) *commensurate with* their experience and qualifications.

7 It is naive to think that senior staff would (a) *accept* / (b) *refuse* to have the same salary as those in junior roles.

8 Those who risk their lives at work every day (a) *deserve* / (b) *do not deserve* a higher salary than an assistant who does menial office tasks.

9 Employees would (a) *gain* / (b) *lose* the motivation to work hard and give the best of themselves.

10 Opportunities for career advancement are (a) *necessary for* / (b) *irrelevant to* employee satisfaction and retention at a company.

IELTS Liz

Factors Influencing Career Choice

Salary	Other factors
• People hope to be offered pay **commensurate with** their qualifications and experience. • A good salary enables you to support your parents. • Young people need to earn enough when they want to get married and start a home of their own.	• Trends in the job market affect the choices available to us. • Many people look for a job that can give them the opportunity to **rise through the ranks**. • People want to engage in tasks that they enjoy and that they feel good at doing.

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• Many graduates leave university **in debt** and have to **pay off** their student loans. • Your income should enable you to cover all your basic needs, pay your bills and live in modest comfort.	• Many children want to follow their parents' profession. • Your personality often has **a decisive influence** on the career path you choose.

Sentence Completion Exercise: Study the words and phrases in **bold** in the sentences above. Then use those words and phrases to complete the following sentences.

1 Many 18-year-olds face a difficult choice: they can look for a job or study and risk getting heavily _ _ _ _ _.

2 Students from low-income families find it particularly difficult to _ _ _ _ their student loans.

3 The success of an internship can exert _ _ _ _ _ on a student's future career choice.

4 Within a few years, Nadia managed to _ _ _ _ _ from junior assistant to section manager.

5 Your pay rise will be _ _ _ _ _ with your additional workload and wider responsibilities.

Changing Jobs vs A Job for Life

IELTS Liz

Changing jobs	One job for life
• Many university graduates have to take on jobs that are not related to their studies to start off with. • You become more flexible when you have the chance to _ _ _ _ _ (1) different company cultures. • When you _ _ _ _ _ (2) jobs, you keep learning new skills and become more versatile. • Very few companies can _ _ _ _ _ (3) their workers lifelong employment.	• Loyalty to a company often leads to promotion opportunities. • Companies have long-term goals that require continued commitment and dedication to _ _ _ _ _ (4). • It takes time to establish the kind of meaningful professional relationships we need to find real job satisfaction. • When you stay in the same job for a long time, you _ _ _ _ _ (5) performing your job mechanically.

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• If you make frequent career moves without good reason, employers might worry you are just a job hopper.	• Many employees _ _ _ _ _ (6) in their jobs for fear of insecurity or because the company has no career development policy.

achieve end up experience guarantee stagnate switch

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the words in the box to complete the sentences about changing jobs and staying in a job for life.

Women in the Armed Forces

For	Against
• Gender equality must be achieved in all areas of human activity. • Women played a crucial role in the armed forces during World War II. • Many essential noncombatant roles can be taken over by women in order to free men for combat. • On the modern battlefield, leadership skills and technical expertise are more valuable than brute strength. • In order to enjoy the same opportunities as men, women have to be exposed to the same risks.	• Some jobs in the armed forces require a level of physical ability and fitness that women could not reach. • If taken prisoner by the enemy, women soldiers are more likely to suffer abuse. • As the military remains a typically macho subculture, women recruits run the risk of being resented or harassed. • Mixed-gender military units would inevitably lack cohesion. • Women are much more likely to get injured than men.

IELTS Liz

Collocations Exercise: In each group, identify the item which does not *normally* collocate with the word in **bold**.

1 play / adopt / spend / take on / fulfil / take over / **a role**

2 to suffer / a lot of pain / abuse / discrimination / harassment / expertise

3 take / achieve / face / run / pose / involve / **a risk**

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The Retirement Age should be Extended

1 The taxpayer's money would be better spent on pension funds than on weapons and prestige projects.

2 The skills and experience of senior employees are necessary for the economy to prosper.

3 Setting the retirement age at 65 was decided many decades ago when life expectancy was much lower.

4 Many senior employees would welcome the opportunity to work beyond the legally mandated retirement age.

5 Making it easier to retire early might alleviate the problem of youth unemployment.

6 Longer life expectancy means pension funds now have to pay out much more money than is paid into them.

7 Forcing healthy people in their mid-sixties to stop working is unfair.

8 Delaying retirement eligibility risks aggravating the problem of youth employment.

9 Delayed retirement would penalise lower-income workers in physically demanding jobs.

10 Conditions should be improved for workers who wish to take early retirement.

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Categorisation Exercise: Mark the sentences above (+) if they *support* the idea that the retirement age should be extended, or (-) if they *do not*.

Robots and Work

For	Against
• Robots can work more efficiently and with more precision than humans. • Robots are already being used successfully to perform some surgical procedures. • Robots in the workplace means more people are laid off work.	• Robots can break down or malfunction, rendering them either useless or unreliable. • The cost of fixing a broken machine or robot can be high and require specialist services.

