EDITION

2019

A Collection of 100+ Writing Task 2 Essays

IELTS ESSAYS
FROM EXAMINERS

VERSION 3.0

COLLECTED BY

DAVID SINCLAIR

TG @Eugene_ielts

mswordcoverpa

Foreword

Nghiên cứu bài mẫu IELTS là một nhu cầu không thể thiếu của những sĩ tử tham gia kì thi này. Thị trường bài mẫu hiện nay khá rộng lớn với nhiều tài liệu sách, bài viết mẫu trên mạng. Tuy đa dạng là thế, nhưng người học IELTS cũng không khỏi bối rối vì độ tin cậy và tính chuẩn mực về ngôn ngữ của các bài viết trên mạng, bài nào cũng tự xem là "chuẩn" hay "band 8+".

Nhằm mang đến người học IELTS những bài mẫu chuẩn mực nhất từ các nguồn chuẩn nhất, đội ngũ "Luyện viết IELTS Writing 9.0+" đã cho ra mắt tập tài liệu "Essay From Examiners – A collection of A collection of **91** authentic IELTS Task 2 Essays" này. Sách là sự tổng hợp bài mẫu đến từ các nguồn chính:

- Thầy Simon
- HowtodoIELTS.com (Ex-examiners)
- Cambridge IELTS
- Cô Pauline Cullen
- Bài mẫu từ sách của nhà xuất bản Macmillan (Ready for IELTS 2nd Edition, Improve your Skills Writing for IELTS)
- Mindset for IELTS

Hi vọng quyển sách này sẽ giúp đỡ được các bạn phần nào trong con đường tiến đến một band điểm cao trong kì thi IELTS Writing.

Thân ái,

David Sinclair

TG @Eugene_ielts

Contents

Foreword 1

Simon 6

1. Festivals 7
2. Extreme sports 8
3. Responsibilities of businesses 9
4. Climate change 10
5. Online news 11
6. Crimes 12
7. Old and New 13
8. Wild animals 14
9. Child Education 15
10. Celebrities 16
11. Job and Money 17
12. Hobbies 18
13. Historical sites 19
14. Unpaid work 20
15. Communities 21
16. Male versus Female in Unis 22
17. Cultures and Advances 23
18. Advertising 24
19. History & Literature 25
20. Parental care 26
21. Salaries 27
22. Economic goals versus other goals 28
23. Minority Languages 29
24. University students 30
25. Punishments to drivers 31
26. People's relationships 32
27. Financial support to artists 33
28. Animal testing 34

TG @Eugene_ielts

29. Higher education versus work 35
30. Museums 36
31. Living alone 37
32. Video games 38
33. Credit cards 39
34. Online courses 40
35. Life expectancy 41
36. Environmental problems 42
37. Foreign films 43
38. Parental roles 44
39. Happiness 45
40. Economic progress 46
41. The roles of music 47
42. Technology versus people's interaction 48
43. Career path 49
44. Equality 50
HowtodoIELTS.com 51
45. Work-life balance 52
46. Choices 53
47. Population & Young People 54
48. Foreign languages 55
49. Sporting events 56
50. Traffic and housing 57
51. Museums and galleries 1 58
52. Museums and galleries 2 59
53. Literature 60
54. Buildings 61
55. Plastic bags 62
56. Big cities 63
57. Online meetings 64
58. Leadership 65

TG @Eugene_ielts

59. Climate change 66
60. History versus science 67
61. Agriculture versus hunger 69
62. Newspaper versus the Internet 71
63. Age for driving 72
64. Fast public transport 73
65. Sharing information 74
66. Situation acceptance 75
67. Environmental Problems 76
68. Self-employed versus company 77
69. Music 78
70. Responsibility for health 79
71. Police and crime rates 80
72. Young people leaving home 81

Cambridge IELTS 82

73. Happiness 83
74. Student behavior 84
75. Gap year 85
76. Personalities 86
77. Sport stars 87
78. Changes 88
79. Nature or Nurture 89
80. Parents vs schools 90
81. Petrol price 91
82. Foreign languages 91
83. Public health 93
84. Child punishment 94
85. Cultural homogeneity 95

Pauline Cullen 96

86. Recycling 1 97
87. Recycling 2 98

TG @Eugene_ielts

88. Recycling 3 99
89. Jobs & Skills 100
90. Crime rates 1 101
91. Crime rates 2 102
92. The media 103
93. Free education and healthcare 104
94. Obesity 105
95. Alternative energy 106
96. Tourism 107

Macmillan 108

97. Traffic congestion 109
98. Globalisation and Cities 110
99. Technology as a Study Tool 111
100. Worsened Environment 112
101. Experience versus Knowledge 113
102. Old Buildings versus New Buildings 114
103. Soft Skills 115
104. Technology in Arts 116
105. Business Responsibilities 117
106. Science versus computer technology 118
107. Budget for healthcare 119
108. Aging poulation 120
109. Salary and job satisfaction 121
110. dependency on technology 122
111. Preserving cultures 123

TG @Eugene_ielts

Simon

TG @Eugene_ielts

1. Festivals

Most people have forgotten the meaning behind traditional or religious festivals; during festival periods, people nowadays only want to enjoy themselves.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Some people argue that we no longer remember the original meaning of festivals, and that most of us treat them as opportunities to have fun. While I agree that enjoyment seems to be the priority during festival times, I do not agree that people have forgotten what these festivals mean.

On the one hand, religious and traditional festivals have certainly become times for celebration. In the UK, Christmas is a good example of a festival period when people are most concerned with shopping, giving and receiving presents, decorating their homes and enjoying traditional meals with their families. Most people look forward to Christmas as a holiday period, rather than a time to practise religion. Similar behaviour can be seen during non-religious festivals, such as Bonfire Night. People associate this occasion with making fires, watching firework displays, and perhaps going to large events in local parks; in other words, enjoyment is people's primary goal.

However, I disagree with the idea that the underlying meaning of such festivals has been forgotten. In UK primary schools, children learn in detail about the religious reasons for celebrating Christmas, Easter and a variety of festivals in other religions. For example, in late December, children sing Christmas songs which have a religious content, and they may even perform nativity plays telling the story of Jesus' birth. Families also play a role in passing knowledge of religious festivals' deeper significance on to the next generation. The same is true for festivals that have a historical background, such as Bonfire Night or Halloween, in the sense that people generally learn the stories behind these occasions at an early age.

In conclusion, although people mainly want to enjoy themselves during festivals, I believe that they are still aware of the reasons for these celebrations.

TG @Eugene_ielts

2. Extreme sports

Extreme sports such as sky diving and skiing are very dangerous and should be banned.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view?

In recent years, extreme sports have become increasingly popular, and some people argue that governments should prohibit them. I completely disagree with the idea that these sports are too dangerous, and I therefore believe that they should not be banned.

In my opinion, so-called extreme sports are not as dangerous as many people think. All sports involve some element of risk, and there should always be clear regulations and safety procedures to reduce the possibility of accidents. People who take part in extreme sports are usually required to undergo appropriate training so that the dangers are minimised. For example, anyone who wants to try skydiving will need to sign up for lessons with a registered club, and beginners are not allowed to dive solo; they must be accompanied by an experienced professional. Finally, the protective equipment and technology used in sports from motor racing to mountain climbing is constantly improving safety.

While I support regulations and safety measures, I believe that it would be wrong, and almost impossible, to ban extreme sports. In the first place, we should all be free to decide how we spend our leisure time; as long as we understand the risks, I do not believe that politicians should stop us from enjoying ourselves. However, an even stronger argument against such a ban would be the difficulty of enforcing it. Many of the most risky sports, like base jumping or big wave surfing, are practised far away from the reach of any authorities. I cannot imagine the police being called to stop people from parachuting off a mountain face or surfing on an isolated beach.

In conclusion, I would argue that people should be free to enjoy extreme sports as long as they understand the risks and take the appropriate precautions.

TG @Eugene_ielts

3. Responsibilities of businesses

As well as making money, businesses also have social responsibilities.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Businesses have always sought to make a profit, but it is becoming increasingly common to hear people talk about the social obligations that companies have. I completely agree with the idea that businesses should do more for society than simply make money.

On the one hand, I accept that businesses must make money in order to survive in a competitive world. It seems logical that the priority of any company should be to cover its running costs, such as employees' wages and payments for buildings and utilities. On top of these costs, companies also need to invest in improvements and innovations if they wish to remain successful. If a company is unable to pay its bills or meet the changing needs of customers, any concerns about social responsibilities become irrelevant. In other words, a company can only make a positive contribution to society if it is in good financial health.

On the other hand, companies should not be run with the sole aim of maximising profit; they have a wider role to play in society. One social obligation that owners and managers have is to treat their employees well, rather than exploiting them. For example, they could pay a "living wage" to ensure that workers have a good quality of life. I also like the idea that businesses could use a proportion of their profits to support local charities, environmental projects or education initiatives. Finally, instead of trying to minimise their tax payments by using accounting loopholes, I believe that company bosses should be happy to contribute to society through the tax system.

In conclusion, I believe that companies should place as much importance on their social responsibilities as they do on their financial objectives.

TG @Eugene_ielts

4. Climate change

Some people think that instead of preventing climate change, we need to find a way to live with it.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Climate change represents a major threat to life on Earth, but some people argue that we need to accept it rather than try to stop it. I completely disagree with this opinion, because I believe that we still have time to tackle this issue and reduce the human impact on the Earth's climate.

There are various measures that governments and individuals could take to prevent, or at least mitigate, climate change. Governments could introduce laws to limit the carbon dioxide emissions that lead to global warming. They could impose "green taxes" on drivers, airline companies and other polluters, and they could invest in renewable energy production from solar, wind or water power. As individuals, we should also try to limit our contribution to climate change, by becoming more energy efficient, by flying less, and by using bicycles and public transport. Furthermore, the public can affect the actions of governments by voting for politicians who propose to tackle climate change, rather than for those who would prefer to ignore it.

If instead of taking the above measures we simply try to live with climate change, I believe that the consequences will be disastrous. To give just one example, I am not optimistic that we would be able to cope with even a small rise in sea levels. Millions of people would be displaced by flooding, particularly in countries that do not have the means to safeguard low-lying areas. These people would lose their homes and their jobs, and they would be forced to migrate to nearby cities or perhaps to other countries. The potential for human suffering would be huge, and it is likely that we would see outbreaks of disease and famine, as well as increased homelessness and poverty.

In conclusion, it is clear to me that we must address the problem of climate change, and I disagree with those who argue that we can find ways to live with it.

TG @Eugene_ielts

5. Online news

Although more and more people read news on the Internet, newspaper will remain the most important source of news.

Do you agree or disagree?

The Internet is beginning to rival newspapers as the best place to find information about what is happening in the world. I believe that this trend will continue, and the Internet will soon be just as important as the traditional ones.

On the one hand, I believe that newspapers will continue to be a vital source of information, even in the Internet age. Firstly, newspapers are the most traditional means of communicating the news, and not everyone wants to or is able to use the Internet instead. For example, old people or those in rural areas might not have the ability of opportunity to get online, while many of us simply prefer newspapers even if we do have Internet access. Secondly, newspapers can be trusted as reliable sources of news because they employ professional journalists and editors. Finally, many people like the experience of holding and reading a paper rather than looking at a computer screen.

However, the Internet is likely to become just as popular as newspapers for a variety of reasons. The main reason is that it allows us much faster access to news in real time and wherever we are, on different gadgets and mobile devices. Another key benefit of online news compared to newspapers is the ability to share articles, discuss them with other people, give our views, and even contribute with our own updates on social media. For example, there has been an explosion in the use of platforms like Twitter and YouTube where anyone can share their news and views. A final point is that this source of news is less damaging to the environment.

In conclusion, I disagree with the view that newspapers will continue to be the main source of news, because I believe that the Internet will soon be equally important.

TG @Eugene_ielts

6. Crimes

Some people who have been in prison become good citizens later, and it is often argued that these are the best people to talk to teenagers about the dangers of committing a crime.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

It is true that ex-prisoners can become normal, productive members of society. I completely agree with the idea that allowing such people to speak to teenagers about their experiences is the best way to discourage them from breaking the law.

In my opinion, teenagers are more likely to accept advice from someone who can speak from experience. Reformed offenders can tell young people about how they became involved in crime, the dangers of a criminal lifestyle, and what life in prison is really like. They can also dispel any ideas that teenagers may have about criminals leading glamorous lives. While adolescents are often indifferent to the guidance given by older people, I imagine that most of them would be extremely keen to hear the stories of an ex¬offender. The vivid and perhaps shocking nature of these stories is likely to have a powerful impact.

The alternatives to using reformed criminals to educate teenagers about crime would be much less effective. One option would be for police officers to visit schools and talk to young people. This could be useful in terms of informing teens about what happens to lawbreakers when they are caught, but young people are often reluctant to take advice from figures of authority. A second option would be for school teachers to speak to their students about crime, but I doubt that students would see teachers as credible sources of information about this topic. Finally, educational films might be informative, but there would be no opportunity for young people to interact and ask questions.

In conclusion, I fully support the view that people who have turned their lives around after serving a prison sentence could help to deter teenagers from committing crimes.

TG @Eugene_ielts

7. Old and New

The older generations tend to have very traditional ideas about how people should live, think and behave. However, some people believe that these ideas are not helpful in preparing younger generations for modern life.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view?

It is true that many older people believe in traditional values that often seem incompatible with the needs of younger people. While I agree that some traditional ideas are outdated,

I believe that others are still useful and should not be forgotten.

On the one hand, many of the ideas that elderly people have about life are becoming less relevant for younger people. In the past, for example, people were advised to learn a profession and find a secure job for life, but today's workers expect much more variety and diversity from their careers. At the same time, the 'rules' around relationships are being eroded as young adults make their own choices about who and when to marry. But perhaps the greatest disparity between the generations can be seen in their attitudes towards gender roles. The traditional roles of men and women, as breadwinners and housewives, are no longer accepted as necessary or appropriate by most younger people.

On the other hand, some traditional views and values are certainly applicable to the modern world. For example, older generations attach great importance to working hard, doing one's best, and taking pride in one's work, and these behaviours can surely benefit young people as they enter today's competitive job market. Other characteristics that are perhaps seen as traditional are politeness and good manners. In our globalised world, young adults can expect to come into contact with people from a huge variety of backgrounds, and it is more important than ever to treat others with respect. Finally, I believe that young people would lead happier lives if they had a more 'old-fashioned' sense of community and neighbourliness.

In conclusion, although the views of older people may sometimes seem unhelpful in today's world, we should not dismiss all traditional ideas as irrelevant.

TG @Eugene_ielts

8. Wild animals

Wild animals have no place in the 21st century, so protecting them is a waste of resources.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Some people argue that it is pointless to spend money on the protection of wild animals because we humans have no need for them. I completely disagree with this point of view.

In my opinion, it is absurd to argue that wild animals have no place in the 21st century. I do not believe that planet Earth exists only for the benefit of humans, and there is nothing special about this particular century that means that we suddenly have the right to allow or encourage the extinction of any species. Furthermore, there is no compelling reason why we should let animals die out. We do not need to exploit or destroy every last square metre of land in order to feed or accommodate the world's population. There is plenty of room for us to exist side by side with wild animals, and this should be our aim.

I also disagree with the idea that protecting animals is a waste of resources. It is usually the protection of natural habitats that ensures the survival of wild animals, and most scientists agree that these habitats are also crucial for human survival. For example, rainforests produce oxygen, absorb carbon dioxide and stabilise the Earth's climate. If we destroyed these areas, the costs of managing the resulting changes to our planet would far outweigh the costs of conservation. By protecting wild animals and their habitats, we maintain the natural balance of all life on Earth.

In conclusion, we have no right to decide whether or not wild animals should exist, and I believe that we should do everything we can to protect them.

TG @Eugene_ielts

9. Child Education

Families who send their children to private schools should not be required to pay taxes that support the state education system.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Some people believe that parents of children who attend private schools should not need to contribute to state schools through taxes. Personally, I completely disagree with this view.

For a variety of reasons, it would be wrong to reduce taxes for families who pay for private education. Firstly, it would be difficult to calculate the correct amount of tax reduction for these families, and staff would be required to manage this complex process. Secondly, we all pay a certain amount of tax for public services that we may not use. For example, most people are fortunate enough not to have to call the police or fire brigade at any time in their lives, but they would not expect a tax reduction for this. Finally, if wealthy families were given a tax discount for sending their children to private schools, we might have a situation where poorer people pay higher taxes than the rich.

In my opinion, we should all be happy to pay our share of the money that supports public schools. It is beneficial for all members of society to have a high quality education system with equal opportunities for all young people. This will result in a well-educated workforce, and in turn a more productive and prosperous nation. Parents of children in private schools may also see the advantages of this in their own lives. For example, a company owner will need well qualified and competent staff, and a well-funded education system can provide such employees.

In conclusion, I do not believe that any financial concessions should be made for people who choose private education.

TG @Eugene_ielts

10. Celebrities

Nowadays celebrities are more famous for their glamour and wealth than for their achievements, and this sets a bad example to young people.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

It is true that some celebrities are known for their glamorous lifestyles rather than for the work they do. While I agree that these celebrities set a bad example for children, I believe that other famous people act as positive role models.

On the one hand, many people do achieve fame without really working for it. They may have inherited money from parents, married a famous or wealthy person, or they may have appeared in gossip magazines or on a reality TV programme. A good example would be Paris Hilton, who is rich and famous for the wrong reasons. She spends her time attending parties and nightclubs, and her behaviour promotes the idea that appearance, glamour and media profile are more important than hard work and good character. The message to young people is that success can be achieved easily, and that school work is not necessary.

On the other hand, there are at least as many celebrities whose accomplishments make them excellent role models for young people. Actors, musicians and sports stars become famous idols because they have worked hard and applied themselves to develop real skills and abilities. They demonstrate great effort, determination and ambition, which is required for someone who wants to be truly successful in their chosen field. An example is the actor and martial artist Jackie Chan, who has become world famous through years of practice and hard work. This kind of self-made celebrity can inspire children to develop their talents through application and perseverance.

In conclusion, it seems to me that the influence of celebrities on young people can be positive as well as negative.

TG @Eugene_ielts

11. Job and Money

When choosing a job, the salary is the most important consideration.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Many people choose their jobs based on the size of the salary offered. Personally, I disagree with the idea that money is the key consideration when deciding on a career, because I believe that other factors are equally important.

