



Task 2 - How do I organise my answer?

Aim: After you have read through this information, you should have a better idea how to organise Writing Task 2 answers.

Problems:

Most candidates have a style of essay writing quite different from the western style. Many people lose marks because their organisation is not what is expected in western academic essays.

What kind of questions can I expect in Task 2?

Most questions in Writing Task 2 are designed to get you to give an opinion on a topic. The topics are non-specialist, so you don't need to be an expert in the different areas. The topics that are chosen are ones that it is not easy to decide which side of the argument you agree with: The arguments for and against are not clearly "black" or "white", but more "grey" – so you will probably agree with some points on both sides of the argument. For example: "Education should be free for everyone. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?"

What if I completely agree or disagree with a topic?

This is unlikely to happen. If it does, you should still try to offer opinions for both sides because this way your organisation will be better and the language you use will be more varied. You don't have to agree with what you write about, you need to show the examiner that you are aware of both sides to an argument.

Are there any Task 2 questions that don't need both sides of the argument in the answer?

Yes, there are:

1) List questions: These are questions that ask you to write a list of points that are related to a topic. For example: "What are the factors that are essential in making someone a good teacher?" Here, all you have to do is to write about each point, you do not have to balance an argument. However, list questions do not happen very often in the test.

2) Two-part questions: Some questions have two parts. You can usually tell if a question is in two-parts because they have the word "and" in them. For example: "What are the arguments for reducing traffic and suggest some ways in which this can be done?" Here you need to write 1 paragraph on the arguments 'for' and then another paragraph on suggested ways to reduce traffic.

Overall organization plans for Task 2:

1) An answer showing both sides of an argument, e.g.:

- INTRODUCTION

- BODY PARAGRAPH 1 – Arguments 'for'



- BODY PARAGRAPH 2 – Arguments ‘against’

- CONCLUSION

2) An answer listing points (you should write about 3 to 5 points).

- INTRODUCTION

- BODY PRAGRAPH 1 – Point 1

- BODY PRAGRAPH 2 – Point 2

- BODY PRAGRAPH 3 – Point 3

- CONCLUSION

3) An answer for a two-part question

INTRODUCTION

- BODY PARAGRAPH 1 – Arguments ‘for’

- BODY PARAGRAPH 2 - Suggestions

- CONCLUSION

There is no Answer Key.

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