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• Robots used in mass production can reduce the price of the items made. • Robots and machines reduce a company's labour costs because they require only a single purchase cost but no salary.	• Robots are only as good as the humans who programme them. • Robots can be easily replaced and reprogrammed for other duties. • Robots could not handle the many unexpected situations people are faced with in the course of a single day's work.

Spot the Mistake Exercise: Identify the two arguments which are in the wrong category.

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WORLD ISSUES

World Overpopulation: Causes / Problems / Solutions

Causes

1 There is a decline in the (a) *death* / (b) *birth* rate with people enjoying increased longevity.

2 People enjoy a better standard of living, which also means a longer lifespan.

3 People are more health conscious and able to lead a healthy lifestyle.

4 Better medical facilities help people recover from illnesses which otherwise might have been (a) *contagious* / (b) *fatal*.

5 New medical treatments can help elderly people extend their lives.

6 Fertility treatments have allowed women to overcome pregnancy problems.

7 Infant mortality rates have (a) *soared* / (b) *dropped* due to better education for women and better medical facilities.

Problems

8 A growing population means growing poverty, which leads to an increase in crime.

IELTS Liz

9 A larger population with a greater demand for food will cause food (a) *shortages* / (b) *surpluses*.

10 The gap between rich and poor will result in greater inequality and lead to unrest.

11 There will be more unemployment due to (a) *more* / (b) *less* competition for jobs.

12 The use of the world's resources is unsustainable and will result in depletion.

13 The (a) *conservation* / (b) *degradation* of the environment will be inevitable owing to the demand for more energy and more industry.

Solutions

14 The government should (a) *abandon* / (b) *enforce* a one-child policy.

15 Women should be educated about family planning.

16 Birth control should be more readily available for free.

17 Sex education (a) *should be* / (b) *should not be* taught in schools.

18 Incentives should be offered by the government for families with (a) *more* / (b) *fewer* children.

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Sentence Completion Exercise: Choose the option (a) or (b) that makes sense in nine of the above sentences about world overpopulation.

Aging World Population

Problems	Solutions
• The number of old people will exceed the number of young people. • The economy will suffer. • Young people will not be able to financially support the entire elderly population. • Elderly care facilities will be strained. • The government will need to divert more funding into elderly care, which will produce a lack of funding in other areas.	• The retirement age should be increased. • If more elderly people work, they will be able to support themselves. • Elderly people should continue to contribute to the workforce. • Elderly people will be able to continue to pay taxes. • People should be encouraged to save more for their pensions. • A growing younger population is needed. • People should be encouraged to have more children.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise Find the words in the sentences above that mean:

1 to be greater than a number or amount

2 to give or do something in order to achieve something together with other people

3 to use something for a different purpose

4 under a lot of pressure.

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Global Warming

Causes	Solutions
• Climate changes have resulted in temperature rises. • Trapped carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere causes increased temperatures. • The use of fossil fuels for industry results in more carbon dioxide being produced. • Transportation also contributes to rises in carbon dioxide. • Carbon dioxide is not being sufficiently absorbed by trees and plants. • Deforestation has resulted in less trees to combat CO2 emissions.	• New sources of energy need to be found that are sustainable and environmentally friendly. • Transportation that is solar powered or run on green energy needs to be used. • People can recycle plastic and reuse containers. • People need to be aware of the amount of energy they use in their homes. • Governments should have stricter rules against deforestation. • Governments can arrange for more trees to be planted.

IELTS Liz

Vocabulary Exercise: Match items **1** – **10** with items **a)** – **j)** to form noun compounds often used when discussing global warming.

1 carbon	**a)** depletion
2 climate	**b)** rise
3 fossil	**c)** footprint
4 glacier	**d)** energy
5 greenhouse	**e)** retreat
6 global	**f)** dioxide
7 sea level	**g)** warming
8 carbon	**h)** effect
9 ozone	**i)** fuels
10 green	**j)** change

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International Aid from Rich Countries to Poor Countries

1 Aid could be given by funding the development of hospitals and medical training, and giving free medicine to ensure good health care.

2 Aid could be given in the form of teacher training and educational facilities rather than just financial aid.

3 Governments are answerable to their citizens for how they spend the tax payers' money.

4 Helping poor countries reduces the animosity between wealthy countries and poorer ones, which will help promote international peace.

5 If a poor country has continual political unrest, aid will not have a long-term impact and may not be effective.

6 In some poor countries, conditions have created a humanitarian crisis which cannot be ignored by rich countries.

7 Poor countries may develop a dependency on aid rather than solve their own national problems.

8 Poor countries need to be trained how to tackle their own domestic problems rather than be given aid.

9 Refusing to give aid to poor countries could result in hundreds of thousands of unnecessary deaths.

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10 Rich countries have a responsibility to their own people before helping others.

11 Rich countries have the extra money to help others as well as themselves.

12 Supporting the economic growth of a poorer country can open up new markets for richer countries.

13 The money from rich countries comes from tax payers and should be used to benefit tax payers in terms of support social services, health care and education.

14 There are not enough rich countries in the world to give enough aid to all the poor countries to achieve the desired results.

15 There is no guarantee that financial aid will be effective if corruption exists within the poor country.

16 There should be a moral obligation for people with money to help those without.

Categorisation Exercise: Mark the arguments above '+' if they are *for* international aid and '-' if they are *against*.