On the one hand, I agree that money is necessary in order for people to meet their basic needs. For example, we all need money to pay for housing, food, bills, health care, and education. Most people consider it a priority to at least earn a salary that allows them to cover these needs and have a reasonable quality of life. If people chose their jobs based on enjoyment or other non-financial factors, they might find it difficult to support themselves. Artists and musicians, for instance, are known for choosing a career path that they love, but that does not always provide them with enough money to live comfortably and raise a family.

Nevertheless, I believe that other considerations are just as important as what we earn in our jobs. Firstly, personal relationships and the atmosphere in a workplace are extremely important when choosing a job. Having a good manager or friendly colleagues, for example, can make a huge difference to workers' levels of happiness and general quality of life. Secondly, many people's feelings of job satisfaction come from their professional achievements, the skills they learn, and the position they reach, rather than the money they earn. Finally, some people choose a career because they want to help others and contribute something positive to society.

In conclusion, while salaries certainly affect people's choice of profession, I do not believe that money outweighs all other motivators.

TG @Eugene_ielts

12. Hobbies

Some people believe that hobbies need to be difficult to be enjoyable.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Some hobbies are relatively easy, while others present more of a challenge. Personally, I believe that both types of hobby can be fun, and I therefore disagree with the statement that hobbies need to be difficult in order to be enjoyable.

On the one hand, many people enjoy easy hobbies. One example of an activity that is easy for most people is swimming. This hobby requires very little equipment, it is simple to learn, and it is inexpensive. I remember learning to swim at my local swimming pool when I was a child, and it never felt like a demanding or challenging experience. Another hobby that I find easy and fun is photography. In my opinion, anyone can take interesting pictures without knowing too much about the technicalities of operating a camera. Despite being straightforward, taking photos is a satisfying activity.

On the other hand, difficult hobbies can sometimes be more exciting. If an activity is more challenging, we might feel a greater sense of satisfaction when we manage to do it successfully. For example, film editing is a hobby that requires a high level of knowledge and expertise. In my case, it took me around two years before I became competent at this activity, but now I enjoy it much more than I did when I started. I believe that many hobbies give us more pleasure when we reach a higher level of performance because the results are better and the feeling of achievement is greater.

In conclusion, simple hobbies can be fun and relaxing, but difficult hobbies can be equally pleasurable for different reasons.

TG @Eugene_ielts

13. Historical sites

Foreign visitors should pay more than local visitors for cultural and historical attractions.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

It is sometimes argued that tourists from overseas should be charged more than local residents to visit important sites and monuments. I completely disagree with this idea.

The argument in favour of higher prices for foreign tourists would be that cultural or historical attractions often depend on state subsidies to keep them going, which means that the resident population already pays money to these sites through the tax system. However, I believe this to be a very shortsighted view. Foreign tourists contribute to the economy of the host country with the money they spend on a wide range of goods and services, including food, souvenirs, accommodation and travel. The governments and inhabitants of every country should be happy to subsidise important tourist sites and encourage people from the rest of the world to visit them.

If travellers realised that they would have to pay more to visit historical and cultural attractions in a particular nation, they would perhaps decide not to go to that country on holiday. To take the UK as an example, the tourism industry and many related jobs rely on visitors coming to the country to see places like Windsor Castle or Saint Paul's Cathedral. These two sites charge the same price regardless of nationality, and this helps to promote the nation's cultural heritage. If overseas tourists stopped coming due to higher prices, there would be a risk of insufficient funding for the maintenance of these important buildings.

In conclusion, I believe that every effort should be made to attract tourists from overseas, and it would be counterproductive to make them pay more than local residents.

TG @Eugene_ielts

14. Unpaid work

Some people think that all teenagers should be required to do unpaid work in their free time to help the local community. They believe this would benefit both the individual teenager and society as a whole.

Do you agree or disagree?

Many young people work on a volunteer basis, and this can only be beneficial for both the individual and society as a whole. However, I do not agree that we should therefore force all teenagers to do unpaid work.

Most young people are already under enough pressure with their studies, without being given the added responsibility of working in their spare time. School is just as demanding as a full-time job, and teachers expect their students to do homework and exam revision on top of attending lessons every day. When young people do have some free time, we should encourage them to enjoy it with their friends or to spend it doing sports and other leisure activities. They have many years of work ahead of them when they finish their studies.

At the same time, I do not believe that society has anything to gain from obliging young people to do unpaid work. In fact, I would argue that it goes against the values of a free and fair society to force a group of people to do something against their will. Doing this can only lead to resentment amongst young people, who would feel that they were being used, and parents, who would not want to be told how to raise their children. Currently, nobody is forced to volunteer, and this is surely the best system.

In conclusion, teenagers may choose to work for free and help others, but in my opinion we should not make this compulsory.

TG @Eugene_ielts

15. Communities

We cannot help everyone in the world that needs help, so we should only be concerned with our own communities and countries.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Some people believe that we should not help people in other countries as long as there are problems in our own society. I disagree with this view because I believe that we should try to help as many people as possible.

On the one hand, I accept that it is important to help our neighbours and fellow citizens. In most communities there are people who are impoverished or disadvantaged in some way. It is possible to find homeless people, for example, in even the wealthiest of cities, and for those who are concerned about this problem, there are usually opportunities to volunteer time or give money to support these people. In the UK, people can help in a variety of ways, from donating clothing to serving free food in a soup kitchen. As the problems are on our doorstep, and there are obvious ways to help, I can understand why some people feel that we should prioritise local charity.

At the same time, I believe that we have an obligation to help those who live beyond our national borders. In some countries the problems that people face are much more serious than those in our own communities, and it is often even easier to help. For example, when children are dying from curable diseases in African countries, governments and individuals in richer countries can save lives simply by paying for vaccines that already exist. A small donation to an international charity might have a much greater impact than helping in our local area.

In conclusion, it is true that we cannot help everyone, but in my opinion national boundaries should not stop us from helping those who are in need.

TG @Eugene_ielts

16. Male versus Female in Unis

Universities should accept equal numbers of male and female students in every subject.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

In my opinion, men and women should have the same educational opportunities. However, I do not agree with the idea of accepting equal proportions of each gender in every university subject.

Having the same number of men and women on all degree courses is simply unrealistic. Student numbers on any course depend on the applications that the institution receives. If a university decided to fill courses with equal numbers of males and females, it would need enough applicants of each gender. In reality, many courses are more popular with one gender than the other, and it would not be practical to aim for equal proportions. For example, nursing courses tend to attract more female applicants, and it would be difficult to fill these courses if fifty per cent of the places needed to go to males.

Apart from the practical concerns expressed above, I also believe that it would be unfair to base admission to university courses on gender. Universities should continue to select the best candidates for each course according to their qualifications. In this way, both men and women have the same opportunities, and applicants know that they will be successful if they work hard to achieve good grades at school. If a female student is the best candidate for a place on a course, it is surely wrong to reject her in favour of a male student with lower grades or fewer qualifications.

In conclusion, the selection of university students should be based on merit, and it would be both impractical and unfair to change to a selection procedure based on gender.

TG @Eugene_ielts

17. Cultures and Advances

It is inevitable that traditional cultures will be lost as technology develops. Technology and traditional cultures are incompatible.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view?

Some people believe that technological developments lead to the loss of traditional cultures. I partly agree with this assertion; while it may be true in the case of some societies, others seem to be unaffected by technology and the modern world.

On the one hand, the advances in technology that have driven industrialisation in developed countries have certainly contributed to the disappearance of traditional ways of life. For example, in pre-industrial Britain, generations of families grew up in the same small village communities. These communities had a strong sense of identity, due to their shared customs and beliefs. However, developments in transport, communications and manufacturing led to the dispersal of families and village communities as people moved to the cities in search of work. Nowadays most British villages are inhabited by commuters, many of whom do not know their closest neighbours.

On the other hand, in some parts of the world traditional cultures still thrive. There are tribes in the Amazon Rainforest, for example, that have been completely untouched by the technological developments of the developed world. These tribal communities continue to hunt and gather food from the forest, and traditional skills are passed on to children by parents and elders. Other traditional cultures, such as farming communities in parts of Africa, are embracing communications technologies. Mobile phones give farmers access to information, from weather predictions to market prices, which helps them to prosper and therefore supports their culture.

In conclusion, many traditional ways of life have been lost as a result of advances in technology, but other traditional communities have survived and even flourished.

TG @Eugene_ielts

18. Advertising

Today, the high sales of popular consumer goods reflect the power of advertising and not the real needs of the society in which they are sold. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

It is true that we are increasingly surrounded by advertising by companies that want to sell us their products. To some extent I agree that advertising has an impact on sales, but I would also argue that we do need most of the goods that we buy.

Advertisements can certainly tempt people to buy products that they might not otherwise want. A good example could be the mobile phone. Every year people can be seen queuing to buy the latest models, even when they already have a perfectly good phone that does not need replacing. Perhaps it is the influence of marketing that leads us to make these kinds of decisions; we want to say up-to- date with the latest fashions or own the newest high-status device. The high sales of the iPhone seem to support this idea.

On the other hand, I believe that most people do not buy products because of the advertising alone. There are other good reasons why we make these choices, and there must be some kind of need before a person makes a purchase. New versions of products almost always have improved features that buyers may want. A new car, for example, may have greatly improved safety features, or it may be more economical to run, or it may pollute less. A new phone may allow the user to communicate more quickly or effectively, thus enhancing their quality of life.

In conclusion, while advertising obviously influences our buying behaviour, I do not agree that people make decisions that go against their real needs.

TG @Eugene_ielts

19. History & Literature

Some people believe that it is more important to teach children the literature and history of their own country, rather than the literature and history of other countries. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

People have different views about the teaching of national versus global literature and history in schools. Personally, I support the idea that children should study first and foremost the great books and historical events of their own countries.

There are several reasons why I believe that schools should focus on teaching national literature and history. Firstly, children enjoy learning about where they live, and by studying the ideas, culture and history of their own countries they begin to develop a sense of identity. At the same time, this approach is appealing to parents, who studied the same books and historical events and can therefore help their children with school work. English children, for example, read Shakespeare and learn about the Battle of Hastings just as their parents did, and there is educational continuity across the generations. Finally, an emphasis on national literature and history gives educators a narrower teaching scope, making curriculum design an easier task.

By contrast, the study of global events and foreign novels could cause unnecessary difficulty and confusion for school pupils. For example, I do not see the point in presenting Russian or Chinese history to a British child who has not yet studied the history of his or her own country in detail. Surely the child would be more able to comprehend historical events that took place in London than those that happened in Moscow or Beijing. Similarly, any exposure to international literature is likely to require the teaching of a foreign language or the use of translations. Young people at primary or secondary school age are simply not ready for such complications.

In conclusion, I would argue that it is undesirable for schools to cover aspects of foreign history and literature; they should ground their pupils in the local culture instead.

TG @Eugene_ielts

20. Parental care

Caring for children is probably the most important job in any society. Because of this, all mothers and fathers should be required to take a course that prepares them to be good parents. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view?

It is true that parents shoulder a huge responsibility and that raising children is by no means an easy task. However, I completely disagree with the idea that we should therefore force all mothers and fathers to attend parenting courses.

In my opinion, the idea that all future parents should take a parenthood preparation course is completely impractical. Many prospective parents have jobs and busy schedules, and they may not be willing or able to attend regular parenting classes. This raises the question of whether those who missed the classes, or perhaps refused to attend, would be punished. I believe that it would be wrong to do this, and it would therefore be impossible to enforce the idea of compulsory training for parents. Besides, even if parents could be forced to attend, I doubt that people would agree on what good parenting entails, and so it would be difficult to create a parenting course to suit everyone.

As well as being impractical, I would argue that training courses for parents are unnecessary. Mothers and fathers have been raising children without any formal help or official interference for thousands of years. Parenting skills are learnt from family members, friends, neighbours and the surrounding culture. Perhaps more importantly, adults learn to be good parents by instinct, by trial and error, and by getting to know their own children; for example, a good parent will try different strategies when faced with a badly-behaved child, and will gradually develop an understanding of what works to correct the behaviour. None of this requires the intervention of a taught course.

In conclusion, while compulsory parenting lessons might seem like a good idea, I believe that such a scheme would be unworkable and largely pointless.

(289 words, band 9)

TG @Eugene_ielts

21. Salaries

In many countries, a small number of people earn extremely high salaries. Some people believe that this is good for the country, but others think that governments should not allow salaries above a certain level.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

People have different views about whether governments should introduce a maximum wage. While in some ways it may seem reasonable to allow people to earn as much as companies are willing to pay, I personally believe that employee remuneration should be capped at a certain level.

There are various reasons why it might be considered beneficial to allow people to be paid extremely high salaries. If companies offer excellent pay packages, they can attract the most talented people in their fields to work for them. For example, technology companies like Google are able to employ the best programmers because of the huge sums that they are willing to pay. Furthermore, these well-paid employees are likely to be highly motivated to work hard and therefore drive their businesses successfully. In theory, this should result in a thriving economy and increased tax revenues, which means that paying high salaries benefits everyone.

However, I agree with those who argue that there should be a maximum wage. By introducing a limit on earnings, the pay-gap between bosses and employees can be reduced. Currently, the difference between normal and top salaries is huge, and this can demotivate workers who feel that the situation is unfair. With lower executive salaries, it might become feasible to introduce higher minimum wages, and everybody would be better off. One possible consequence of greater equality could be that poverty and crime rates fall because the general population will experience an improved standard of living.

In conclusion, it seems to me that it would be better, on balance, for governments to set a limit on the wages of the highest earners in society.

274 words, band 9

TG @Eugene_ielts

22. Economic goals versus other goals

Many governments think that economic progress is their most important goal. Some people, however, think that other types of progress are equally important for a country.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

People have different views about how governments should measure their countries' progress. While economic progress is of course essential, I agree with those who believe that other measures of progress are just as important.

There are three key reasons why economic growth is seen as a fundamental goal for countries. Firstly, a healthy economy results in job creation, a high level of employment, and better salaries for all citizens. Secondly, economic progress ensures that more money is available for governments to spend on infrastructure and public services. For example, a government with higher revenues can invest in the country's transport network, its education system and its hospitals. Finally, a strong economy can help a country's standing on the global stage, in terms of its political influence and trading power.

However, I would argue that various other forms of progress are just as significant as the economic factors mentioned above. In particular, we should consider the area of social justice, human rights, equality and democracy itself. For example, the treatment of minority groups is often seen as a reflection of the moral standards and level of development of a society. Perhaps another key consideration when judging the progress of a modern country should be how well that country protects the natural environment, and whether it is moving towards environmental sustainability. Alternatively, the success of a nation could be measured by looking at the health, well-being and happiness of its residents.

In conclusion, the economy is obviously a key marker of a country's success, but social, environmental and health criteria are equally significant.

TG @Eugene_ielts

23. Minority Languages

Several languages are in danger of extinction because they are spoken by very small numbers of people. Some people say that governments should spend public money on saving these languages, while others believe that would be a waste of money.

Discuss both these views and give your opinion.

It is true that some minority languages may disappear in the near future. Although it can be argued that governments could save money by allowing this to happen, I believe that these languages should be protected and preserved.

There are several reasons why saving minority languages could be seen as a waste of money. Firstly, if a language is only spoken by a small number of people, expensive education programmes will be needed to make sure that more people learn it, and the state will have to pay for facilities, teachers and marketing. This money might be better spent on other public services. Secondly, it would be much cheaper and more efficient for countries to have just one language. Governments could cut all kinds of costs related to communicating with each minority group.

Despite the above arguments, I believe that governments should try to preserve languages that are less widely spoken. A language is much more than simply a means of communication; it has a vital connection with the cultural identity of the people who speak it. If a language disappears, a whole way of life will disappear with it, and we will lose the rich cultural diversity that makes societies more interesting. By spending money to protect minority languages, governments can also preserve traditions, customs and behaviours that are part of a country's history.

In conclusion, it may save money in the short term if we allow minority languages to disappear, but in the long term this would have an extremely negative impact on our cultural heritage.

TG @Eugene_ielts

24. University students

Some people think that all university students should study whatever they like. Others believe that they should only be allowed to study subjects that will be useful in the future, such as those related to science and technology.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

People have different views about how much choice students should have with regard to what they can study at university. While some argue that it would be better for students to be forced into certain key subject areas, I believe that everyone should be able to study the course of their choice.

There are various reasons why people believe that universities should only offer subjects that will be useful in the future. They may assert that university courses like medicine, engineering and information technology are more likely to be beneficial than certain art degrees. From a personal perspective, it can be argued that these courses provide more job opportunities, career progression, better salaries, and therefore an improved quality of life for students who take them. On the societal level, by forcing people to choose particular university subjects, governments can ensure that any knowledge and skill gaps in the economy are covered. Finally, a focus on technology in higher education could lead to new inventions, economic growth, and greater future prosperity.

In spite of these arguments, I believe that university students should be free to choose their preferred areas of study. In my opinion, society will benefit more if our students are passionate about what they are learning. Besides, nobody can really predict which areas of knowledge will be most useful to society in the future, and it may be that employers begin to value creative thinking skills above practical or technical skills. If this were the case, perhaps we would need more students of art, history and philosophy than of science or technology.

In conclusion, although it might seem sensible for universities to focus only on the most useful subjects, I personally prefer the current system in which people have the right to study whatever they like.

TG @Eugene_ielts

25. Punishments to drivers

Some people think that strict punishments for driving offences are the key to reducing traffic accidents. Others, however, believe that other measures would be more effective in improving road safety.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

People have differing views with regard to the question of how to make our roads safer. In my view, both punishments and a range of other measures can be used together to promote better driving habits.

On the one hand, strict punishments can certainly help to encourage people to drive more safely. Penalties for dangerous drivers can act as a deterrent, meaning that people avoid repeating the same offence. There are various types of driving penalty, such as small fines, licence suspension, driver awareness courses, and even prison sentences. The aim of these punishments is to show dangerous drivers that their actions have negative consequences. As a result, we would hope that drivers become more disciplined and alert, and that they follow the rules more carefully.

On the other hand, I believe that safe driving can be promoted in several different ways that do not punish drivers. Firstly, it is vitally important to educate people properly before they start to drive, and this could be done in schools or even as part of an extended or more difficult driving test. Secondly, more attention could be paid to safe road design. For example, signs can be used to warn people, speed bumps and road bends can be added to calm traffic, and speed cameras can help to deter people from driving too quickly. Finally, governments or local councils could reduce road accidents by investing in better public transport, which would mean that fewer people would need to travel by car.