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Growing Gap between Rich and Poor

Causes	Solutions
• Corruption in some countries affects the distribution of _ _ _ _ _ (1). • The poverty circle in some countries cannot be broken due to lack of free education and limited job _ _ _ _ _ (2). • While developed and developing countries have growing markets, underdeveloped countries are still tackling basic human necessities such as clean water, shelter, political stability and food production. • Effective collection of taxes in rich countries means they have money for the development of the country.	• Offer free education, which will allow people the chance to escape the poverty _ _ _ _ _ (3). • Ensure that all countries have a minimum _ _ _ _ _ (4) that is sufficient for a good _ _ _ _ _ (5) of living. • Increase taxes for people with higher salaries and make sure they are paying them, then use the money to fund free education and free health care for all people. • Put a ceiling on the higher salaries to ensure a more equal distribution of wealth in society. • Narrow the _ _ _ _ _ (6) between the salaries of blue-collar and white-collar workers.

IELTS Liz

cycle	gap	opportunities	standard	wage	wealth

Sentence Completion Exercise: Use the nouns in the box to complete the sentences about the growing gap between rich and poor.

The Brain Drain: Migration of Skilled Workers Out of a Country

Causes

- Poor living standard in the person's native country.
- Lack of good media and education facilities in the country they come from.

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- Political instability, the unrest and violence can lead people to look outside their country of origin. (1)
- Developed countries can offer worker's children a future with brighter prospects.
- Developed countries offer workers better working conditions and more for up-to-date facilities. (2)
- Professionals will be able to work at the forefront of their profession in developed countries.

Problems

- Countries will lose their top professionals and the potential to train future generations.
- Countries will see a shortage of their skilled workers, which they could critically affect education, medicine and other fields. (3)
- People will be affected by those who have already left their country, leading it to more migration. (4)
- A country will lose financially from educating workers from childhood to then lose them in adulthood.
- A country will lose some of their brightest and most dynamic people.

Solutions

- Invest in and improve facilities in schools and hospitals.
- Increase wages to encourage professionals to stay away. (5)
- Offer a clear career path for professionals with opportunities for development.
- Make sure promotion is based on skills and experience rather than on bias or personal contacts.
- Invite professionals from developed countries to train and professionals in their country of origin. (6)

Spot the Mistake Exercise: In sentences 1 – 6 above, there is *one extra word* which does not fit. Spot the incorrect extra word.

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ANSWERS: ADVERTISING

Companies Sponsoring Sports Events for Advertising

Sports fans are more interested in the event than in the sponsors' advertising messages. This is an argument *against* companies sponsoring sports events.

Companies can showcase their products. This is an argument *for* companies sponsoring sports events.

Children and Advertising

1 Consumerism

2 Obesity

3 illusion

4 differentiate

5 pester

6 ban

1 d

Advertising Encourages Spending

1 glamour

2 Fair trade

3 artificial wants

4 shop around; bargains

5 impact

6 rely on

Types of Advertising

- TV adverts
- radio adverts
- magazine or newspaper advertising

- billboards & posters
- direct mail
- brochures, leaflets & flyers
- product placement in movies
- online advertising

ANSWERS: ANIMALS

Protecting Wild Animals

1 for (or to)

2 from

3 over

4 on

5 of

❶ **1** +

❷ **1** c

Decrease in Some Animal Species

1 d **2** b **3** c **4** a

Zoos

1 species

2 wild

3 habitat

4 cruelty

5 captivity

6 cages

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Man's Relationship with Animals

❶

In earlier times, horses, oxen and dogs were working animals. / Dogs can be trained to guide or rescue people and also to track down criminals.

This pair does not constitute a contrast for at least two reasons.
Firstly, horses, oxen and dogs are still working animals in many countries today.
Secondly, guide dogs, search and rescue dogs and guard dogs are all examples of working animals.

❷

1 companions

2 domesticated

3 vegans

4 track down

ANSWERS: ART

1 b

Censoring the Arts

❶ **1** c (for) **2** d (for) **3** a (against) **4** b (against)

❷ Answers to the collocation exercise are contained in the extra ideas listed below for this topic.

For	Against
• Some art **fuels violence**, **incites hatred** and is morally harmful. • Artists should **work within certain guidelines.** • Some art encourages rebellion against the government.	• Artists need freedom of expression in order to do their work. • Artists should be free to express their own ideas. • Being innovators, artists should be free to **develop original ideas**.

Children Learning Art

1 the **2** a **3** it **4** for **5** the

Free Admission to Art Galleries and Museums

1 learn
2 encouraged
3 restore
4 respect
5 compensate

ANSWERS: BUILDINGS AND HOUSING

Renting or Buying Houses

❶

1 mortgage

2 tenant

3

4

5

❷

1

2 thrifty

3 enrich

4 homeless

Planting Trees or Building Houses

❶

1 Without suitable housing, living conditions will deteriorate.
(*or* Living conditions will deteriorate without suitable housing.)
2 Trees produce oxygen, which counteracts air pollution.
3 Parks provide areas for exercise and relaxation.
(*or* Parks provide areas for relaxation and exercise.)
4 Overpopulation leads to a lack of suitable housing.

❷

Planting Trees: Sentences 2 and 3.
Building Houses: Sentences 1 and 4.

Building Houses in Urban or Rural Areas

1 commute
2 derelict
3 widespread
4 sanitation
5 reduce
6 open up

Protecting Old Buildings

1 - **2** + **3** - **4** + **5** + **6** + **7** - **8** - **9** + **10** -

Open Plan Office Designs

❶

1 c **2** e **3** d **4** a **5** b

❷

For: Sentences 3 and 5.

• It • There is less distinction between levels of staff. • People will feel part of a team.	• Staff have less privacy for their work than in a closed office space.

ANSWERS: BUSINESS

Closure of Small Businesses

1 broad range

2 inevitable

3 get involved

4 render

5 aware

Problems with International Businesses for Local Communities

The burden of high taxation makes it difficult for many small businesses to survive. ⇨ *Global corporations should be granted further tax cuts.*

Taxing big businesses less will in no way lighten the burden of taxation for small businesses.

Businesses Providing Sports Facilities for Employees

1

2

3

4

5

Businesses should Support Local Communities

1 thriving

2 possible

3 available

4 responsible

Marketing is Key to Success

1 f (-) **2** e (+) **3** a (+) **4** c (+) **5** b (-) **6** d (-)

People Buying Things They Do Not Need

1 b **2** e **3** d **4** c **5** a

Business and Staff Uniforms

1 a

2 they

3 and

4 for

5 the

Business Success is Measured by Money

1 (-)

Non-family employees may find it difficult to integrate. This is an argument *against* the idea that family-run businesses are best.

Family businesses are usually a lot less bureaucratic. This is an argument *in favour of* the idea that family-run businesses are best.

ANSWERS: CHARACTER & PEOPLE

Success: Is it Innate or Achieved?

1 child prodigy

2 head start

3 undeniable

4 breeds

5 inborn

6 gifted

Celebrities are Role Models and Should to Behave Well in Public

1 b **2** e **3** d **4** c **5** a

Leadership: Are Leadership Skills Innate or Learned?

1 charismatic

2 articulate

3 oratory

4 predisposed

5 Assertiveness

6

1 d

ANSWERS: CRIME & PUNISHMENT IDEAS

Increase in Crime Rates

1 d **2** a **3** e **4** b **5** c

Long Term Prison Sentences

1 + **2** - **3** + **4** + **5** + **6** - **7** -

Re-Offending After Release from Prison

1 a prosecutor

2 to sentence

3 to go on trial

Internet Crime / Cybercrime

1 harassment

2 fraudulent

3 hacking

4 ransom

5 laundering

6 to monitor

Advanced Technology to Solve & Prevent Crime

1 access

2 committed

3

4

1 self-defence

2 deterrent

3 repeat offender

4 loopholes

5 defence attorney

6 corruption

Juvenile Crime

1 exert

2 lead

3 Limit

4 Encourage

5 take up

Juveniles Receiving Adult Punishment

Adult sentences are too severe for youngsters. This argument supports the idea that juveniles *should not* receive adult punishment.

A crime is a crime regardless of age. This argument supports the idea that juveniles *should* receive adult punishment.

The Death Penalty

1 contemplating

2 morally

3 convicted

4 equivalent

5 re-socialise

1 a

2

3 its

4 they

5 the

Broadcasting Criminal Trials on TV

have a right to: **c)** are entitled to

on trial: **e)** being tried

act as a deterrent to: **g)** discourage

influence: **b)** affect

promote: **j)** sell

negatively: **a)** adversely

ANSWERS: ECONOMY AND MONEY

Gap between Rich and Poor

Improving road infrastructure would boost the economy. This is highly unlikely to solve the problem of countries which cannot cater for basic human needs such as sanitation, food, water, clothing and shelter. Besides, the focus of the sentence is on stimulating the economy, not on catering for basic needs.

Rich Countries should Support Poor Countries

affluent (+)
developed (+)
economically backward (-)
high-income (+)
industrially advanced (+)
destitute (-)
poverty-stricken (-)
laborious (-)
prosperous (+)
opulent (+)

Personal Debt

1 to tempt

2 to budget

3 to overspend

4 to entice (sb to do sth)

5 to squander

Using Credit Cards

1 to have huge debts = to be faced with massive debts

2 to run up debts = to incur debts

3 to repay one's debts = to clear one's debts

4 to get into debt = to fall into debt

5 to be deeply in debt = to be heavily in debt

Saving Money is Good for a Country's Economy

1 the

2 an

3 of

4 with

5 they

ANSWERS: EDUCATION

1

2

3

4

5 administered

Parents Should Push Children to Do Well

1 (-) **2** (+) **3** (-) **4** (+) **5** (+) **6** (+) **7** (-) **8** (-) **9** (-) **10** (-) **11** (+) **12** (-)

Art & Music is a Waste of Time at School

1 outlet

2 range

3 forms

4 skills

5 study

6 calculations

Streaming: Grouping Students by Ability into Different Classes

1 It is very difficult to teach a mixed-ability class.

2 Students in the bottom class end up believing they are not smart.

Sentence 1 is *for* streaming, while Sentence 2 is *against*.