In conclusion, while punishments can help to prevent bad driving, I believe that other road safety measures should also be introduced.

TG @Eugene_ielts

26. People's relationships

Some people think that in the modern world we are more dependent on each other, while others think that people have become more independent.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

People have different views about whether we are more or less dependent on others nowadays. In my view, modern life forces us to be more independent than people were in the past.

There are two main reasons why it could be argued that we are more dependent on each other now. Firstly, life is more complex and difficult, especially because the cost of living has increased so dramatically. For example, young adults tend to rely on their parents for help when buying a house. Property prices are higher than ever, and without help it would be impossible for many people to pay a deposit and a mortgage. Secondly, people seem to be more ambitious nowadays, and they want a better quality of life for their families. This means that both parents usually need to work full-time, and they depend on support from grandparents and babysitters for child care.

However, I would agree with those who believe that people are more independent these days. In most countries, families are becoming smaller and more dispersed, which means that people cannot count on relatives as much as they used to. We also have more freedom to travel and live far away from our home towns. For example, many students choose to study abroad instead of going to their local university, and this experience makes them more independent as they learn to live alone. Another factor in this growing independence is technology, which allows us to work alone and from any part of the world.

In conclusion, while there are some reasons to believe that people now depend on each other more, my own view is that we are more independent than ever.

TG @Eugene_ielts

27. Financial support to artists

Some people think that governments should give financial support to creative artists such as painters and musicians. Others believe that creative artists should be funded by alternative sources.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

People have different views about the funding of creative artists. While some people disagree with the idea of government support for artists, I believe that money for art projects should come from both governments and other sources.

Some art projects definitely require help from the state. In the UK, there are many works of art in public spaces, such as streets or squares in city centres. In Liverpool, for example, there are several new statues and sculptures in the docks area of the city, which has been redeveloped recently. These artworks represent culture, heritage and history. They serve to educate people about the city, and act as landmarks or talking points for visitors and tourists. Governments and local councils should pay creative artists to produce this kind of art, because without their funding our cities would be much less interesting and attractive.

On the other hand, I can understand the arguments against government funding for art. The main reason for this view is that governments have more important concerns. For example, state budgets need to be spent on education, healthcare, infrastructure and security, among other areas. These public services are vital for a country to function properly, whereas the work of creative artists, even in public places, is a luxury. Another reason for this opinion is that artists do a job like any other professional, and they should therefore earn their own money by selling their work.

In conclusion, there are good reasons why artists should rely on alternative sources of financial support, but in my opinion government help is sometimes necessary.

TG @Eugene_ielts

28. Animal testing

Nowadays animal experiments are widely used to develop new medicines and to test the safety of other products. Some people argue that these experiments should be banned because it is morally wrong to cause animals to suffer, while others are in favour of them because of their benefits to humanity.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

It is true that medicines and other products are routinely tested on animals before they are cleared for human use. While I tend towards the viewpoint that animal testing is morally wrong, I would have to support a limited amount of animal experimentation for the development of medicines.

On the one hand, there are clear ethical arguments against animal experimentation. To use a common example of this practice, laboratory mice may be given an illness so that the effectiveness of a new drug can be measured. Opponents of such research argue that humans have no right to subject animals to this kind of trauma, and that the lives of all creatures should be respected. They believe that the benefits to humans do not justify the suffering caused, and that scientists should use alternative methods of research.

On the other hand, reliable alternatives to animal experimentation may not always be available. Supporters of the use of animals in medical research believe that a certain amount of suffering on the part of mice or rats can be justified if human lives are saved. They argue that opponents of such research might feel differently if a member of their own families needed a medical treatment that had been developed through the use of animal experimentation. Personally, I agree with the banning of animal testing for non-medical products, but I feel that it may be a necessary evil where new drugs and medical procedures are concerned.

In conclusion, it seems to me that it would be wrong to ban testing on animals for vital medical research until equally effective alternatives have been developed.

TG @Eugene_ielts

29. Higher education versus work

Some people believe that studying at university or college is the best route to a successful career, while others believe that it is better to get a job straight after school.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

When they finish school, teenagers face the dilemma of whether to get a job or continue their education. While there are some benefits to getting a job straight after school, I would argue that it is better to go to college or university.

The option to start work straight after school is attractive for several reasons. Many young people want to start earning money as soon as possible. In this way, they can become independent, and they will be able to afford their own house or start a family. In terms of their career, young people who decide to find work, rather than continue their studies, may progress more quickly. They will have the chance to gain real experience and learn practical skills related to their chosen profession. This may lead to promotions and a successful career.

On the other hand, I believe that it is more beneficial for students to continue their studies. Firstly, academic qualifications are required in many professions. For example, it is impossible to become a doctor, teacher or lawyer without having the relevant degree. As a result, university graduates have access to more and better job opportunities, and they tend to earn higher salaries than those with fewer qualifications. Secondly, the job market is becoming increasingly competitive, and sometimes there are hundreds of applicants for one position in a company. Young people who do not have qualifications from a university or college will not be able to compete.

For the reasons mentioned above, it seems to me that students are more likely to be successful in their careers if they continue their studies beyond school level.

TG @Eugene_ielts

30. Museums

Some people think that museums should be enjoyable places to entertain people, while others believe that the purpose of museums is to educate.

Discuss both views and give you own opinion.

People have different views about the role and function of museums. In my opinion, museums can and should be both entertaining and educational.

On the one hand, it can be argued that the main role of a museum is to entertain. Museums are tourist attractions, and their aim is to exhibit a collection of interesting objects that many people will want to see. The average visitor may become bored if he or she has to read or listen to too much educational content, so museums often put more of an emphasis on enjoyment rather than learning. This type of museum is designed to be visually spectacular, and may have interactive activities or even games as part of its exhibitions.

On the other hand, some people argue that museums should focus on education. The aim of any exhibition should be to teach visitors something that they did not previously know. Usually this means that the history behind the museum's exhibits needs to be explained, and this can be done in various ways. Some museums employ professional guides to talk to their visitors, while other museums offer headsets so that visitors can listen to detailed commentary about the exhibition. In this way, museums can play an important role in teaching people about history, culture, science and many other aspects of life.

In conclusion, it seems to me that a good museum should be able to offer an interesting, enjoyable and educational experience so that people can have fun and learn something at the same time.

TG @Eugene_ielts

31. Living alone

In some countries, many more people are choosing to live alone nowadays than in the past.

Do you think this is a positive or negative development?

In recent years it has become far more normal for people to live alone, particularly in large cities in the developed world. In my opinion, this trend could have both positive and negative consequences in equal measure.

The rise in one-person households can be seen as positive for both personal and broader economic reasons. On an individual level, people who choose to live alone may become more independent and self-reliant than those who live with family members. A young adult who lives alone, for example, will need to learn to cook, clean, pay bills and manage his or her budget, all of which are valuable life skills; an increase in the number of such individuals can certainly be seen as a positive development. From an economic perspective, the trend towards living alone will result in greater demand for housing. This is likely to benefit the construction industry, estate agents and a whole host of other companies that rely on homeowners to buy their products or services.

However, the personal and economic arguments given above can be considered from the opposite angle. Firstly, rather than the positive feeling of increased independence, people who live alone may experience feelings of loneliness, isolation and worry. They miss out on the emotional support and daily conversation that family or flatmates can provide, and they must bear the weight of all household bills and responsibilities; in this sense, perhaps the trend towards living alone is a negative one. Secondly, from the financial point of view, a rise in demand for housing is likely to push up property prices and rents. While this may benefit some businesses, the general population, including those who live alone, will be faced with rising living costs.

In conclusion, the increase in one-person households will have both beneficial and detrimental effects on individuals and on the economy.

TG @Eugene_ielts

32. Video games

Some people regard video games as harmless fun, or even as a useful educational tool. Others, however, believe that videos games are having an adverse effect on the people who play them.

In your opinion, do the drawbacks of video games outweigh the benefits?

Many people, and children in particular, enjoy playing computer games. While I accept that these games can sometimes have a positive effect on the user, I believe that they are more likely to have a harmful impact.

On the one hand, video games can be both entertaining and educational. Users, or gamers, are transported into virtual worlds which are often more exciting and engaging than real-life pastimes. From an educational perspective, these games encourage imagination and creativity, as well as concentration, logical thinking and problem solving, all of which are useful skills outside the gaming context. Furthermore, it has been shown that computer simulation games can improve users' motor skills and help to prepare them for real-world tasks, such as flying a plane.

However, I would argue that these benefits are outweighed by the drawbacks. Gaming can be highly addictive because users are constantly given scores, new targets and frequent rewards to keep them playing. Many children now spend hours each day trying to progress through the levels of a game or to get a higher score than their friends. This type of addiction can have effects ranging from lack of sleep to problems at school, when homework is sacrificed for a few more hours on the computer or console. The rise in obesity in recent years has also been linked in part to the sedentary lifestyle and lack of exercise that often accompany gaming addiction.

In conclusion, it seems to me that the potential dangers of video games are more significant than the possible benefits.

TG @Eugene_ielts

33. Credit cards

Nowadays it is easy to apply for and be given a credit card. However, some people experience problems when they are not be able to pay their debts back.

In your opinion, do the advantages of credit cards outweigh the disadvantages?

It is all too easy to obtain a credit card and then to run up debts which are difficult to repay. In my opinion, the disadvantages of credit cards far outweigh the advantages.

Many people consider only the benefits of owning a credit card. It is true that a credit card gives you access to money and the facility to pay it back later, like a loan. This could be useful for emergencies or something expensive, like a holiday. In addition, having a credit card is more secure than carrying money around with you. If you lose your wallet or purse, or if you are mugged in the street, a quick phone call to the bank means that the card will be instantly refused if anyone tries to use it.

On the other hand, credit cards encourage people to spend money they do not have. I would never have a credit card for this reason. Debts can build up and leave people in real financial difficulties. When people cannot pay their debts back, everyone suffers: those in debt may lose their homes, the banks lose money, and the whole economy suffers. The enticing message of 'spend today, pay tomorrow' should not seduce US into embracing this philosophy. As my mother used to say: it will end in tears.

In conclusion, listen to the advice of the older generation. Do not be tempted by the ease of using a credit card, because it may result in mounting debts which cannot be paid back.

(Peter Walton)

TG @Eugene_ielts

34. Online courses

Some universities now offer their courses on the Internet so that people can study online.

Is this a positive or negative development?

It is true that online courses are becoming a common feature of university education. Although there are some drawbacks of Internet-based learning, I would argue that there are far more benefits.

The main drawback of the trend towards online university courses is that there is less direct interaction. Students may not have the opportunity to engage face-to-face with their teachers, and will instead have to rely on written forms of communication. Similarly, students who study online do not come into direct contact with each other, and this could have a negative impact on peer support, discussion and exchange of ideas. For example, whereas students on traditional courses can attend seminars and even discuss their subjects over coffee after lessons, online learners are restricted to chatting through website forum areas. These learners may also lack the motivation and element of competition that face-to-face group work brings.

Despite the negatives mentioned above, I believe that online university courses are a positive development for various reasons. Firstly, they allow learners to study in a flexible way, meaning that they can work whenever and wherever is convenient, and they can cover the material at their own pace. Secondly, the cost of a university education can be greatly reduced, while revenues for institutions may increase as more students can be taught. Finally, online learning offers open access to anybody who is willing to study, regardless of age, location, ability and background. For example, my uncle, who is 65 years old, has recently enrolled on an online MBA course in a different country, which would have been impossible in the days before Internet-based education.

In conclusion, while I recognise the possible disadvantages of online learning, I consider it to be a positive development overall.

TG @Eugene_ielts

35. Life expectancy

In the developed world, average life expectancy is increasing.

What problems will this cause for individuals and society?

Suggest some measures that could be taken to reduce the impact of ageing populations.

It is true that people in industrialised nations can expect to live longer than ever before. Although there will undoubtedly be some negative consequences of this trend, societies can take steps to mitigate these potential problems.

As people live longer and the populations of developed countries grow older, several related problems can be anticipated. The main issue is that there will obviously be more people of retirement age who will be eligible to receive a pension. The proportion of younger, working adults will be smaller, and governments will therefore receive less money in taxes in relation to the size of the population. In other words, an ageing population will mean a greater tax burden for working adults. Further pressures will include a rise in the demand for healthcare, and the fact young adults will increasingly have to look after their elderly relatives.

There are several actions that governments could take to solve the problems described above. Firstly, a simple solution would be to increase the retirement age for working adults, perhaps from 65 to 70. Nowadays, people of this age tend to be healthy enough to continue a productive working life. A second measure would be for governments to encourage immigration in order to increase the number of working adults who pay taxes. Finally, money from national budgets will need to be taken from other areas and spent on vital healthcare, accommodation and transport facilities for the rising numbers of older citizens.

In conclusion, various measures can be taken to tackle the problems that are certain to arise as the populations of countries grow older.

TG @Eugene_ielts

36. Environmental problems

Explain some of the ways in which humans are damaging the environment.

What can governments do to address these problems?

What can individual people do?

Humans are responsible for a variety of environmental problems, but we can also take steps to reduce the damage that we are causing to the planet. This essay will discuss environmental problems and the measures that governments and individuals can take to address these problems.

Two of the biggest threats to the environment are air pollution and waste. Gas emissions from factories and exhaust fumes from vehicles lead to global warming, which may have a devastating effect on the planet in the future. As the human population increases, we are also producing ever greater quantities of waste, which contaminates the earth and pollutes rivers and oceans.

Governments could certainly make more effort to reduce air pollution. They could introduce laws to limit emissions from factories or to force companies to use renewable energy from solar, wind or water power. They could also impose 'green taxes' on drivers and airline companies. In this way, people would be encouraged to use public transport and to take fewer flights abroad, therefore reducing emissions.

Individuals should also take responsibility for the impact they have on the environment. They can take public transport rather than driving, choose products with less packaging, and recycle as much as possible. Most supermarkets now provide reusable bags for shoppers as well as 'banks' for recycling glass, plastic and paper in their car parks. By reusing and recycling, we can help to reduce waste.

In conclusion, both national governments and individuals must play their part in looking after the environment.

TG @Eugene_ielts

37. Foreign films

Many people prefer to watch foreign films rather than locally produced films.

Why could this be?

Should governments give more financial support to local film industries?

It is true that foreign films are more popular in many countries than domestically produced films. There could be several reasons why this is the case, and I believe that governments should promote local film-making by subsidising the industry.

There are various reasons why many people find foreign films more enjoyable than the films produced in their own countries. Firstly, the established film industries in certain countries have huge budgets for action, special effects and to shoot scenes in spectacular locations. Hollywood blockbusters like 'Avatar' or the James Bond films are examples of such productions, and their global appeal is undeniable. Another reason why these big-budget films are so successful is that they often star the most famous actors and actresses, and they are made by the most accomplished producers and directors. The poor quality, low-budget filmmaking in many countries suffers in comparison.

In my view, governments should support local film industries financially. In every country, there may be talented amateur film-makers who just need to be given the opportunity to prove themselves. To compete with big-budget productions from overseas, these people need money to pay for film crews, actors and a host of other costs related to producing high-quality films. If governments did help with these costs, they would see an increase in employment in the film industry, income from film sales, and perhaps even a rise in tourist numbers. New Zealand, for example, has seen an increase in tourism related to the 'Lord of the Rings' films, which were partly funded by government subsidies.

In conclusion, I believe that increased financial support could help to raise the quality of locally made films and allow them to compete with the foreign productions that currently dominate the market.

TG @Eugene_ielts

38. Parental roles

These days more fathers stay at home and take care of their children while mothers go out to work.

What could be the reasons for this?

Do you think it is a positive or a negative development?

It is true that men are increasingly likely to take on the role of househusband, while more women than ever are the breadwinners in their families. There could be several reasons for this, and I consider it to be a very positive trend.

In recent years, parents have had to adapt to various changes in our societies. Equal rights movements have made great progress, and it has become normal for women to gain qualifications and pursue a career. It has also become socially acceptable for men to stay at home and look after their children. At the same time, the rising cost of living has meant that both marriage partners usually need to work and save money before starting a family. Therefore, when couples have children, they may decide who works and who stays at home depending on the personal preference of each partner, or based on which partner earns the most money.

In my view, the changes described above should be seen as progress. We should be happy to live in a society in which men and women have equal opportunities, and in which women are not put under pressure to sacrifice their careers. Equally, it seems only fair that men should be free to leave their jobs in order to assume childcare responsibilities if this is what they wish to do. Couples should be left to make their own decisions about which parental role each partner takes, according to their particular circumstances and needs.

In conclusion, the changing roles of men and women in the family are a result of wider changes in society, and I believe that these developments are desirable.

TG @Eugene_ielts

39. Happiness

Happiness is considered very important in life.

Why is it difficult to define?

What factors are important in achieving happiness?

It is no doubt true that the majority of people would like to be happy in their lives. While the personal nature of happiness makes it difficult to describe, there do seem to be some common needs that we all share with regard to experiencing or achieving happiness.

Happiness is difficult to define because it means something different to each individual person. Nobody can fully understand or experience another person's feelings, and we all have our own particular passions from which we take pleasure. Some people, for example, derive a sense of satisfaction from earning money or achieving success, whereas for others, health and family are much more important. At the same time, a range of other feelings, from excitement to peacefulness, may be associated with the idea of happiness, and the same person may therefore feel happy in a variety of different ways.

Although it seems almost impossible to give a precise definition of happiness, most people would agree that there are some basic preconditions to achieving it. Firstly, it is hard for a person to be happy if he or she does not have a safe place to live and enough food to eat. Our basic survival needs must surely be met before we can lead a pleasant life. Secondly, the greatest joy in life is usually found in shared experiences with family and friends, and it is rare to find a person who is content to live in complete isolation. Other key factors could be individual freedom and a sense of purpose in life.

In conclusion, happiness is difficult to define because it is particular to each individual, but I believe that our basic needs for shelter, food and company need to be fulfilled before we can experience it.

TG @Eugene_ielts

40. Economic progress

Economic progress is often used to measure a country's success. However, some people believe that other factors are more important.

What other factors should also be considered when measuring a country's success?

Do you think one factor is more important than others?

The relative success of different countries is usually defined in economic terms. There are several other factos, apart from the economy, that could be used to assess a country, and in my opinion education is the most important of all.