Exams as a Means of Assessment

1 d **2** c **3** e **4** b **5** a

Wearing Uniforms

1 conform

2 encourage

3 behave

4

extra-

Students benefit from activities that are not academic. This is an argument *for* extra-curricular activities.

Studying Abroad

1 c **2** a **3** d **4** b

1 Against **2** Against **3** For **4** For

More Ideas for this topic:

For	Against

- It provides a chance to learn about another culture and way of life.
- Learning a new language can be useful later in life.
- Foreign education can offer students better work prospects in their own countries.

- Homesickness can lead to poor academic performance.
- Some students refuse to return to their own country after their education.
- Some students might not be able to re-adapt back into their own culture.

Home Schooling

1 b **2** a **3** c **4** c **5** a

Corporal Punishment in School

1 deterrent

2

3

4

5

6

7 self-esteem

Single-Sex Schools

1 they

2 the

3 a

4 for

5 any

A Good Teacher needs to be Intelligent

Students prefer teachers who are passionate about their subject area. This argument does not support the idea that a good teacher needs to be intelligent. Rather, it supports the idea that it is more important for a teacher to be enthusiastic than to be intelligent.

More Boys than Girls Study Science

1 outperform

2 depicted

3 tackle

4 drawn to

5 reinforcing

6 ensure

Traditional Classroom / Online Learning

1 a sense of unity

2 flexible

3 instant feedback

6

1 b **2** a **3** a **4** b **5** a **6** b **7** b **8** a

ANSWERS: ENVIRONMENT

Pollution

A tax increase on budget airlines would lead to a reduction in the number of flights. This describes a possible *solution*.

An increase in the number of cars and low-cost airlines has contributed to air pollution. This describes one of the *causes* of pollution.

Natural Beauty Spots

1 boost

2 protect

3 prohibit

4 imposed

5 encroach

Deforestation

1 Junk mail

2 Crop rotation

3 Overgrazing

4 Logging

5

6

7 curb

1 mandatory

2 compost

3 depleting

4 adverse

5 sustainable (energy)

6 subsidised

Who should Take Responsibility for Solving Environmental Issues?

1 tackle

2 are faced with

3 solve

4 alleviate

5 ignore

6 anticipate

7 deal with

Solving Environmental Problems Globally or Domestically?

1 c **2** a **3** d **4** b

Declining Biodiversity: Decline in Plant and Animal Species

1 the

2 not

3 a

4 never

5 as

ANSWERS: FAMILY

Parents or Teachers Should Discipline Children

1 obedience

2 to lack discipline

3 to reward sb

4 well-behaved

The Family is Smaller than Before

1 f **2** a **3** d **4** e **5** b **6** c

1 c

1

2 burden

3 devoted

4 revolve

5 abnormal

Divorce

❶

Children are unsure of who they might live with afterwards. This is an argument *against* divorce.

Each parent can devote quality time to their children rather than quantity. This is an argument *for* divorce.

❷

1 d **2** e **3** b **4** c **5** a

Single Parent Families

1 emotional distress

2 (a) role model

3 dysfunctional

4 upbringing

5 financial strain

Children Spending More Time with Grandparents

1 b **2** d **3** c **4** a

1 For **2** Against **3** For **4** Against

More Ideas for this topic:

For	Against
• • • values.	• Grandparents might not have the energy to make the time with their grandchildren enjoyable.

Both Parents Working

1 and

2 of

3 a

4 a

5 it

Care of the Elderly: Families should be Responsible

1 (-) **2** (+) **3** (+) **4** (+) **5** (+) **6** (-) **7** (-) **8** (+) **9** (-) **10** (-) **11** (+) **12** (-)

Researching Family History

1 b **2** a **3** c **4** c **5** b **6** a **7** b

ANSWERS: FOOD

GM Foods (GM = genetically modified, i.e. scientifically produced)

Vocabulary Exercise: Find words and phrases in the sentences above that mean:

1 harmful

2

3

4

5

6 to tamper (with something)

7 to alleviate

Factory Farming: Intensive Animal Farming

1 a **2** b **3** b **4** a **5** b **6** b **7** a **8** b **9** a **10** a

Fast Foods should be Banned

The fast food industry has developed very healthy alternatives. This is an argument against banning fast foods.

The nutritional value of fast food is quite low. This is an argument in favour of banning fast foods.

Packaged Food: Ready Meals & Prepared Foods

1 b **2** d **3** e **4** a **5** c

Future World Food Shortage

1 drought

2 commodities

3 measures

4 energy

5 overgrazing

Vegetarian Diet

1 the

2 a

3 it

4 been

5 have

Preservatives in Food

❶

1 adhere

2 monitor

3 trigger

4 regulate

5 decay

❷

1 + **2** + **3** - **4** - **5** - **6** + **7** - **8** - **9** + **10** +

ANSWERS: HEALTH

Funding on Prevention or Cure?

1 of

2 so

3 it

4 for

5 a

Growing Number of Overweight People

1 nutritious

2 ubiquitous

3 engineered

4

5

6

7

Responsibility for Public Health

People are free to choose a healthy diet and to take regular exercise. This argument supports the idea that it is individuals who are responsible for their health.

Funding public health offers excellent return on investment. This argument supports the idea that it is the government that is responsible for public health.

Fewer People are Walking these Days

1 become

2 increased

3 offer

4 emphasised

5 informed

6 reshape

ANSWERS: INTERNET & COMPUTERS

Social Media Benefit Communication

1 a platform

2 uncivil

3 countless

4 across the globe

5 to disrupt

6 to resort to something

Computers will Replace Teachers

1 the

2 be

3 for

4 and

5 an

The Internet Brings People Closer Together

1 join

2 tracking

3 update

4 interact

5 supplanted

6 drives

7 spread

Risks for Children Online

1 d **2** e **3** a **4** c **5** f **6** b

Security Online

1 e-mail attachment

2 confidential information

3 to fall prey (to sb/sth)

Online Shopping

Shipping is sometimes as expensive as the item you order. This is an argument *against* online shopping.

Online retailers are open 24/7. This is an argument *for* online shopping.

Meeting People Online

1 fake

2

3

4

5

6

ANSWERS: LANGUAGE

English as the Only Global Language

1 affected

2 effect

3 effect

4 affected

Free Online Translation Renders Learning Foreign Languages Obsolete

1 Voice-to-voice

2 accurate

3 approximate

4 machine

5 simultaneous

Learning a Foreign Language at Primary School

Older children are cognitively more mature and are therefore able to learn more with less input. This is an argument *against* learning a foreign language at primary school.

Learning becomes more difficult as a child ages. This is an argument *for* learning a foreign language at primary school.

ANSWERS: LEISURE

1 a

2

3 an

4

5 the atmosphere

The Value of Free Time

1 unwind

2 burnout

3 work-life

4 hands

5 lethargic

ANSWERS: MEDIA & TV

Violence in the Media Promotes Violence in Society

1 impact

2 positive correlation

3 incite

4 makes the headlines

5 omnipresent

6 disaffected

Famous People Have a Right to Privacy from the Press

1 pander

2 media intrusion

3 legitimate

4 scrutiny

5

6

obsolete	outdated	out of touch with	disconnected from
obsessed	addicted	fail to	do not
disappear	cease to exist	catch	captivate
attract	draw	listening	tuning in
find	devise	via	through

Children Watching TV

1 to access: one's voicemail / a programme / ~~a power failure~~ / a file / information / a folder / a URL

2 to overcome: an addiction / one's shyness / resistance / difficulties / ~~satisfaction~~ / a problem

3 to strengthen: ~~one's problems~~ / a bond / a relationship / one's position / ties

4 to take up: a job / acting / a sport / a hobby / painting / a post / ~~a lecture~~

TV Influences Culture

1 desensitised

2 affects

3 portray

4 reflects

5 afford

6 aim

ANSWERS: MUSIC

Role of Music

1 b **2** a **3** d **4** c **5** c **6** b **7** d **8** a

1

2

3

4 uninventive

5 nurture

6 versatile

International Music

1 (-) **2** (+) **3** (-) **4** (+) **5** (+) **6** (-) **7** (-) **8** (+) **9** (+) **10** (-)

NB: As regards statement No. 8, some people might argue that this is a negative phenomenon, but it seems that most see it as a positive one.

Free Music Downloads should be Stopped

1 lookout

2 strongly

3 express

4 severely

ANSWERS: NEWS

News: Is All News True

1 newsworthy

2 Bias

3 Subjectivity

4 keep abreast

5 publicise

explains *why* the news often focuses on bad news.

Newspapers Will One Day Disappear

1 emerging economies

2 for free

3 file for bankruptcy

4 breaking news

5 losing revenue

6 struggling for survival

7 are bound to

Reliability of Online News

1 implausible

2 genuine

3 inaccuracy

ANSWERS: READING & BOOKS

Which are Best, e-Books or Paper Books?

1 reminder

2 object (of) desire

3 digital

4

5

6

1 f (+) **2** d (-) **3** b (-) **4** e (-) **5** c (+) **6** a (+)

Reading Storybooks is a Waste of Time

1 instil

2 fosters

3 bond with

4 impact

5 pay scant attention to

6 identify with

Libraries should Spend more Money on Technology, not Books

1 physical

Answer Key: Ideas for IELTS Essay Topics

2 natural

3 vulnerable

4 digital

5 available

6 dependent

ANSWERS: SOCIETY

Littering

1 harsh

2 to be inclined (to do something)

3 to get away with (something)

4 to catch (somebody) in the act

5 to dispose of (something)

Homelessness

1 d **2** e **3** f **4** a **5** b **6** c

The Importance of Traditional Lifestyles

1 perspectives

2 selflessness

3 heritage

4 remedies

5 fall back on

Traditional Lifestyles are Being Lost

1 and

2 their

3 of

4 on

5 for

People Moving from Rural to Urban Areas

1 to plummet

2 to rocket

3 a glut of

4 a dearth of

Society Needs Rules to Function

1 in disarray

2 vulnerable

3 deter (somebody) from (doing something)

4 with impunity

Cultural Diversity

1 stem from

2 lose

3 competing against

4 result in

5 given

Happiness

1 e **2** d **3** b **4** a **5** c

Utopia

1 greed

2 live life to the full

3 non-existent

4 close-knit

5 bonds

The Generation Gap

1 bond

2 keep pace (with)

3 alter

4 at ease (with)

Tighter Gun Control

Banning guns or having stricter gun laws will not stop crime. This is an argument *against* tighter gun control.