Standards of education, health and individual human rights should certainly be considered when measuring a country's status. A good education system is vital for the development of any nation, with schools, colleges and universities bearing the responsibility for the quality of future generations of workers. Healthcare provision is also an indicator of the standard of living within a country, and this can be measured by looking at average life expectancy rates or availability of medical services. Finally, human rights and levels of equality could be taken into account. For example, a country in which women do not have the same opportunities as men might be considered less successful than a country with better gender equality.

In my view, a country's education system should be seen as the most important indicator of its success and level of development. This is because education has a considerable effect on the other two factors mentioned above. It affects people's health in the sense that doctors and nurses need to be trained, and scientists need to be educated to the highest level before they can carry out medical research. It also affects the economy in the sense that a well-educated workforce will allow a variety of companies and industries to flourish, leading to trade with other countries, and increased wealth.

In conclusion, nations can be assessed and compared in a variety of ways, but I would argue that the standard of a country's education system is the best measure of its success.

TG @Eugene_ielts

41. The roles of music

There are many different types of music in the world today.

Why do we need music?

Is the traditional music of a country more important than the international music that is heard everywhere nowadays?

It is true that a rich variety of musical styles can be found around the world. Music is a vital part of all human cultures for a range of reasons, and I would argue that traditional music is more important than modern, international music.

Music is something that accompanies all of us throughout our lives. As children, we are taught songs by our parents and teachers as a means of learning language, or simply as a form of enjoyment. Children delight in singing with others, and it would appear that the act of singing in a group creates a connection between participants, regardless of their age. Later in life, people's musical preferences develop, and we come to see our favourite songs as part of our life stories. Music both expresses and arouses emotions in a way that words alone cannot. In short, it is difficult to imagine life without it.

In my opinion, traditional music should be valued over the international music that has become so popular. International pop music is often catchy and fun, but it is essentially a commercial product that is marketed and sold by business people. Traditional music, by contrast, expresses the culture, customs and history of a country. Traditional styles, such as ...(example)..., connect us to the past and form part of our cultural identity. It would be a real pity if pop music became so predominant that these national styles disappeared.

In conclusion, music is a necessary part of human existence, and I believe that traditional music should be given more importance than international music.

,

TG @Eugene_ielts

42. Technology versus people's interaction

Nowadays the way many people interact with each other has changed because of technology.

In what ways has technology affected the types of relationships that people make? Has this been a positive or negative development?

It is true that new technologies have had an influence on communication between people. Technology has affected relationships in various ways, and in my opinion there are both positive and negative effects.

Technology has had an impact on relationships in business, education and social life. Firstly, telephones and the Internet allow business people in different countries to interact without ever meeting each other. Secondly, services like Skype create new possibilities for relationships between students and teachers. For example, a student can now take video lessons with a teacher in a different city or country. Finally, many people use social networks, like Facebook, to make new friends and find people who share common interests, and they interact through their computers rather than face to face.

On the one hand, these developments can be extremely positive. Cooperation between people in different countries was much more difficult when communication was limited to written letters or telegrams. Nowadays, interactions by email, phone or video are almost as good as face-to-face meetings, and many of us benefit from these interactions, either in work or social contexts. On the other hand, the availability of new communication technologies can also have the result of isolating people and discouraging real interaction. For example, many young people choose to make friends online rather than mixing with their peers in the real world, and these 'virtual' relationships are a poor substitute for real friendships.

In conclusion, technology has certainly revolutionised communication between people, but not all of the outcomes of this revolution have been positive.

TG @Eugene_ielts

43. Career path

Many people decide on a career path early in their lives and keep to it. This, they argue, leads to a more satisfying working life.

To what extent do you agree with this view?

What other things can people do in order to have a satisfying working life?

It is true that some people know from an early age what career they want to pursue, and they are happy to spend the rest of their lives in the same profession. While I accept that this may suit many people, I believe that others enjoy changing careers or seeking job satisfaction in different ways.

On the one hand, having a defined career parth can certainly lead to a satisfying working life. Many people decide as young children what they want to do as adults, and it gives them a sense of satisfation to work towards their goals and gradually achieve them. For example, many children dream of becoming doctors, but to realise this ambition they need to gain the relevant qualifications and udertake years of training. In my experience, very few people who have qualified as doctors choose to change their career because they find their work so rewarding, and because they have invested so much time and effort to reach their goal.

On the other hand, people find happiness in their working lives in different ways, Firstly, not everone dreams of doing a particular job, and it can be equally rewarding to try a variety of professions; starting out on a completely new career path can be reinvigorating experience. Secondly, some people see their jobs as simply a means of earning money, and they are happy if their salary is high enough to allow them to enjoy life outside work. Finally, job satisfaction is often the result of working conditions, rather than the career itself. For example, a positive working atmosphere, enthusiastic colleagues, and an inspirational boss can make working life much more satisfying, regardless of the profession.

In conclusion, it can certainly be satisfying to pursue a particular career for the while of one's life, but this is by no means the only route to fulfilment.

TG @Eugene_ielts

44. Equality

In recent years, there has been growing interest in the relationship between equality and personal achievement. Some people believe that individuals can achieve more in egalitarian societies. Others believe that high levels of personal achievement are possible only if individuals are free to succeed or fail according to their individual merits.

What is your view of the relationship between equality and personal success?

In my opinion, an egalitarian society is one in which everyone has the same rights and the same opportunities. I completely agree that people can achieve more in this kind of society.

Education is an important factor with regard to personal success in life. I believe that all children should have access to free schooling, and higher education should be either free or affordable for all those who chose to pursue a university degree. In a society without free schooling or affordable higher education, only children and young adults from wealthier families would have access to the best learning opportunities, and they would therefore be better prepared for the job market. This kind of inequality would ensure the success of some but harm the prospects of others.

I would argue that equal rights and opportunities are not in conflict with people's freedom to succeed or fail. In other words, equality does not mean that people lose their motivation to succeed, or that they are not allowed to fail. On the contrary, I believe that most people would feel more motivated to work hard and reach their potential if they thought that they lived in a fair society. Those who did not make the same effort would know that they had wasted their opportunity. Inequality, on the other hand, would be more likely to demotivate people because they would know that the odds of success were stacked in favour of those from privileged backgrounds.

In conclusion, it seems to me that there is a positive relationship between equality and personal success.

TG @Eugene_ielts

HowtodoIELTS.com

TG @Eugene_ielts

45. Work-life balance

Many people try to balance work and other parts of their life. However, this is very difficult to do. What are the problems associated with this? What is the best way to achieve a better balance?

People today are increasingly concerned with individual happiness and work-life balance. The main problem for most people is that work takes up too much time and causes mental health issues and the best way to achieve this balance is to work more efficiently.

The primary issues associated with work-life balance are the amount of time people must spend working and how this impacts their mental health. Since the global financial crisis of 2008, the job market around the world has become increasingly competitive. This means that old workers may get pushed out of their jobs by younger graduates willing to work for less and that new graduates have to put in enormous extra hours to catch up. The end result is more work, which eats away at a person's private life. Once your free time becomes restricted there are a variety of related mental health problems that can appear. For example, someone who is overworked can suffer from excessive stress, some forms of depression, and obesity because of the lack of time available to exercise. That is why there has been a sharp rise in the last decade in these problems.

The best way for people to combat being overworked and get more time for their personal life is to work more efficiently. In an ideal world, there would be ways to alleviate the burden that put less stress on individuals but making the most of your time is a more pragmatic solution. For example, smartphones allow people to get a lot of work done in what were previously wasted hours in the past. You can send emails, make phone calls, and use productivity applications when waiting for the bus, train, or standing in line. People will have to make the choice not to scroll through Facebook or read the news but that is a small sacrifice to have some extra time at the end of the day to do their hobbies or spend time with a loved one.

In conclusion, the problems associated with poor work-life balance are especially apparent because of the current economic climate and the best solution is to find ways to maximise efficiency. If more people changed their daily habits related to social media and using the internet, then they might be able to find more worthwhile passions and not feel as though their life is passing them by.

TG @Eugene_ielts

46. Choices

Some people believe that nowadays we have too many choices. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own experience or knowledge. Write at least 250 words.

It is common nowadays to hear people decrying the number of choices people have relative to the past and proclaiming the drawbacks of so many easily-available options in a variety of areas of life. While I think that there is some truth in this, increased choice is ultimately a positive trend because it opens up options outside the mainstream.

The main reason why increased choice is considered a negative development is it makes life more complicated. Take for example the number of products people can choose from today. Supermarkets are filled with different brands with hardly any meaningful differences. This can cause people to waste time and energy making choices with little actual impact. This is also the case when it comes to online streaming services like Netflix, Hulu and HBO. Not only do people have to spend time researching these sites but once they make a choice they are limiting what they will be able to watch in the future. If they decide to subscribe to all of them, suddenly they will be paying upwards of $40 a month for basic viewing content. These are a couple of ways in which choice can take up time and make life more complex.

Although choice introduces a level of complexity to life, the main benefit is that it opens up options for people outside dominant cultural trends. The best example of this is the changes that have taken place in the music industry over the last 20 years with the advent of iTunes and streaming services. In the past, the big pop acts dominated the radio and album sales. Now the music scene is much more fractured. This makes it more difficult for some artists but also opens up the possibility that you can find a niche of music that you and some other people love. This has been replicated in other areas like podcasting, painting, and film as well. People can find what interests them outside of what major companies are trying to push. That is why increased choice is positive taken as a whole.

In conclusion, the drawbacks of increased choice do not outweigh the advantages gained by allowing people to explore what interests them the most. In the future, this will continue and present challenges but also allow for a more diverse cultural experience for rich and poor alike, all over the world.

TG @Eugene_ielts

47. Population & Young People

At the present time, the population of some countries includes a relatively large number of young adults, compared with the number of older people. Do the advantage of this situation outweigh the disadvantages?

The average age of the population for many nations around the world has been in decline in recent decades creating a situation where young people have become the world's largest demographic, particularly in developing nations. Although there are decided drawbacks to this phenomenon related to expertise in the workforce, it is still a positive development because it will lead to booming economies in the coming years.

The most frequently cited drawback to having a predominately young population is the lack of skilled workers in many important industries. A great example of this can be seen in Vietnam, which has one of the youngest populations in the world. Vietnam currently has very few leaders in important areas like engineering and technology. When it came time for Ho Chi Minh city to build a subway system, there were not enough skilled engineers to accomplish the feat. They had to hire a huge number of specialists from Japan and Thailand to ensure the quality of the project. The potential engineers for this project are still in school in Vietnam or studying abroad and it may be another decade before they are ready to design and execute large, complex infrastructure. It is not uncommon for developing countries with young populations to require outside assistance for national projects to the detriment of their own workers.

Despite this drawback, the advantage of a young population is that it brings many future benefits to a country and is a key indicator of future economic prosperity. Japan famously has one of the oldest populations in the world and this has led them into a deep economic recession over the last 20 years as it becomes increasingly apparent that the nation will have to assume responsibilities related to healthcare and a dwindling workforce. Contrast this with the so-called 'Tiger Economies' of Southeast Asia that include Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and Singapore. These countries have some of the youngest populations in the world, which, coupled with a growing middle class and better education, means that they will enjoy upward economic growth for decades to come. The middle class will expand because well-educated graduates will be able to get good jobs and this middle class will become a consumer class that feeds the economy. Overall, this is why having a young population is desirable for any nation.

In conclusion, I fully believe that a younger population indicates a country is going to be successful in the future. The key element for all young populations is education and governments should focus on this in order to fully exploit the benefits of their demographics.

TG @Eugene_ielts

48. Foreign languages

Living in a country where you have to speak a foreign language can cause serious social problems, as well as practical problems. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

One of the biggest social and practical challenges that people living abroad face is the language barrier. I believe that this can lead to very serious social problems in many countries but technology has made the practical issues less relevant over the last several decades.

The main reason that having to speak a foreign language can cause social problems is through the breakdown in understanding between people of different cultures. The most salient example of this is in the United States where there has been an influx of Hispanic immigrants, especially along the Southern border. These immigrants are typically able to integrate well if they learn English but those that have not learned have provoked social problems and even violent reactions. Many English speaking residents resent the immigrants failure to integrate and this has resulted in discriminatory practices and widespread racism towards Hispanics. This in turn has caused many Hispanics to develop an antipathy towards other residents and segregate themselves in homogeneous neighborhoods.

There are comparatively fewer practical problems caused by not knowing the language of the country where you live because of the development of technology in general and smartphones in particular. Computers have made it much easier to look up directions, find important information and get quick translations. Smartphones have made this even easier. If someone doesn't know the language of the country where they live, they can still find restaurants to their liking on Facebook and get simple directions through Google Maps. They can even order food online without having to use another language at all. If they need to communicate with someone who does not speak their language they can simply take out their phone and use Google translate to slowly, but effectively, convey a message. The problems that not knowing the language of the country where you live causes are therefore minimal and easily overcome.

In conclusion, I only partly agree with the statement in question. Not knowing a language when living abroad can cause social unrest but pragmatic concerns have been mitigated by recent technology. In the future, it will become even less important to know the language of the country where you live although there is great potential for increased social unrest and heightened tensions in many parts of the world.

TG @Eugene_ielts

49. Sporting events

Some people think that it is a waste of money for countries to host big sporting events like the world cup, and that the money would be better spent on other things. However, others think that hosting large sporting events has a clear, positive impact on a country.

There is fierce competition between nations to host major international sports events like the World Cup or Olympics as it is a unique opportunity to boost the national reputation of the host nation. In spite of its undeniable benefits, I believe that the costs are too great and therefore governments should prioritise other key issues to better benefit their citizens.

On the one hand, becoming a host nation for global events such as the World Cup or the Olympics brings a number of economic and infrastructural benefits. During these events, there is an influx of tourists from all over the world who need places to stay, restaurants to eat in and traditional products to purchase. The efforts made to cater to these tourists will remain long after they have gone. The cost of renovating a hotel might pay for itself during the event and then begin turning a large profit in later years. The other main area of development is related to the rapid expansion of quality infrastructure. Nations will be forced to invest in new sports facilities like swimming pools and stadiums as well as make renovations to pre-existing infrastructure like roads and airports. For example, China used the Beijing Olympics as an opportunity to modernise old buildings and roads.

On the other hand, these competitions use up tremendous resources from the host nation for a temporary competition. To ensure the success of these prestigious events, governments must waste a large percentage of the nation budget in the years leading up to the competition, oftentimes in the billions of dollars. The newly constructed facilities usually fall into disuse after each tournament. A salient example of this is Brazil as many of the swimming pools and sports facilities that were used in the 2014 Olympics are currently abandoned and becoming decrepit. Meanwhile, there are other pressing issues that have been festering including the need for new schools for underprivileged students and quality healthcare for the elderly population. If the government had prioritised these issues the country would be in a better position and its citizens would have a higher standard of living.

To summarize, due to the exorbitant costs, I am of the belief that the government should not allocate such a large percentage of its financial resources to hosting global events with negligible long-term impact. Instead these events should be hosted in the same countries year after year so that the new infrastructure pays for itself over time.

TG @Eugene_ielts

50. Traffic and housing

Traffic and housing problems in major cities could be solved by moving companies, factories and their employees to the countryside. Do you agree or disagree?

Many people claim that moving companies, factories and their employees from cities to the countryside might ameliorate some of the worst traffic and housing issues. I strongly believe that this is a suitable solution for those two particular city problems.

Moving the facilities of major corporations to the countryside will reduce traffic problems by encouraging more people to live in the countryside for their work. It is widely known that more people live in cities today than ever before and this has caused terrible traffic. For example, in Beijing it is not uncommon for gridlocked motorways to delay motorists for hours. Travelers depend on getting in to Beijing for their livelihood but if their jobs were in the countryside, or a nearby suburb, they could live outside the city and reduce traffic. This would have a major impact on overcrowded cities like Beijing that lose billions of dollars a year because of time wasted in traffic jams, according to recent research.

Moving factories and employees to the countryside will also help to mitigate housing issues in cities. In many developing countries, the rush of people from the country to the city has necessitated the construction of massive skyscrapers. A lot of these underdeveloped cities such as Mexico City and Lagos do not have the sophisticated infrastructure including efficient plumbing, clean water and trash collection that is needed to service a concentrated population. By moving jobs and people to the countryside, developing countries will have more time to improve their infrastructure to deal with surging urban populations.

In conclusion, moving people to the countryside will help to reduce traffic and housing problems, especially in developing countries. If more governments studied this closely and enacted laws to encourage people to move, it would greatly improve the quality of life for everyone living in the city.

TG @Eugene_ielts

51. Museums and galleries 1

Museums and art galleries should focus on works that show the history and culture of their own country rather than works of other parts of the world.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

SAMPLE ANSWER 1: MOSTLY DISAGREE

Many people claim that it is more important for museums to display work from the country where they are located rather than draw from other places around the world. I partly agree that museums are a valuable educational tool to learn about one's own country but overall museums should aspire to broaden people's perspective rather than narrow and deepen it.

Proponents of museums mainly showcasing works from their own country often point out that they help people connect with their country's culture and history. Children all over the United States learn about American history from their textbooks. They learn about the constitution, the founding fathers, and the various wars of liberation America has fought. However, if they go to a museum to see the actual historical documents from the period this will likely have a more memorable impression. Seeing a famous work of art or historical document up close, they may notice notice details that were not in their book and feel a more personal connection to their country.

Although there is a strong argument to be made for museums specialising in this way, I feel it is more important for people to gain a broader view of cultures around the world. Most people cannot afford to travel abroad and even if they do, they are unlikely to experience another culture deeply as a tourist. Museums are a great opportunity for people of all ages to learn about other countries. Someone visiting the British Museum in London will see artifacts from every continent in the world without a plane ticket. Over the years if they keep returning to the museum they will learn more and more.

Museums will inevitable show a mixture of works from their own country as well as other countries. In my opinion, it is more important for people to take in the breadth of culture of the whole world rather than just their country. If children start from a young age learning about the world they are likely to grow up more tolerant.

TG @Eugene_ielts

52. Museums and galleries 2

Museums and art galleries should focus on works that show the history and culture of their own country rather than works of other parts of the world.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

SAMPLE ANSWER 2: MOSTLY AGREE

There is natural debate around the issue of whether or not museums should be showcasing works mainly from their own country or other countries. Although it is important to learn about other cultures through museums, countries have the right and responsibility to preserve and maintain their own cultural history.