Most guns are not used as a form of self-defence. This is an argument *for* tighter gun control.

ANSWERS: SPACE EXPLORATION

Spending Money on Space Exploration

1 countless

2 a hazard

3 dominance

4 to surpass

5 to squander

Sending Communications into Space

Trying to improve communication between cultures and countries would be more useful for mankind. This is an argument *does not support* the idea of sending communications into space.

Sending signals into space is probably the best way to find out if there is life elsewhere in our galaxy. This is an argument *in favour of* sending communications into space.

Space Tourism

1 a **2** b **3** a **4** c **5** c

ANSWERS: SPORT & EXERCISE

International Sports Events

1 achieve (a)

2 rise

3 decrease

4 perform

5 borrow

6 evolve

Dangerous Sports should be Banned

1 d **2** c **3** e **4** b **5** a

NB: 3 d is also correct; *to risk an injury* is a frequent collocation, but it does not appear in this particular section.

Children should Learn Team Sports, not Individual Sports (Cooperation *vs* Competition)

1 foster

2 achieve

3 interact

4 rely

5 engage

6 suffer

Governments should Build Sports Facilities for Top Athletes *vs* the Public

Schools should be the main beneficiaries of public investment in sport. This supports the argument that governments should build sports facilities for the public.

The success of top athletes brings prestige and worldwide attention to their country. This supports the argument that governments should build sports facilities for top athletes.

Watching Sport on TV is a Waste of Time

1 disrupts

2 slump

3 slouch

4 passionate

5 affordable

6 compulsive

Who is Responsible for Children to Exercise?

1 pride of place

2 play a key role

3 instil

4 motto

5 set an example

6 at the expense of

ANSWERS: TECHNOLOGY

Banning Mobile Phones in Public Areas

1 intrusive

2 adverse

3 designated areas

4 violate

5 to be on the verge of

6 to curtail

Technology has Helped People Become more Social

1 abolish

2 build up

3 reconnect

4 disrupt

5 prioritise

6 disseminate

The Gap between Old and Young has Widened due to Technology

1 a **2** b **3** b **4** a **5** b; a **6** b **7** a **8** a **9** b **10** a

Mankind is Now Dependent on Modern Technology

1 (+) **2** (+) **3** (-) **4** (+) **5** (-) **6** (-) **7** (-) **8** (+) **9** (+) **10** (-)

Technology Increases the Gap between Rich and Poor

1 the

2 a

3 they

4 very

5 any

The Internet is Mankind's Most Important Invention

The invention of the telephone, the light-bulb and the computer made the Internet possible. This argument does not support the idea that mankind's most important invention is the Internet.

This argument supports the idea that mankind's most important invention is the Internet.

ANSWERS: TOURISM

Tourism

boost: **i)** stimulate

influence: **a)** affect

alter: **b)** change

adversely: **e)** negatively

rely: **c)** depend

downturn: **g)** recession

Tourism Causes Damage to Historical Buildings

1 regrettably

2 recorded

3 irreparable

People Need to Learn the Language in order to Travel

1 resolved

2 venture

3 enquire

4 renders

5 seek

6 cope

People should Adapt to the Culture of the Country they are Visiting

deeply	gravely	punishable by law	chargeable
unpleasant	awkward	conflict	clash
firsthand	directly	depend	rely
enhance	enrich	discard	forgo
fixed	established		

People Do Not Need to Travel if They Have TV

Many people actually watch programmes about places they have already been to, or which they intend to visit. This sentence *counters* the argument that people do not need to travel if they have TV.

You can see more of a country and learn more about it in a 30-minute documentary than you would during a month's holiday there. This sentence *supports* the argument that people do not need to travel if they have TV.

Travel in a Group or Alone

1 in company

2 to dishearten sb

3 measures

Ecotourism

1 and

2 an

3 they

4 by

5 in

ANSWERS: TRANSPORT

Congestion in Cities

1 d **2** c **3** a **4** e **5** f **6** b

Is increasing Tax on Flights the Best Way to Reduce Air Travel?

1 to increase / raise / put up / a tax

2

3 to put / introduce / levy / impose / a tax

4 to evade / dodge / taxes

Retake the Driving Test Every Five Years

1 c **2** c **3** b **4** a

Public Transport

1 essential

2 unreliable

3 sustainable

4 flexible

5 rife

Increased Car Ownership

1 depletion

2 tax revenue

3 fossil fuels

4 to take a detour

5 to incur

6 to keep up with the Joneses

For	Against
• Owning a car means you no longer have to travel with other people, which means avoiding the spread of illness, the discomfort of overcrowding and the possibility of pickpocketing. • Having a car means that you can travel easily with lots of luggage rather than carrying it all when using public transport. • Cars allow people to commute further suburbs or outside the city becomes a more viable option.	• More traffic accidents occur due to the increase in traffic. • Many roads and streets in city centres were not built to cope with such a high volume of traffic resulting in serious congestion problems. • It is healthier to travel short distances on foot or by bike. Cars do not contribute towards better health.

The Government should Spend More on Railways

1 railway / train / station / timetable / travel / network / infrastructure / ~~motorist~~

2 ~~CO2 emissions~~ / high-speed / state / electric / private / regional / **railway**

3 rail / infrastructure / service / ~~depletion~~ / network / transport / travel / passenger

4 train / delays / journey / travellers / timetable / fare / ~~crossroads~~ / line

5 road / congestion / network / ~~highway~~ / infrastructure / closure / access / development

ANSWERS: WATER

Oceans

Answer Key: Ideas for IELTS Essay Topics

1 a **2** d **3** f **4** e **5** g **6** b **7** c

Water Pollution

1 dispose of / get rid of / ~~pollute~~ / dump / clean up / store / process / recycle **waste**

2 poisonous / radioactive / toxic / harmful / hazardous / ~~wildlife~~ / industrial **waste**

3 ~~contaminate~~ / reduce / minimise / tackle / combat / prevent / avoid / limit **pollution**

4 atmospheric / marine / water / river / industrial / ~~consumption~~ / chemical / nitrate **pollution**

Marine Life

1 supports

2 depend on

3 absorbs

4 put an end to

5 reduce

6 take part in

Water Use should be Controlled by the Government

develop	formulate	conserve	save
set	impose	raising	increasing
promoting	encouraging	cutting	slashing
punish	penalise	jeopardise	endanger

Drinking Water should be Free, not Sold (No Bottled Water)

Unlike the air that we breathe, water needs a costly infrastructure that has to be maintained permanently. This is an argument *against* the idea that drinking water should be free.

Disposable plastic water bottles have a disastrous effect on the environment. This is an argument *in favour of* the idea that drinking water should be free, not sold in bottles.

ANSWERS: WORK

The Best Way to Get a Good Job

a struggle	difficult	hands-on	practical
proof	evidence	landing	getting
rise through the ranks	advance professionally	a head start	an advantage
from the outset	from the start	hire	employ
value	rate	degree	qualification

Job Satisfaction

1 competition

2 despair

3 unemployment

Problems with Work-Life Balance

1 blurs the boundaries

2 takes its toll

3 make a point

4 are on call

5 wind down

Who should Have High Salaries

1 the

2 and

3 for

4 it

5 can

Children and Part-Time Work

1 vulnerable

2 spontaneously

3 to make ends meet

4 to take advantage of someone

5 to juggle (one thing with another)

Children and Work Exploitation (Child Labour)

1 d **2** c **3** e **4** a **5** b

Teachers Do Not Want to Work in Rural Areas

1 in poor repair

2 a counterpart

3 an incentive

4 a fringe benefit

5 (to feel) daunted (by something)

6 to retain

Working Online from Home

1 d (-) **2** c (+) **3** f (+) **4** a (-) **5** b (+) **6** e (-)

For	Against
• Working from home gives you the freedom to work anytime, anywhere. • There is no dress code.	• When you work at home, it is much more difficult to achieve a healthy work-life balance. • There are far too many distractions and interruptions in one's home environment.

All Employees should have the Same Salary in a Company

1 a **2** b **3** b **4** a **5** b **6** b **7** a **8** a **9** b **10** a

Factors Influencing Career Choice

1 in debt

2 pay off

3 a decisive influence

4 rise through the ranks

5 commensurate with

Changing Jobs vs A Job for Life

1 experience

2 switch

3 guarantee

4 achieve

5 end up

6 stagnate

Women in the Armed Forces

1 spend

2 expertise

3 achieve

The Retirement Age should be Extended

1 (-) **2** (+) **3** (+) **4** (+) **5** (-) **6** (+) **7** (+) **8** (-) **9** (-) **10** (-)

Robots and Work

Robots in the workplace means more people are laid off work. This is an argument *against* using robots.

Robots can be easily replaced and reprogrammed for other duties. This is an argument *in favour of* using robots.

ANSWERS: WORLD ISSUES

World Overpopulation: Causes / Problems / Solutions

1 a **4** b **7** b **9** a **11** a **13** b **14** b **17** a **18** b

Aging World Population

1 to exceed

2 to contribute

3 to divert

4 strained

Global Warming

1 c, f **2** j **3** l **4** e **5** h **6** c, f **9** a **10** d

International Aid from Rich Countries to Poor Countries

1 (+)	**2** (+)	**3** (-)	**4** (+)	**5** (-)	**6** (+)
7 (-)	**8** (-)	**9** (+)	**10** (-)	**11** (+)	**12** (+)
13 (-)	**14** (-)	**15** (-)	**16** (+)		

Growing Gap between Rich and Poor

1 wealth

2 opportunities

3 cycle

4 wage

5 standard

6 gap

The Brain Drain: Migration of Skilled Workers Out of a Country

1 the

2 for

3 they

4 it

5 away

6 and