Proponents of museums showing a variety of works from many different countries rightly argue that people's lives are enriched through all these different cultures. For example, Europe is a relatively small area that packs in dozens of distinct national identities. Someone going to a museum in a cosmopolitan city like Berlin is likely to find Italian Renaissance paintings next to modernist Spanish sculpture as well as German works. This allows people to feel they are travelling around the world and taking in a variety of viewpoints. Through this exposure to culture they may come to better understand other nations and have greater insight into what connects and differentiates countries from each other.

Despite the clear benefits of learning about other cultures, countries have the right to house the relics of their own history. Many of the museums displaying works from other countries took them without permission. For example, the British Museum's collection was mainly sourced during the height of the British Empire. Many nations have disputed the right of the museum to house their country's artifacts and some have been returned. It is only right that countries keep what was made in their country so that they can educate their own people about their history. Anything that has been taken without explicit permission should be returned, just as a thief is required to return what they have stolen if they are caught.

I think that there is tremendous value in museums displaying works from other countries but it does not override the basic right of nations to look after their own history. One way forward would be to encourage museums to have frequent exchanges and temporary exhibitions.

TG @Eugene_ielts

53. Literature

Some people say that school children should be mainly taught about the literature (e.g fiction and poetry) of their own country because it is more important than that of other countries.

To what extent do you agree?

Many think that it is more important to learn about the literature from one's own country, rather than other countries. I am in complete agreement with this viewpoint because of how literature can contribute to both national understanding and individual identity.

The most fundamental reason that children should be exposed to literature from their own country is to deepen their understanding. For example, young students in America study a common curriculum including authors like Dr. Seuss, Shel Silverstein, and Harper Lee. The books from Dr. Seuss and Shel Silverstein convey principles of individualism, creativity and entrepreneurship that are key to understanding America's history and present. To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee is a good example of a book focused on a period of racial segregation, that can help students to better understand recent events around the Black Lives Matter movement. Learning about racism from a classic novel set in America is more likely to likely engage, inform and stimulate a relevant response.

Another reason why students need to learn their national literature well is that it will help to shape their personal identity at an impressionable age. Children will form their identity from a variety of sources, including the literature of other countries. This is a positive development. But the main influence should be from their own country so that they are a true representative of their nationality. A Japanese child growing up abroad could return to Japan and feel like an outsider. One method of countering this is to make sure they have a good grasp of poetry and fiction from Japan. From classical poetry they will be influenced by Japan's singular minimalist tradition. From the novels, they will learn about the relationships between people and the differing levels of formality expected in Japanese society. This will all contribute to making their identity more Japanese.

In conclusion, children will better understand and have their identity firmly shaped by the literature of their home country. This is becoming increasingly important in a globalized world that threatens to blur the distinctions between nationalities into a single mono-culture.

TG @Eugene_ielts

54. Buildings

When designing a building, the most important factor is the intended use of the building rather than its outward appearance.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

When it comes to building design, architects often have to make compromises between form and function. Many feel that the purpose of the building should dictate these decisions. I agree that how the building will be used is a key factor, but I think that how it looks is just as important.

Those who argue that a building should be constructed according to its function are mainly thinking about the people who will later use the building. If a building is unable to perform its most basic functions, then it is undoubtedly a failed project. For example, if an architect is building a primary school then they must consider parking areas, how cars will pick up and drop off children, where to put the playground, access for people with disabilities, and that is just the area around the school. A beautiful parking lot that only has room for a handful of cars is useless. Inside the school, they also need classrooms that are large enough, hallways that do not get easily too crowded, a good number and location of restrooms and many other pragmatic concerns. If the architect is overly focused on how the school looks, then they may sacrifice ease of use and practicality.

However, the look of the building is also important because of the role of art in everyday life. Architecture is often considered one of the original and purest forms of artistic expression. I am reminded of a quote from Pablo Picasso who said 'Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.' Imagine a city filled with ugly, utilitarian structures like many Soviet-era buildings. These buildings will not lift people's spirits or encourage them to contemplate the intended message. Contrast this with a city where architects have been given free rein to be artists. As long as the buildings are also functional, you will find a city filled with beauty and provocation that enhances life for its inhabitants. The outward appearance does not have to be beautiful, but it has a responsibility to contribute something to enrich the lives of everyday people.

In conclusion, how a building works is equally as important as how that same building looks. Form should not follow function but be fused together in order to add to the aesthetic dimension of a city. It is undoubtedly more challenging, expensive and time-consuming to achieve this kind of balance, but it is also worth the effort.

TG @Eugene_ielts

55. Plastic bags

Plastic shopping bags are used widely and caused many environmental problems. Some people say they should be banned.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

No one would deny that the plastic bags used in supermarkets and shops have a negative effect on the environment because they do not degrade and end up as litter in our cities or oceans. However, the replacements for plastic bags also carry significant environmental risks. That is why I think plastic bags should not be banned.

The main environmental side effect related to plastic bags is that they pollute both the land and water. An insignificant percentage of people may reuse or recycle plastic bags, but most ultimately litter or throw them in the trash. If they are thrown in the trash, plastic bags will wind up in the ever-increasing number of landfills and contribute to soil pollution. The ones that are simply tossed in the street clog drains in cities and eventually find their way to the sea and entangle marine life. This is why many feel that plastic bags should be banned.

Despite the advantages of banning plastic bags, the solutions for plastic bags are worse than the original problem. Most people who advocate banning plastic bags suggest paper bags (which are biodegradable) or reusable bags that are typically made from cotton or plastic. Both of these replacements are flawed. Paper bags require us to continue clearing forests and also carry a large carbon footprint. Reusable bags are plagued by similar problems. Independent studies have shown that the production of cotton and reusable plastic causes more harm to the environment than disposable plastic bags. Coupled with the fact that reusable bags are more difficult to recycle, their overall effect on the environment is worse.

I do not think overly simplistic restrictions on plastic bags would have the desired positive effect. Rather than thoughtlessly banning them, policy makers should come up with a policy that balances the materials we use for bags in order to produce an overall positive impact on the environment.

TG @Eugene_ielts

56. Big cities

Living in large cities today poses many problems for people. What are these problems? Should governments encourage more people to live in smaller towns?

More and more people live in cities today than at any point in the past and this trend will likely continue in the future. This has resulted in many problems including extreme overcrowding and governments should take measures to make living outside cities more attractive.

There are a wide range of drawbacks associated with the rise of modern cities but one of the most obvious issues is related to population density. The large number of people crammed into a relatively small area has caused expensive housing, increased traffic and severe pollution. For example, apartment prices in mega-cities like Tokyo and New York have soared to the point where only the wealthiest inhabitants can afford decent living standards. Regardless of financial status, all city dwellers have to deal with more and more traffic jams as the population increases while the area of cities remains fixed. Finally, all these people living and travelling in one place puts a tremendous strain on the environment and some cities, like Beijing in China, have become dangerously polluted.

In my opinion, governments have a duty to encourage citizens to move to more rural areas. If cities continue to expand unabated then the above problems will only get worse. We might one day find ourselves living in densely packed, heavily polluted cities that resemble scenes from a dystopian science fiction film. In order to prevent this from happening, the government can give tax breaks to companies that choose to locate offices and production facilities outside the city. This will provide more jobs for people who are willing to live in the countryside.

In conclusion, the concerns related to overcrowding in cities can and should be somewhat countered by governments incentivising living in rural areas. If this is done then we may still face problems related to cities in the future, but at least they will not be as serious.

TG @Eugene_ielts

57. Online meetings

Recent research has shown that business meetings and training are increasingly taking place online. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?

Many businesses today choose to hold meetings and do training online, rather than in person. While this has certain drawbacks related to interpersonal relationships, I still feel this is a positive trend because of its positive impact on employees with families. In this essay, I will discuss both sides in detail.

Conducting the majority of business meetings online has a potentially negative effect on the social dynamics of a company. The preference for online communication sacrifices essential elements of human interaction in the name of a more efficient, utilitarian process. When people sit in a room together, for training or a meeting, they are more likely to form strong interpersonal bonds. They will be able to see each other's body language better and there is a good chance they may socialise in person afterwards. For example, employees might go for drinks or even just have a private chat about the meeting or training while still at work. This is much less likely to happen when people are working from home or a remote location and using online tools like Skype to communicate.

Companies that choose to do more training and have more meetings online are making life more convenient for their employees with families. At some point in their lives, most people must face the challenge of working and having a family. If both the mother and father work, then one of them might have to give up their job to stay home or they will have to hire an expensive caretaker to look after their child during the day. If more meetings and training took place online, this could free up time for people in certain jobs, such as IT workers, to work entirely from home and look after their children during the day. They will still have to make time for the training and meetings but at least they won't waste valuable time commuting to the office.

The move towards increased online training and meetings may sacrifice some of the social aspects of work but this is more than made up for by the convenience it allows working families. In many families today, both the mother and father have to work to make ends meet and we should support any efforts to relieve their financial and physical burdens.

TG @Eugene_ielts

58. Leadership

Some are of the opinion that people are naturally born as good leaders while others feel that leadership skills can be learned.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

It is often said that important people are born with certain characteristics that enable them to become great leaders. The alternative view is that leadership is a learnable quality. Personally, I agree with the latter viewpoint because training and experience are more important than innate ability in this situation.

It is somewhat true that many individuals are born with distinctive personal traits that allow them the opportunity to become talented leaders. Leaders tend to be those who are charming and persuasive. In contrast, those who lack of these characteristics may have a difficulty inspiring the belief and loyalty that all leaders require and end up as followers rather than leaders. For instance, a salesman who often fails to convince his clients to sign a deal may be dissuaded from becoming the sales team leader since he does not believe that he has what it takes to be one. The more convincing salesmen are more likely to rise to that role.

However, there are also people who assert that leadership skills can actually be achieved through proper training and effort. That is why there is a larger number of institutes offering leadership training programmes helping those who want to learn the skills required to be a leader. Public speaking is one of many skills these schools can teach. Individuals who are shy and lack confidence can find their feet in the leadership battle by learning the essence of good body language, pronunciation, and other elements of good public speaking. This will in turn make them better leaders.

In conclusion, although some traits related to leadership are likely inherited there is tremendous room for people to grow into positions of responsibility if they apply themselves fully to learning the skills and personal characteristics of great leaders.

TG @Eugene_ielts

59. Climate change

Climate change is a phenomenon that affects countries all over the world. Many people strongly believe that it is the responsibility of individuals, rather than corporations and governments, to deal with this problem.

To what extent do you agree?

Climate change is a very real danger that threatens not only our lives but also the quality of life of future generations. To combat this I strongly disagree that individuals need to take responsibility because governments, in cooperation with private companies have both a greater responsibility and capacity in this matter.

Climate change cannot simply be the responsibility of private citizens because they do not have the ability to affect large systemic changes in the way that governments in conjunction with corporations do. People can only contribute in small ways; for every person who recycles there are several people who do not and there is no certain way to change this. Governments, on the other hand, can enact legislation requiring both individuals and large corporations to abide by certain restrictions. Laws for corporations are the real solution as they contribute by far the most to climate change and by reducing how much waste produced and how they treat that waste, climate change can be seriously countered.

The second reason governments should be responsible for combating climate change is that governments are responsible for global problems while individuals should only have to deal with local and personal problems. A person should only concern themselves with their job and personal life because that is the extent of their responsibility. Governments are responsible for various things related to their citizens including security, health care in some cases, and education. Included in security is the environment because it impacts citizen's well-being; therefore this falls under the remit of what governmental responsibility.

Individuals will never be able to have the effect government will and it is not their responsibility at any rate. In my opinion, governments, by taking measures to rein in corporate and private waste are taking up their rightful burden.

TG @Eugene_ielts

60. History versus science

Some people say history is one the most important school subjects. Other people think that, in today's world, subjects like science and technology are more important than history. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

There are many people who have called into question the importance in today's world of subjects like history, which do not have an immediately discernible impact on most future careers. While I think that history should still be mandatory, more practical subjects related to technology and the arts are more needed in our evolving world.

The main reason that students should study some history in school is that it provides crucial insights into nations around the world that serve as springboards for later political beliefs. In America, students learn about the American Revolution, the constitution and the founding fathers periodically from elementary to high school. They learn about why the war started (so that the colonies could tax and govern themselves) as well as the great figures from history like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin. Some of the principles students learn include the ideas of American exceptionalism, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and the responsibility of citizens to vote in a representative democracy. Later in life, most people will lean liberal or conservative but still hold the same basic convictions about individual liberty and responsibility. By knowing the context in which these ideas emerged students can become adults with well-informed political beliefs and it will be more difficult for unscrupulous politicians to make false assertions about the past.

Although history should still be taught, the practical sciences and arts should be prioritised because these are more likely to have an impact on a person's future career. Very few students will end up with careers in history, as historians or professors, but a large percentage will work in the arts and especially the sciences. For example, in Vietnam the most popular university majors are engineering, finance, and graphic design. If schools emphasise maths at school then this will better prepare them to make calculations in complex engineering projects or when working at a bank or accountancy firm. Even learning how to draw and use colors in art class is more useful for students because of the high demand for graphic designers on websites and advertisements. Countries that devote more of their educational budget towards these practical subjects will give students a head start on a potential future career and increase their chances of having a higher standard of living.

It is clear that in this case a moderate approach is best. School administrators should not remove history from the timetable but in my opinion they should devote more time and

TG @Eugene_ielts

resources to the teaching of subjects related to technology and the arts. This will become ever more important as the tech industry continues to dominate the future job market.

TG @Eugene_ielts

61. Agriculture versus hunger

In spite of the advances made in agriculture, many people around the world still go hungry. Why is this the case? What can be done about this problem?

Recent years have witnessed tremendous developments in agricultural science yet every day people all over the world continue to suffer and even die from hunger. In my opinion, this is because innovations rarely impact the developing world and the best solution for it is to direct humanitarian funding towards these advances.

The main cause of more advanced agricultural methods not reaching the people who need it the most is that the developing world has trouble implementing these methods. There are a number of reasons for this ranging from limited financial resources to poor existing infrastructure to political instability, depending on the country in question. One example of this would be in many African nations, where malnourishment has historically been highest. Countries like the Congo have seen revolution after revolution over the last several decades, which has effectively destabilised the entire country. The universities where students would learn about changes in agriculture are frequently shut down or destroyed. The young people who would become agricultural scientists end up drawn into the conflict as soldiers or victims. Long-term economic neglect means that the government has very limited ability to subsidise farming. These problems are present to varying degrees in countries around the world and offer one possible explanation for the continued prevalence of hunger.

The solution that I believe would be most effective is directing humanitarian funds previously focused on food aid towards education and agricultural infrastructure. Food aid is a notoriously poor solution because it only offers an immediate solution and warlords often exploit it to support their continued mistreatment of their people. It hurts more than it helps. However, there would be better long-term effects if international organisations and governments redirected that money into helping build better farms, provide more modern equipment, and sending qualified professions to train people in need. There is a TedTalk by a young man in Kenya who built his own windmill out of old bicycle parts and by reading a book in the local library. It is large enough to power his own house and he was seeking financing for a larger one that would power irrigation channels for the entire village. If more people like him can be found or trained then this will have an impact that lasts for decades and is relatively impervious to the factors preventing agricultural advances from taking root in developing countries.

In conclusion, developing companies face myriad problems that hinder their ability to take advantage of newer agricultural models and we should direct more funding to helping these countries learn more about new farming methods. This is likely to be an important

TG @Eugene_ielts

issue in the world as the gap between rich and poor, develop and undeveloped widens while technological progress continues its indifferent march forward.

TG @Eugene_ielts

62. Newspaper versus the Internet

Some people think that newspapers are the best way to learn news. However, others believe that they can learn news better through other media. Discuss both views and give your opinion

Newspapers have been considered the most reliable news source for more than a century but in recent decades newer forms of media have supplanted their influence. Some feel that these new sources of news are better but in my opinion, newspapers are by far better because of the amount of time and research that writers put into their articles.

The main reason that many people prefer newer media outlets is that they deliver news more quickly across a variety of convenient platforms. The most notable example of this is online news. The vast majority of people get their news from Facebook and other social media websites which aggregate articles from various online publishers, including the online version of print newspapers in some cases. The problem here is that websites are solely concerned with increasing traffic and getting news up as fast as possible. It is a common occurrence for a website to publish news quickly in order to beat others to the scoop before it has been properly verified or even thoughtfully analysed. The result is hordes of people clicking on links to amuse themselves for a minute without casting a critical eye over the veracity of the news. These articles are then shared online or by word of mouth and false information spreads rapidly.

Despite the conveniences of online media, the news that is printed in newspapers has been better researched and verified in most cases. Newspapers frequently devote entire departments to long-term investigative journalism. A standout example of this would be the Boston Globe's years long investigation into sexual abuse by the Catholic church. They carefully interviewed victims and put together a convincing case which led to long-lasting reforms and convictions of some individuals. They also published stories on the topic for over a year which allowed for detailed and thoughtful analysis of the problem, suggestions for solutions, and articles on wider societal implications. This type of reporting is anathema to the fervent pace of online media.

In conclusion, even though newspapers are a dying industry I think they are more informative and trustworthy than the largely online institutions that are replacing them. This trend is irreversible and will have consequences for the future of democracies around the world as people become less informed.

TG @Eugene_ielts

63. Age for driving

Some people believe that the best way to increase the road safety is to increase the minimum legal age for driving cars. To what extent do you agree or disagree.

Many are of the opinion that raising the age at which people can get driving licenses is the best way to make roads safer. Although this will help prevent some accidents due to inexperience, I strongly feel that it is more important to focus on safer roads through improved urban planning.

The main justification that proponents of raising the age at which people can drive will often cite is the number of accidents attributed to inexperience. In the USA, most teenagers get their driving permit around age 16. There are a couple of factors that can lead a 16 year-old to cause more accidents than someone in their 20s. The first is that they simply do no have as much road experience. They have only dealt with a limited number of experiences and are more likely to make poor decisions at pivotal moments. The other reason is that many American teenagers begin drinking alcohol around this age even though the legal age is 21. Teenagers are notoriously irresponsible and they have not developed strategies for handling alcohol when driving. All people, when drunk, are dangerous but it is especially dangerous if they are inexperienced in terms of both alcohol and driving.

Even though these are valid points, I do no think they outweigh the number of accidents that poor urban planning and infrastructure cause. There will always be other causes that include young drivers, driving while under the influence and road rage but the only factor that plays a hand in nearly all accidents relates to how the roads have been planned. Take the city of New Orleans for example. The urban planners in New Orleans constructed the city with almost entirely one-way streets. This may make it inconvenient at times but it has also resulted in one of the lowest accident rates in the USA. It has also allowed for the construction of parallel streetcars that have also greatly reduced the number of accidents. Cities around the world have replicated this approach by increasing the number of one-way streets and working streetcars into the city plan and seen reciprocal declines in vehicular accidents.

I believe that urban planning, despite not being a well-publicized cause, is the main source of most accidents around the world and raising the legal driving age would have little real impact. The more cities that begin to focus their attention on the causes, rather than the symptoms, of accidents the safer our roads will be for ourselves and future generations.

TG @Eugene_ielts

64. Fast public transport

Some people think that governments should invest mainly in making public transportation faster while other think there are more important priorities (cost, the environment). Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

While many are of the opinion that the most important factor in public transport is speed, others value areas such as cost and the environment. In my opinion, although there are a number of key considerations, speed is by far the most important.

Two of the most commonly addressed areas of public transport are cost and the environment. In Vietnam, the quality of the public transport buses is very low and they produce a lot of air pollution. However, they are very cheap and this allows the residents who need them the most, typically students and low-wage earners, to afford them. In an ideal world the government would have cheap buses that produce little exhaust, but cost and environmental concerns will always be in conflict. In developing countries, it makes sense to emphasise the expense of tickets while developed countries have the wealth and responsibility to try to better balance these competing policy influences.

Although these are worthwhile considerations, speed of transport should be the main rationale as it has a trickle down effect on the economy and quality of life of a country. For example, Japan has a famously fast and efficient system of railways both inside cities and connecting provinces within the country. If someone has a family, faster transport allows them to spend more time with their family both before and after work. This can enhance the quality of life of working class people. It also means that they will get to work faster, get more work done during the day and have more time to recuperate for the next day. Over years and decades this has hastened Japan's development into one of the world's leading economies.

In my opinion, cost and the environment are crucial for ordinary people and the future of our planet but speed has a greater effect on people in both the short and long-term. Governments that focus on faster public transport will reap the rewards for decades and be able to reinvest that money in areas like the environment, education, and healthcare.

TG @Eugene_ielts

65. Sharing information

Some people believe that it is good to share as much information as possible in scientific research, business, and the academic world. Others believe that some information is too important or too valuable to be shared freely. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

The question of how much information relevant to various areas of scientific and academic research should be shared is becoming more and more important as the pace of technological innovation quickens and the internet allows for instant collaboration. In my opinion, information is a valuable, potentially dangerous asset and should only be shared freely in particular circumstances.

Advocates of freely sharing information rightly argue that collaboration leads to faster results. This applies to scientists, who can help each by offering their individual research results, businesses, which can work together as long as they are not competitors on advertising or product development, as well as academics, who need fresh perspectives to push their work to higher plateaus. Take for example the potential for sharing information in the business world. Google has built their successful advertising business by working together with various companies and sharing information. Google collects a variety of statistics related to users including their location and interests. This information is shared with advertisers who can then better target ads for users. It allows the consumer to see more relevant products and services and the companies advertising to target their audience more efficiently.

While there are decided advantages like the one mentioned above, information is still a valuable asset that individuals and companies should safeguard. In a perfect world, we might expect people to openly share everything they know but the social and economic constructions of our actual world make this a naive proposition. One interesting example of this is from a recent news article about Elon Musk where he explained why his rocket company SpaceX does not apply for patents on any new technology. He reasoned that his main competitors are governments, not private companies. If his company discloses its innovations then domestic and foreign governments can take advantage of the shared technology and potentially disrupt his business. This is just one example of how sharing can prove damaging in a capitalist society.

In conclusion, though sharing might be a valid standpoint in a perfect world, it is not feasible under current global conditions. Instead of looking to increase sharing, governments should do more to support innovative companies and researchers. This will have a larger overall impact.

TG @Eugene_ielts

66. Situation acceptance

Some people believe that it is best to accept a bad situation, such as an unsatisfactory job or shortage of money. Others argue that it is better to try and improve such situations. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Many people find themselves in situations where they must either accept what life has given them or find a way to move up in the world. In my opinion, although accepting your situation in life may be pragmatic in some cases, it is still better to at least strive to improve your situation as it can usually be bettered to some degree.

On the one hand, the vast majority of people are unable to drastically change their situation and acceptance of this fact will make them feel more satisfied with their lives. The best example of this would be those people living in dire economic conditions. Recent research puts the Democratic Republic of Congo as one of the poorest nations on Earth, both due to a lack of developed infrastructure and internal strife in recent years. For a person living in a small village, ravaged by war or famine, it would be cruel to suggest that they should find a way to improve their lives when it might simply be impossible. Instead, such people may feel they are better off accepting that they cannot make any changes to their situation at the present moment and just focus on their own survival and that of their family. These situations are rare but do exist around the world in various countries, particularly if they are at war or experiencing a severe economic downturn.

On the other hand, few would dispute the fact that in even the most difficult situations people can make their lives better through continued effort. Instances of people who worked hard and became successful abound in both developed and developing nations. Some relevant examples of this are the postwar situations of countries like Germany, Japan, and South Korea. All those countries were devastated by war to greater and lesser degrees yet they are all currently economic powerhouses. In Japan, World War 2 left their population depleted of workers, a deep national debt due to reparations and infrastructure reduced to rubble. By not accepting their situation they were able to become leaders in technology through notable companies like Sony, Nokia and Toyota. The efficacy of the individuals who had to work hard to improve their lives is reflected in the overall progress of the country and should serve as an example to all war-torn nations.

To conclude, there are very few situations where it would be advisable to simply accept an unhappy situation because hard work over a long period will pay off to some degree in the vast majority of cases. By having a more positive attitude it is also more likely that your efforts to make a better life will be rewarded, while a more defeatist attitude is likely to reduce your chances to make changes in life.

TG @Eugene_ielts

67. Environmental Problems

Some people say that the main environmental problem of our time is the loss of particular species of plants and animals. Others say that there are more important environmental problems. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Many are of the opinion that the risks for endangered plants and wildlife are the most severe consequences of our worsening environment while others would argue that other problems are more pressing. While I consider the impact of recurring natural disasters to be important, in my opinion the loss of wildlife is the most serious threat to the environment.

The rise in recent catastrophic natural disasters has been strongly linked to climate change. Many scientists have made the case that incremental rises in temperature, specifically involving the oceans, has increased the frequency and potency of hurricanes, tsunamis, and blizzards. There are countless instances of these from the last two decades but the tsunami affecting mainly Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand in 2004 is a particularly striking example. This was the largest natural disaster this century and resulted in thousands of deaths, injuries and billions of dollars in damages, the effects of which set these developing nations back economically for years. People lost their lives, homes, and livelihood in many cases.

The main reason that many people including myself are so focused on plant and animal life is because of the rising number of endangered animals in recent decades. One of the most well-known examples of this is the often cited case of polar bears. Polar bears live mainly in the Arctic and recent melting of the polar ice caps has resulted in reduced ice for polar bears to hunt on. Polar bears have become an endangered species and it is often forecast that by 2100 they will be entirely extinct in the wild. Their extinction will likely have a domino effect on the fragile ecosystems of the arctic and other endangered animals like seals and narwhales. This is just one example of the impact of global warming on animals and plants of our planet. Extinction is irreversible and there is no more lasting impression we can leave than to deplete the world entirely of a species.

In my opinion, the loss of ecological diversity trumps any other environmental concerns. In order to remedy this problem governments and individuals need to take serious steps to not only invest more in conservation efforts for endangered animals but also work towards long term reforms related to fossil fuels, carbon emissions and the other apparent catalysts for climate change.

TG @Eugene_ielts

68. Self-employed versus company

Nowadays many people choose to be self-employed, rather than to work for a company or organisation. Why might this be the case? What could be the disadvantages of being self-employed?

An increasing number of people today are opting to start their own companies instead of working for a company mainly because of the increased support for young entrepreneurs. In my opinion, the main disadvantages of not having an employer are lack of expertise and its overall effect on businesses.

The number of self-employed is related to young entrepreneurs and has its origin in widespread angel investment across a variety of industries. One well-known example of this can be seen on the popular show 'Shark Tank,' where a panel of investors and executives hear product pitches and compete to purchase stakes in budding entrepreneurs' businesses. This show has launched a number of successful products by securing initial funding, which has led to a trickle down effect from this show: not only has it turned specific dreams into realities but it also encourages viewers in general to be more ambitious and has therefore been one of the main catalysts for the frenzy of self-run businesses popping up in recent years.

Though there are undoubtedly positives to all these start-up companies, I think that the overall impact is negative because it results in many poorly run businesses. For example, in recent years a number of ride-sharing apps including Uber, Grab, Lyft, Be, Go-Viet and countless others have sprung up. The established companies provide a functioning app with high-quality service to meet the growing demands of this industry. However, the majority of small start-ups find themselves in over their heads with apps that barely function and driver shortages that specialise in inconveniencing customers. It would be better for the people starting these derivative businesses to either work in companies, gain valuable experience, look for gaps in the market, and then develop develop worthy competitors or simply be content to have a good job in a good company that they do not own.

In conclusion, I feel that the rising number of new companies has led to a cult of overconfidence. If more people were satisfied working for others rather than pursuing unrealisable ambitions, this would likely lead to better consumer products across the board as well as increased national economic prosperity.

TG @Eugene_ielts

69. Music

Some people say that music is a good way of bringing people of different cultures and ages together. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Music has always been a key distinguisher of culture but many believe that it can also bridge cultural gaps and differences in age. Though I think some people overstate the impact of music leveling the differences between generations, I strongly believe that it brings people of different cultures together by expressing universal sentiments.

The main reason that I believe music is not a particularly good unifier in terms of generational disparity is that people tend to enjoy the music from their formative years and disdain whatever is currently relevant. Though there are of course exceptions, most people would recognise the mostly accurate stereotype of an old person complaining about the music that youths listen to nowadays. For example, in America some of the most popular artists today include Kanye West, Taylor Swift, and Rihanna. These artists differ greatly from past musicians. Kanye is a brash rapper with controversial opinions whose music constantly shifts and redefines genre. Taylor Swift and Rihanna write sugary pop songs that become ubiquitous in cafes and on the radio. Older people prefer what they used to listen to, whether that be intricate melodies and insightful writing of The Beatles or the raw sincerity of old school rap. The differences between the generations are reflected and augmented rather than mediated due to the different personalities and styles of modern music.

Although music does little to alleviate generational barriers, it does help cultures relate through universal, human perspectives. What I mean by this is that even though people may not understand another culture they can still understand the messages of the music. One great example of this is the music of Bob Marley. Bob Marley is from a small Carribbean country called Jamaica, a country whose culture has become influential around the world. This is because he expressed universal feelings of love, empathy, and positivity against the backdrop of a nation experiencing political and economic upheaval. His resilience against this pulses through his infectious music and has translated across cultural divides. An Asian person, who might not have any firsthand experience with different races or cultures, can still identify with Bob Marley and enjoy his music. This connection based entirely on music brings together people of disparate cultures through an emotional and intellectual bonding on common issues.

In conclusion, although music may actually do more to divide the young and old it definitely uses its universality to bring together different cultures. It is especially important at a time when the world appears to be more divided than ever that we find common ground to build cross-cultural relationships upon.

TG @Eugene_ielts

70. Responsibility for health

Many people believe that every individual is responsible for his/her own healthy lifestyle. Others believe that governments should take care of it. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

There has been much recent policy advocacy related to what the proper role of governments in healthcare should be. Although I believe governments have begun to treat this issue with the seriousness it merits, the responsibility for taking care of one's health should ultimately rest with individuals as they are more likely to stick with habits that they themselves have cultivated.

Those who favour strong governmental intervention often point out the role of the state in forming healthy eating habits through early intervention at public schools. In the United States, the vast majority of students attend state schools and in recent years the government has been implementing new policies aimed at curbing addiction to unhealthy foods. This means that they have reduced the total intake of saturated fats in school lunches and drastically cut down on sugar not only in prepared lunches but also in the ubiquitous vending machines placed around most schools. In the short term this has led to improved health for students but its true effect will be over the next several decades when these children grow up and are more likely to eschew fast food for the healthier alternatives now opening up to meet the growing demands of an increasingly health-conscious nation.

While there are clear benefits to governmental action, individuals are better at regulating their own behaviour in the long-term. People have always found ways to get around rules in order to satisfy their most basic desires, including those related to food. No matter what steps governments take, people will always crave unhealthy, delicious foods as our brains are hardwired to feel pleasure from saturated fats, carbohydrates, and sugar. For example, even a country like France, which has imposed strict rules over the food that children are served, is still facing an obesity crises. Therefore the only way for people to consistently combat poor health is to develop the discipline on their own. Individuals who make the choice to eat healthier are more likely to stick with this habit having worked out the reasons for themselves, rather than simply following a rule imposed by their schools at the behest of the government.

In conclusion, governments have a large role to play in public health but only individuals can take control of their own lives and make decisions that will truly benefit them in the future. In this case, the best solution is simply no solution. Standing back and allowing people to become more self-reliant will not only have more long-lasting effects but will also empower individuals in various other areas of their life to be more responsible.

TG @Eugene_ielts

71. Police and crime rates

Some countries are struggling with increases in crime rates. Some believe that having more police on the streets is best way to reduce and combat crime. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Many countries today are grappling with the best ways to curb rising crime rates and some have suggested that increased police presence on the streets is the optimal solution. Although I think this would have a positive effect for obvious reasons, the best solution is more nuanced and requires a deeper understanding of the sources underlying crime.

There is little doubt that employing greater numbers of police officers will have an adverse affect on criminality. One of the best examples of this would be in New York City under Mayor Rudy Giuliani during the late 1980s and early 90s. At that time, New York was a haven for criminals and many areas of the city were deemed too dangerous by residents to safely live in or walk through at night. One of the many measures that Giuliani used to reduce crime was significantly increasing the number of police officers during his time in office. This led to a reciprocal decline in crime and made the tourist-heavy neighbourhoods almost entirely safe and the rougher districts at least passably crime-free.

The above-mentioned measures were only effective because administrators also tackled the root causes of crime. It is generally agreed upon that the principle causes of crime are related to education indirectly and poverty more directly. If you look at countries with extremely low poverty and unemployment rates, such as Japan, you will see correspondingly low rates of crime. In Japan, this begins with one of the world's most renowned educational systems. Students graduate from high school and university with immediately employable skills and most are employed throughout their lifetimes. Since they have money to afford a good standard of living there is little incentive for criminal behaviour and the crime rate is among the lowest in the world.

In conclusion, the best way to reduce crime in the long-term is to invest more in education and the economy to stimulate job growth and address the catalysts spurring on crime. Any government that is serious about making their country a safer place must first take steps to improve their educational system as that will have the largest impact on creating the stable jobs that discourage criminality in all its forms.

TG @Eugene_ielts

72. Young people leaving home

Many parents encourage young people to leave home when they become older, while others think they should stay at home with the family. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

It has become increasingly prevalent for young adults to leave home before getting married. In my opinion, this is a positive trend taken as a whole because it fosters independence but it can have rare debilitating financial drawbacks.

The main drawback to moving out early is losing a parental safety net that safeguards financial stability. In large cities such as New York, real estate prices are so high that without a high-paying job you will struggle to contend with rent, food, transportation costs, and allowances for leisure activities. It is even possible that these hardships could prove overwhelming and pride may prevent your from going back to your parents. These individuals might end up taking a job with a low salary or that is not their passion.

The aforementioned drawbacks are the exceptions; the majority of people who move out are successful because they become self-reliant. A standout example of this is the typical American university student. Most students leave their parental home at 18 and never look back. These students take their first baby steps towards looking after themselves by doing their own laundry, managing their finances to an extent, and taking on campus employment. Once they graduate from university they will likely take over their entire financial outlay. This means they must find a good job and spend more responsibly. These qualities, of frugality and responsibility, will serve them well in their lives and increase their odds of future success.

In conclusion, the majority benefit from the added responsibility that leaving home brings. To encourage more people to move out parents should provide a degree of financial support when necessary but focus moreso on fostering their children's independence.

TG @Eugene_ielts

Cambridge IELTS

TG @Eugene_ielts

73. Happiness

Happiness is considered very important in life. Why is it difficult to define? What factors are important in achieving happiness? Given reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience. (C4T2)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

Happiness is very difficult to define, because it means so many different things to different people. While some people link happiness to wealth and material success, others think it lies in emotions and loving personal relationships. Yet others think that spiritual paths, rather than either the material world or relationships with people, are the only way to true happiness.

Because people interpret happiness for themselves in so many different ways, it is difficult to give any definition that is true for everyone. However, if there are different kinds of happiness for different individuals then the first step in achieving it would be to have a degree of self-knowledge. A person needs to know who he or she is before being able to know what it is that makes him or her happy.

Of course, factors such as loving relationships, good health, the skills to earn a living and a peaceful environment all contribute to our happiness too. But this does not mean that people without these conditions cannot be happy.

Overall, I think an ability to keep clear perspectives in life is a more essential factor in achieving happiness. By that I mean an ability to have a clear sense of what is important in our lives (the welfare of our families, the quality of our relationships, making other people happy, etc.) and what is not (a problem at work, getting annoyed about trivial things, etc.)

Like self-awareness, this is also very difficult to achieve, but I think these are the two factors that may be the most important for achieving happiness.

262words

TG @Eugene_ielts

74. Student behavior

In many countries schools have severe problems with student behavior.

What do you think are the causes of this? What solutions can you suggest? (C4T4)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

Poor student behavior seems to be an increasingly widespread problems and I think that modern lifestyles are probably responsible for this.

In many countries, the birth rate is decreasing so that families are smaller with fewer children. These children are often spoilt, not in terms of love and attention because working parents do not have the time for this, but in more material ways. They are allowed to have whatever they want, regardless of price, and to behave as they please. This means that the children grow up without consideration for others and without any understanding of where their standard of living comes from.

When they get to school age they have not learnt any self-control or discipline. They have less respect for their teachers and refuse to obey school rules in the way that their parents did.

Teachers continually complain about this problem and measures should be taken to

combat the situation. But I think the solution to the problem lies with the families, who need to be more aware of the future consequences of spoiling their children. If they could raise them to be considerate of others and to be social, responsible individuals, the whole community would benefit.

Perhaps parenting classes are needed to help them to do this, and high quality nursery schools could be established that would support families more in terms of raising the next generation. The government should fund this kind of parental support, because this is no longer a problem for individual families, but for society as a whole.

TG @Eugene_ielts

75. Gap year

In some countries young people are encouraged to work or travel for a year between finishing high school and starting university studies. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages for young people who decide to do this. (C5T2)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

It is quite common these days for young people in many countries to have a break from studying after graduating from high school. The trend is not restricted to rich students who have the money to travel, but is also evident among poorer students who choose to work and become economically independent for a period of time.

The reasons for this trend may involve the recognition that a young adult who passes directly from school to university is rather restricted in terms of general knowledge and experience of the world. By contrast, those who have spent some time earning a living or travelling to other places, have a broader view of life and better personal resources to draw on. They tend to be more independent, which is a very important factor in academic study and research, as well as giving them an advantage in terms of coping with the challenges of student life.

However, there are certainly dangers in taking time off at that important age. Young adults may end up never returning to their studies or finding it difficult to readapt to an academic environment. They may think it is better to continue in a particular job, or to do something completely different from a university course. But overall, I think this is less likely today, when academic qualifications are essential for getting a reasonable career.

My view is that young people should be encouraged to broaden their horizons. That is the best way for them to get a clear perspective of what they are hoping to do with their lives and why. Students with such a perspective are usually the most effective and motivated ones and taking a year off may be the best way to gain this.

TG @Eugene_ielts

76. Personalities

Research indicates that the characteristics we are born with have much more influence on our personality and development than any experiences we may have in our life. Which do you consider to be the major influence? (C5T4)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

Today the way we consider human psychology and mental development is heavily influenced by the genetic sciences. We now understand the importance to inherited characteristics more than ever before. Yet we are still unable to decide whether an individual' s personality and development are more influenced by genetic factors (nature) or by the environment (nurture).

Research, relating to identical twins, has highlighted how significant inherited characteristics can be for an individual' s life. But whether these characteristics are able to develop within the personality of an individual surely depends on whether the circumstances allow such a development. It seems that the experiences we have in life are so unpredictable and so powerful, that they can boost or over-ride other influences, and there seems to be plenty of research finding s to confirm this.

My own view is that there is no one major influence in a person' s life. Instead, the traits we inherit from our parents and the situations and experiences that we encounter in life are constantly interacting. It is the interaction of the two that shapes a person' s personality and dictates ow that personality develops. If this were not true, then we would be able to predict the behavior and character of a person form the moment they were born.

In conclusion, I do not think that either nature or nurture is the major influence on a person, but that both have powerful effects. How these factors interact is still unknown today and they remain largely unpredictable in a person' s life.

TG @Eugene_ielts

77. Sport stars

Successful sports professional can earn a great deal more money than people in other important professions. Some people think this is fully justified while think it is unfair. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion. (C6T2)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

As a result of constant media attention, sports professionals in my country have become stars and celebrities, and those at the top are paid huge salaries. Just like movie stars, they live extravagant lifestyles with huge houses and cars.

Many people find their rewards unfair, especially when comparing these super salaries with those of top surgeons or research scientists, or even leading politicians who have the responsibility of governing the country. However, sports salaries are not determined he or she holds. Instead, they reflect the public support that successful stars can generate. So the notion of 'fairness' is not the issue.

Those who feel that sports stars' salaries are justified might argue that the number of professionals with real talent are very few, and the money is a recognition of the skills and dedication a person needs to be successful. Competition is constant and a player is tested every time they perform in their relatively short career. The pressure from the media is intense and there is little privacy out of the spotlight. So all of these factors may justify the huge earnings.

Personally, I think that the amount of money such sports stars make is more justified than the huge earnings of movie stars, but at the same time, it indicates that our society places more value on sport than on more essential professions and achievements.

TG @Eugene_ielts

78. Changes

Some people prefer to spend their lives doing the same things and avoiding change. Other, however, think that change is always a good thing. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion. (C6T4)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

Over the last half century the pace of change in the life of human beings has increased beyond our wildest expectations. This has been driven by technological and scientific breakthroughs that are changing whole way we view the world on an almost daily basis. This means that change is not always a personal option, but an inescapable fact of life, and we need to constantly adapt to keep pace with it.

Those people who believe they have achieved some security by doing the same, familiar things are living in denial. Even when people believe they are resisting change themselves, they cannot stop the world around them from changing. Sooner or later they will find that the familiar jobs no longer exist, or that the 'safe' patterns of behavior are no longer appropriate.

However, reaching the conclusion that change is inevitable is not the same as assuming that

'change is always for the better' . Unfortunately, it is not always the case that new things are promoted they have good impacts for the majority of people. A lot of

innovations are made with the aim of making money for a few. This is because it is the rich and powerful people in our society who are able to impose changes (such as in working conditions or property developments) that are in their own interests.

In conclusion, I would say that change can be stimulating and energizing for individuals when they pursue it themselves, but that all change, including that which is imposed on people, does not necessarily have good outcomes.

TG @Eugene_ielts

79. Nature or Nurture

It is generally believed that some people are born with certain talents, for instance for sport or music, and others are not. However, it is sometimes claimed that any child can be taught to become a good sports person or musician. (C7T1)

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

The relative importance of natural talent and training is a frequent topic of discussion when people try to explain different levels of ability in, for example, sport, art or music.

Obviously, education systems are based on the belief that all children can effectively be taught to acquire different skills, including those associated with sport, art or music. So from our own school experience, we can find plenty of evidence to support the view that a child can acquire these skills with continued teaching and guided practice.

However, some people believe that innate talent is what differentiates a person who has been trained to play a sport or an instrument, from those who become good players. In other words, there is more to the skill than a learned technique, and this extra talent cannot be taught, no matter how good the teacher or how frequently a child practices.

I personally think that some people do have talents that are probably inherited via their genes. Such talents can give individuals a facility for certain skills that allow them to excel, while more hare-working students never manage to reach a comparable level. But, as with all questions of nature versus nurture, they are not mutually exclusive. Good musicians or artists and exceptional sports stars have probably succeeded because of both good training and natural talent. Without the natural talent, continuous training would be neither attractive nor productive, and without the training, the child would not learn how to exploit and develop their talent.

In conclusion, I agree that any child can be taught particular skills, but to be rally good in areas such as music, art or sport, then some natural talent is required.

TG @Eugene_ielts

80. Parents vs schools

Some people think that parents should teach children how to be good members of society. Others, however, believe that school is the place to learn this. (C8T1)

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

A child' s education has never been about learning information and basic skills only. It has always included teaching the next generation how to be good members of society. Therefore, this cannot be the responsibility of the parents alone.

In order to be a good member of any society the individual must respect and obey the rules of their community and share their community and share their values. Educating children to understand the need to obey rules and respect others always begins in the home and is widely thought to be the responsibility of parents. They will certainly be the first to help children learn what is important in life, how they are expected to behave and what role they will play in their world.

However, learning to understand and share the value system of a whole society cannot be achieved just in the home. Once a child goes to school, they are entering a wider community where teachers and peers will have just as much influence as their parents do at home. At school, children will experience working and living with people from a whole variety of backgrounds from the wider society. This experience should teach them how to co-operate with each other and how to contribute to the life of their community.

But to be a valuable member of any community is not like learning a simple skill. It is something that an individual goes on learning throughout life and it is the responsibility of every member of a society to take responsibility for helping the younger generation to become active and able members of that society.

TG @Eugene_ielts

81. Petrol price

Increasing the price of petrol is the best way to solve growing traffic and pollution problems.

To what extent do you agree or disagree? What other measures do you think might be effective? (C8T3)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

There is no doubt that traffic and pollution from vehicles have become huge problems, both in cities and on motorways everywhere. Solving these problems is likely to need more than a simple rise in the price of petrol.

While it is undeniable that private car use is one of the main causes of the increase in traffic and pollution, higher fuel costs are unlikely to limit the number of drivers for long. As this policy would also affect the cost of public transport, it would be very unpopular with everyone who needs to travel on the roads. But there are various other measures that could be implemented that would have a huge effect on these problems.

I think to tackle the problem of pollution, cleaner fuels need to be developed. The technology is already available to produce electric cars that would be both quieter and cleaner to use. Persuading manufacturers and travellers to adopt this new technology would be a more effective strategy for improving air quality, especially in cities.

However, traffic congestion will not be solved by changing the type of private vehicle people can use. To do this, we need to improve the choice of public transport services available to travellers. For example, if sufficient sky trains and underground train systems were built and effectively maintained in our major cities, then traffic on the roads would be dramatically reduced. Long-distance train and coach services should be made attractive and affordable alternatives to driving your own car for long journeys.

In conclusion, I think that long-term traffic and pollution reductions would depend on educating the public to use public transport more, and on governments using public money to construct and run efficiently.

82. Foreign languages

Some experts believe that it is better for children to begin learning a foreign language at primary school rather than secondary school.

Do the advantages of this outweigh the disadvantages? (C9T1)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer. Traditionally, children have begun studying foreign languages at secondary school, but

TG @Eugene_ielts

introducing them earlier is recommended by some educationalists. This policy has been adopted by some educational authorities or individual schools, with both positive and negative outcomes.

The obvious argument in its favour is that young children pick up languages much more easily than teenagers. Their brains are still programmed to acquire their mother tongue, which facilitates learning another language, and unlike adolescents, they are not inhibited by self-consciousness.

The greater flexibility of the primary timetable allows for more frequent, shorter sessions and for a play-centred approach, thus maintaining learners' enthusiasm and progress. Their command of the language in later life will benefit from this early exposure, while learning other languages subsequently will be easier for them. They may also gain a better understanding of other cultures.

There are, however, some disadvantages. Primary school teachers are generalists, and may not have the necessary language skills themselves. If specialists have to be brought in to deliver these sessions, the flexibility referred to above is diminished. If primary language teaching is not standardised, secondary schools could be faced with a great variety of levels in different languages within their intake, resulting in a classroom experience which undoes the earlier gains. There is no advantage if enthusiastic primary pupils become demotivated as soon as they change schools. However, these issues can be addressed strategically within the policy adopted.

Anything which encourages language learning benefits society culturally and economically, and early exposure to language learning contributes to this. Young children innate abilities should be harnessed to make these benefits more achievable.

TG @Eugene_ielts

83. Public health

Some people say that the best way to improve public health is by increasing the number of sports facilities. Others, however, say that this would have little effect on public health and that other measures are required.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion. (C9T3)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

A problem of modern societies is the declining level of health in the general population, with conflicting views on how to tackle this worrying trend. One possible solution is to provide more sports facilities to encourage a more active lifestyle.

Advocates of this believe that today' s sedentary lifestyle and stressful working conditions mean that physical activity is no longer part of either our work or our leisure time. If there were easy-to-reach local sports that could be offered would cater for all ages, levels of fitness and interests: those with painful memories of PE at school might be happier in the swimming pool than on the football pitch.

However, there may be better ways of tackling this problem. Interest in sport is not universal, and additional facilities might simply attract the already fit, not those who most need them. Physical activity could be encouraged relatively cheaply, for example by installing exercise equipment in parks, as my local council has done. This has the added benefit that parents and children often use them together just for fun, which develops a positive attitude to exercise at an early age.

As well as physical activity, high tax penalties could be imposed on high-fat food products, tobacco and alcohol, as excessive consumption of any of these contributes to poor health. Even improving public transport would help: it takes longer to walk to the bus stop than to the car.

In my opinion, focusing on sports facilities is too narrow an approach and would not have the desired results. People should be encouraged not only to be more physically active but also adopt a healthier lifestyle in general.

TG @Eugene_ielts

84. Child punishment

It is important for children to learn the difference between right and wrong at an early age. Punishment is necessary to help them learn this distinction.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

What sort of punishment should parents and teachers be allowed to use to teach good behaviour to children? (C10T1)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

One important stage in a child' s growth is certainly the development of a conscience, which is linked to the ability to tell right from wrong. This skill comes with time and good parenting, and my firm conviction is that punishment does not have much of a role to play in this. Therefore I have to disagree almost entirely with the given statement.

To some extent the question depends on the age of the child. To punish a very young child is both wrong and foolish, as an infant will not understand what is happening or why he or she is being punished. Once the age of reason is reached however, a child can be rewarded for good behaviour and discouraged from bad. This kind but firm approach will achieve more than harsh punishments, which might entail many negative consequences unintended by the parents.

To help a child learn the difference between right and wrong, teachers and parents should firstly provide good role modelling in their own behavior. After that, if sanctions are needed, the punishment should not be of a physical nature, as that merely sends the message that it is acceptable for larger people to hit smaller ones- an outcome which may well result in the child starting to bully others. Nor should the punishment be in any way cruel.

Rather, teachers and parents can use a variety of methods to discipline their young charges, such as detention, withdrawal of privileges, and time-out. Making the punishment fit the crime is a useful notion, which would see children being made to pick up rubbish they have dropped, clean up graffiti they have drawn, or apologize to someone they have hurt. In these ways responsibility is developed in the child, which leads to much better future behaviour than does punishment.

TG @Eugene_ielts

85. Cultural homogeneity

Countries are becoming more and more similar because people are able to buy the same products anywhere in the world.

Do you think this is a positive or negative development? (C10T3)

This model has been prepared by an examiner as an example of a very good answer.

It is said that countries are becoming similar to each other because of the global spread of the same products, which are now available for purchase almost anywhere. I strongly believe that this modern development is largely detrimental to culture and traditions worldwide.

A country' s history, language and ethos are all inextricably bound up in its manufactured artefacts. If the relentless advance of international brands into every corner of the world continues, these bland packages might one day completely oust the traditional objects of a nation, which would be a loss of richness and diversity in the world, as well as the sad disappearance of the manifestations of a place' s character. What would a Japanese tea ceremony be without its specially crafted teapot, or a Fijian kava ritual without its bowl made from a certain type of tree bark?

Let us not forget either that traditional products, whether these be medicines, cosmetics, toys , clothes, utensils or food, provide employment for local people. The spread of multinational products can often bring in its wake a loss of jobs, as people turn to buying the new brand, perhaps, thinking it more glamorous than the one they are used to. This eventually puts old-school craftspeople out of work.

Finally, tourism numbers may also be affected, as travellers become disillusioned with finding every place just the same as the one they visited previously. To see the same products in shops the world over is boring, and does not impel visitors to open their wallets in the same way that trinkets or souvenirs unique to the particular area do.

Some may argue that all people are entitled to have access to the same products, but I say that local objects suit local conditions best, and that faceless uniformity worldwide is an unwelcome and dreary prospect.

TG @Eugene_ielts

Pauline Cullen

TG @Eugene_ielts

86. Recycling 1

Some people claim that not enough of the waste from homes is recycled. They say that the only way to increase recycling is for governments to make it a legal requirement. To what extent do you think laws are needed to make people recycle more of their waste?

My Version

Recycling waste materials should help tackle the mountains of domestic rubbish produced each year and our depleting natural resources. However, recycling programmes need the full cooperation of residents if they are to be effective. The question here Is whether this can only be achieved by Imposing legal restrictions.

Undoubtedly, far too many recyclables are thrown away with the general waste and, as a result, damage the environment. To address this problem, we need to first consider the reasons behind people's reluctance to recycle. One possible Issue may be the process Itself, which usually requires us to clean and sort waste Into different categories based on their material. This is both time-consuming and confusing if we do not know whether certain types of glass, plastic or paper are recyclable or not. We naturally avoid tasks that take up too much time, so It is not surprising that so many people simply throw all of their rubbish away in the same bln.

If the main problem is confusion and a lack of time, then creating a law to govern this seems rather severe. It also seems unlikely to succeed given that laws and fines generally lead to resentment rather than cooperation. Furthermore, as recycling must occur within the home, It is difficult to imagine how such a law could realistically be enforced. A better solution would be to find ways to simplify the recycling process and also educate people about the benefits of recycling both for the environment and for society as a whole.

To conclude, I believe that the most effective way to Increase recycling Is to make the task simpler and raise awareness of the Impact that excessive amounts of waste are having on our planet. In my view, laws and fines should only be used as a last resort and when all other approaches have failed.

TG @Eugene_ielts

87. Recycling 2

Some people claim that not enough of the waste from homes is recycled. They say that the only way to increase recycling is for governments to make it a legal requirement. To what extent do you think laws are needed to make people recycle more of their waste?

My Version 1 - I disagree

Recycling waste materials should help to tackle both the mountains of domestic rubbish produced each year and our depleting natural resources. However, recycling programmes need the full cooperation of residents If they are to be effective. The question here Is whether this can only be achieved by Imposing legal restrictions.

Undoubtedly, far too many recyclables are thrown away with the general waste and, as a result, damage the environment. To address this problem, we need to first consider the reasons behind people's reluctance to recycle. One possible Issue may be the process Itself, which usually requires us to clean and sort waste Into different categories based on their material. This is both time-consuming and confusing if we do not know whether certain types of glass, plastic or paper are recyclable or not. We naturally avoid tasks that take up too much time, so It is not surprising that so many people simply throw all of their rubbish away in the same bln.

If the main problem is confusion and a lack of time, then creating a law to govern this seems rather excessive. It also seems unlikely to succeed given that laws and fines generally lead to resentment rather than cooperation. Furthermore, as recycling must occur within the home, It is difficult to imagine how such a law could realistically be enforced. A better solution would be to find ways to simplify the recycling process and also educate people about the benefits of recycling both for the environment and for society as a whole.

To conclude, I believe that the most effective way to Increase recycling Is to make the task simpler and raise awareness of the Impact that excessive amounts of waste are having on our planet. In my view, laws and fines should only be used as a last resort and when all other approaches have failed.

TG @Eugene_ielts

88. Recycling 3

Some people claim that not enough of the waste from homes is recycled. They say that the only way to increase recycling is for governments to make it a legal requirement. To what extent do you think laws are needed to make people recycle more of their waste?

My Version 2-1 agree

Recycling waste materials should help to tackle both the mountains of domestic rubbish produced each year and our depleting natural resources. However, recycling programmes need the full cooperation of residents if they are to be effective, and unfortunately, this is often lacking.

Even though many countries already have sophisticated systems and processes for recycling used materials, far too many recyclables continue to be thrown away with the general waste. As a result, our growing rubbish dumps are having a devastating effect on the environment. Moreover, throwing paper, plastics, and glass into the general waste means losing the chance to extract precious raw materials so that they can be used again. This is a pressing problem that we must do our best to solve as quickly as possible.

Many people say they do not recycle simply because it is too time-consuming, and, in spite of the many educational programmes about this, many say they are confused about what can be recycled. Given the information overload we are confronted with every day, it is perhaps unsurprising that adding even more information has little impact and is easily Ignored. Unfortunately, we humans are creatures of habit and tend to carry on as normal unless we are forced to change our ways. Thus, the only effective way to bring about a real change in our behaviour is to implement new laws governing our domestic waste.

To sum up, increasing our recycling levels is imperative given the impact our waste is having on the planet, yet our busy lives mean that we are not paying enough attention to this. Thus, I completely agree that we will only achieve success through new laws and regulations.

TG @Eugene_ielts

89. Jobs & Skills

In today's job market it is far more important to have practical skills than theoretical knowledge. In the future, job applicants may not need any formal qualifications. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Practical skills are very important and it could be argued that they are as important as academic qualifications when it comes to getting a job. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that academic qualifications will ever become unnecessary. There are certain manual jobs such as cleaning and labouring where formal qualifications are less important. Employers in these industries are more likely to employ people with a good working knowledge of the job and what it entails. However, even in these jobs it is important for people to have a minimum level of education, especially if they want to rise above the lowest working level. How can a person without good writing and mathematical skills balance a budget or manage staff? How can such a person make informed decisions about which products to use or safety issues in the workplace?

Having said this, a student graduating from university with the highest level of qualifications, but limited practical skills, still has a great deal to learn. None of us would expect or want a doctor without many years of practical experience and training to perform an essential operation. Students from all disciplines need to understand that entering the job market with a degree in management, for example, does not automatically qualify them for a managerial role.

Clearly, education is important in teaching the theoretical side of any profession. This theoretical knowledge forms an important basis for practical skills which are also essential. In truth neither one nor the other is dispensable when it comes to getting a good job.

TG @Eugene_ielts

90. Crime rates 1

In many countries the level of crime is increasing and crimes are becoming more violent. Why do you think this is and what can be done about it?

It is true that the crime rate is increasing in many areas of the world. Many governments react to this problem by building prisons to contain the criminals. This has proved so unsuccessful that each year bigger and tougher prisons are needed. Perhaps we need to go back to the basics of this problem and assess the possible causes.

One of the reasons that is often given is the increase in violence both on television and in computer games. While this may be responsible for making crimes more violent,

1 think it is unrealistic to lay the blame for all criminal activity on the media. I think the main cause of crime is the increasing gap between the rich and the poor, as well as the increasing use of drugs. The majority of crimes are being committed by people in need who are forced to take what they do not have, and by people addicted to drugs.

Solving these problems is not easy. We could try to ensure that more jobs are created so that the divide between rich and poor is reduced. However, criminals need to be trained and rehabilitated so that they can enter the workforce. Furthermore, providing employment only addresses part of this problem, so far there has been little success in the war against drugs

I believe that crime will continue to rise, particularly in crowded and overpopulated areas, unless we can find an effective way to address these issues. Perhaps we can help to break the cycle by trying to ensure fewer young people enter a life of crime in the first place. We could do this through education and by making sure that they are able to work.

TG @Eugene_ielts

91. Crime rates 2

Each year, the crime rate increases. What are the causes of crime and what could be done to prevent this rise in criminal activity?

Crime is an issue of increasing concern around the world, and more money than ever before is being spent on the detection and punishment of criminal activity. The reasons why people commit crime are countless, but drugs and alcohol, social problems and poverty play a major role. To solve these problems, governments can either focus on draconian punishments, or improve employment opportunities, invest in good housing projects and tackle drug and alcohol abuse.

One of the main causes of criminality is the use, sale and trafficking of narcotics. For example, the sale of drugs is organised by armed criminal gangs who illegally traffick drugs and control their business with extreme violence. Drug-related crime does not end there; drug users often steal to fund their habit, resulting in further acts of petty crime. The social problems connected with crime are said to be the result of single-parent families, absent role models and bad living conditions. The children from these broken families often become criminals because they feel alienated from society. Poverty is also a reason behind crime. When unskilled jobs pay so little and prices are so high, it's easy to see why some turn to crime for an income.

Dime can of, course, be dealt with by toughening criminal laws and introducing longer custodial sentences for persistent criminals, but some of the best ways to deal with crime may be to deal with the social causes. Increasing employment opportunities in poorer areas would improve living standards, which would mean access to affordable housing and education. Government funding for drug and alcohol rehabilitation programmes would help reduce dependency on stimulants and the need for the criminal activity that surrounds them.

In conclusion, crime is a major issue, but cracking down on offenders with a harsh penal system is not the only way. These problems can be solved through the government providing jobs and funding which should raise living standards and dramatically reduce crime levels.

TG @Eugene_ielts

92. The media

Whoever controls the media also controls opinions and attitudes of the people and there is little that can be done to rectify this. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

In some countries, the media is controlled exclusively by large companies; in others it is the government that has this control. Often, in a war situation, one of the first casualties is the media, which is seized by one group or another. This gives some support to the idea that the media is a source of power and control.

Whoever controls the media also has ultimate control over what is published or broadcasted and what is omitted.

They can also add a certain prejudice or bias to their coverage of certain news stories depending on their own feelings about the matter. This is not a new problem, although the issue is perhaps more pressing now that the Internet and pay-TV have enabled these messages to be disseminated even further.

However, we should remember that readers have their own ideas and opinions. You can control what is printed but you cannot control the opinions of your readers. I think the only positive here is that, nowadays, people seem to be much more cynical about what they read in the press or hear on the television. In particular, when it comes to the tabloid press, people know that they have to take what they read with a grain of salt. In other words, they read knowing they may be being lied to. Perhaps it is of even greater concern that we have become so accepting of this form of censorship.

The only thing that can be done to alter this situation is for the government to regulate the industry so that there is no longer a monopoly on media ownership. This also means that they have to allow and support a totally free press, even if this means the government may be criticised or ridiculed within its pages.

TG @Eugene_ielts

93. Free education and healthcare

All education and healthcare should be funded by the government and free for everyone. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Healthcare and education are both essential services that can be extremely expensive and, as a result, unaffordable for those on a limited budget. Nevertheless, it is important to establish just who is responsible for funding them. The health of a country's citizens is vitally important, without adequate healthcare, people of all ages can become extremely ill and thus unable to earn a living or take care of themselves. So it is essential for governments to provide well-equipped hospitals as well as highly trained staff to run them. There is also a need for appropriate emergency services. Furthermore, without a good public education system, people may find they are limited in their work choices. If education is not provided free to all. those born Into poverty may find themselves unable to rise above that level.

We may all wish for these essential services to be provided free of charge, but the government needs to obtain the funds for them from somewhere. Even when they are provided free of charge, there has to be some way of recouping the costs. One way of acquiring the necessary funds Is by Imposing taxes. Alternatively, access to welfare can be means-tested and based on personal levels of income. The Irony Is that, in democratic societies, where a government Is elected based on its promises, It Is often the political party that promises tax cuts that is elected to office.

It seems clear that poorer members of our society need this type of aid and If these costs are covered, at least partially, by the government, then we need to accept that our taxes will be used to fund them.

TG @Eugene_ielts

94. Obesity

Obesity is now a major global epidemic. What can be done to tackle this increasingly common problem?

Obesity is now one of the main causes of preventable death, especially in industrialised countries. To tackle this problem, governments can reduce the impact of their overweight ciri7ens by the careful use of taxation to fund alternatives to a sedentary lifestyle. However, individuals should also take responsibility for their own health by avoiding a bad diet and taking the initiative to participate in sport.

It is important for governments to act quickly to curb obesity because of the rising death rate. There will also be rising costs in healthcare and the benefits system if it is left unchecked. To combat this problem, governments should, first of all, heavily tax junk food and use the revenue generated to subsidise healthy fruit and vegetables. This would make healthy food cheaper and more widely available than unhealthier options. Also, the government can act by funding leisure centres, sports clubs and gyms. This money could be used to help people gain motivation to exercise and become more active.

On the other hand, there are those who claim that obesity is due to lifestyle choice and therefore an individual problem, not one for the government. They claim that people should find their own motivation to prevent obesity by being aware of the potentially fatal consequences of their lifestyles. Individuals could also change their diets by switching from a carbohydrate- heavy diet to one which includes a balance of vitamins and minerals. Joining a sports club need not always be the only way to lose weight. Even vigorous housework or heavy gardening can help avert heart disease.

In conclusion, although individuals may be able to help themselves by changing their diets and activities, it may require government intervention to tackle obesity quickly and on a large scale.

TG @Eugene_ielts

95. Alternative energy

Alternative energy sources that use the natural power of the wind, waves and sun are too expensive and complicated to replace the coal, oil and gas that we use to power our cities and transport. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this?

Alternative energy is thought by some to be the answer to our reliance on fossil fuels, as sources of alternative energy are low emitters of CO2 and are a sustainable means of providing electrical power. Critics of 'green energy' contend that current technologies are either too costly or impractical to realistically replace our current energy needs.

The advantages of 'green energy' are obvious. There is no need to worry about dwindling supplies of progressively more expensive resources. Solar power will never run out and, once initial costs are paid off, the electricity is basically free. These sources of energy have another major benefit in the shape of their low emissions. Although there are emissions costs in the building of wind turbines or hydroelectric power stations, there is no further air pollution or the risk of environmental contamination.

This notion of a perfect world of free and non-polluting energy does draw criticism, however. It is obvious that solar power won't work at night or that not every country has a coastline, rivers or windy hills. It is also a problem that replacing our current energy supply will entail expensive research and development, which, in turn, involves government cooperation. One last obstacle to the adoption of 'green energy' is nuclear power. Many countries see the huge energy production from this power source as a more practical solution than messing around with the wind and waves.

In conclusion, there is little doubt that we will soon need to wean ourselves off fossil fuels and on to an alternative fuel source. The only real question is whether we risk the costs and delays of green energy or choose the productive, but potentially dangerous, nuclear option.

TG @Eugene_ielts

96. Tourism

Tourism has increased so much over the last 50 years that it is having a mainly negative impact on local inhabitants and the environment. However, others claim that it is good for the economy. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of tourism and give your own opinion.

Whether or not tourist destinations benefit from international tourism is a debatable issue. To some governments, the local economic benefits are worth the overcrowding and hiked prices of the tourist season. However, there are environmental and social costs and other risks of relying on tounsm as a major source of annual income.

Sleepy coastal communities can be changed beyond recognition by mass-market tourism. Package holiday companies operate huge numbers of low-cost flights to high-rise hotels in developing countries every summer.

This means, of course, that easy money can be had servicing this seasonal influx and the government sees increased tax revenue and local employment. However, when the tourist season comes to an end, employment ceases and the area becomes a ghost town. The social cohesion of a small community can also be blighted by the seasonal migration of people to the cities to look for work out of season, leaving only the elderly behind. This is perhaps made worse by second home owners, who drive up house prices beyond the means of local inhabitants.

On the other hand, the local community do gain language skills and other fringe benefits of cultural exchange. Such a large volume of travellers every year can cause environmental problems to fragile habitats and historical sites. Age-old stone remains can be worn away and traditional buildings demolished in favour of bland international hotels. Local infrastructure can also fail to cope with large numbers of visitors, leading to pollution and litter. However, over time this can change as the economy improves and tourism becomes more of an established industry. Local government investment in infrastructure should ensure repeat trade and further benefits for the economy.

Overall, tourism can be a good source of income for countries blessed with natural beauty or sites of historical interest. However, governments must ensure that the wishes of local businesses are not put before the needs of the local community and that any revenue generated by tourism is reinvested in the area to protect the local environment.

TG @Eugene_ielts

Macmillan

TG @Eugene_ielts

97. Traffic congestion

Traffic congestion is becoming increasingly problematic in major cities. What solutions can you suggest to help solve the problem?

Major cities around the world are beset by a similar problem: traffic congestion. From Shanghai to New York, key cities in most developing or developed countries are tackling congested roads and all the negative consequences that this brings. Finding answers is an ongoing issue.

One key solution for the problem is public transport. In many places this is not convenient and too expensive which means that people still prefer to take their own cars rather than travel by bus, train or underground. Reducing the cost of public transport and checking that it works smoothly, for example by ensuring that buses link to key train stations and run late enough each day, will entice people back onto public transport systems.

Ensuring that this transport has proper staffing, in other words have ticket inspectors and staff at stations, will also help as people will feel safer. This would, for example, allow women travelling alone late at night to still feel secure.

Another way to persuade people to leave their cars at home is by increasing taxes on driving. Charging tax on parking and petrol could bring in more revenue to fund better roads or support other types of transport. For example, higher road tax could fund cycling paths within cities.

However, making travel by private car more difficult is only viable if reliable and affordable alternatives are in place. Another measure which could help Ls to develop more 'park and ride' schemes where people can park free at the edge of the city and catch a bus in to the centre. There should also be more cycle paths available.

By having better alternatives in place and making them more attractive than using private cars, it may be possible to reduce the increasing problems with traffic congestion that modem cities face.

TG @Eugene_ielts

98. Globalisation and Cities

Nowadays many countries have very cosmopolitan cities with people from all over the world. How can the government ensure that all these people can live together harmoniously?

In today's cosmopolitan world it is unusual to find a major city or country where there are no immigrants. People travel more now than they ever did in the past and populations have had to adapt to this transitional lifestyle much more quickly than in the past. Ultimately society, as a group of individuals, directs the way that new arrivals in a country are treated. But the government can do a number of things to support this.

Firstly, all governments should insist that schools teach history and culture from more than one country, not just the home nation. By learning how others have lived we gain insight into alternative cultures and ways of life which makes us more accepting when we meet people from those countries. Of course we don't have time to learn about the history of every country in the world but understanding at least one other culture opens our minds and makes us more tolerant.

In addition, when immigrants choose to settle in a country, the host government should offer free language and culture lessons. It is impossible for new arrivals to integrate if they do not understand the language and habits of their new home. I believe it is important for immigrants to learn the culture of the place they have chosen to settle. By acquiring the language and knowledge about the culture, they will be able integrate more easily and comfortably without necessarily losing their own identity.

Finally the governments of countries should make sure that they have some stringent laws to protect people from aggression or prejudice so that, should an immigrant face terrible attitudes, they have some protection. By ensuring people feel safe the host country shows that it is civilized and promotes integration.

In summary, understanding others is the key to harmonious living but laws should also be in place to protect people from those who can't behave responsibly.

TG @Eugene_ielts

99. Technology as a Study Tool

Some people think that technology is now an invaluable study tool for young people. Others, however, believe that it is harmful for the studying process. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Technology is seen by some people as the key to success for young students. Others, however, argue that it has a negative impact, but I think technology is a positive force for the young as they study.

Some are of the opinion that the role played by technology in the studying process for the young is very important, because compared to the past, studying is now much more efficient and convenient. For example, recent advances in areas such as mobile technology mean that information can now be accessed at any time and anywhere, thus reducing the effort students need to devote researching for essay and studies, in general.

Others, however, believe that the negative effect technology can have on young people's studies is not insignificant. They arguement that far from improving the way young people deal with knowledge as they study, technology is, in effect, harming the thinking process. Their argument is that students' thinking is being done by laptops and tablets. As a result, they are unable to analyse and use the information they encounter, which can damage their education.

Personally, I feel that technology is useful for young students nowadays. As well as improving the studying process, technology allows young people to manipulate the vast amounts of knowledge they encounter via the internet and in libraries. Without technology, in fact, preparing for exams and studying would both be impractical, because they would not be able to look at, process and examine the vast amounts of information at their fingertips.

As we have seen, while the effect of technology on young people’s studies is seen as both positive and negative, on balance I think it is a valuable tool.

TG @Eugene_ielts

100. Worsened Environment

Many people feel that urban environments are more unhealthy than they have ever been. What do you think are the main causes of this problem? What measures can be effective in tackling this problem?

Towns and cities around the world are much less healthy for their inhabitants compared to the past. This situation is the direct result of several factors, but many approaches exist to address the issue.

One reason for the problem is greater population density combined with increased traffic, which, in turn, causes pollution, like air and noise, as well as stress. For example, many countries worldwide, not just in Europe, are becoming more urbanised as people move to cities because of the entertainment and education facilities available, along with

greater work opportunities. As a result, city life is considerably less wholesome now both physically and mentally than for previous generations.

To make city environments healthier, however, several important steps can be taken. For example, urban areas can be made greener by introducing more green spaces, even if they are only micro-gardens with a few trees, shrubs and seats. This can lead to both cleaner air and reduced stress. The problem can also be addressed by public and private buildings being made greener with the creation of roof gardens for people to relax in.

Having transport systems that are efficient, cheap and comfortable is another way of ensuring that cities are healthy places. Such a measure will also enhance the quality of city life by reducing air pollution and stress on the roads as people are drawn to using the transport system. Attractive buildings that integrate work and living conditions as well as facilities like leisure, health and education set in attractive open spaces, can also lead to improvements in the health of the urban environment.

Thus, despite cities being less healthy than in the past, the root causes can be tackled with several simple strategies.

TG @Eugene_ielts

101. Experience versus Knowledge

Nowadays, experience is more valued in the workplace than knowledge in many countries. Do you think the advantages of this outweigh the disadvantages?

Experience and knowledge are both crucial in the modern work environment. However, I personally feel that the focus on the former is much more beneficial in the modem knowledge-based economy.

The importance of knowledge for workers cannot be underestimated. For example, employees need qualifications and knowledge of skills such as numeracy and literacy, as well as knowledge of how systems, such as computer systems, work. In order for professionals such as engineers, teachers or doctors to be successful, for example in their careers, they need knowledge as well as experience. While certain types of knowledge can be acquired during work experience, it is essential for a body of knowledge such as medical and engineering information to be acquired beforehand.

In today's world, however, where knowledge is effectively controlled by machines, it is essential for workers to focus on developing the skills to manipulate this knowledge, as it is so voluminous that it is now impossible to acquire. Knowledge, in effect, plays a secondary role to skills and experience.

There are, therefore, clear advantages to attaching greater value to experience compared to knowledge in the workplace. The modern world demands that companies and institutions have employees with very sophisticated skills not just in technology, but in dealing with modern systems. As a result, frequently workers' technical expertise often takes precedence over basic knowledge and without workers with the necessary experience, it is impossible for companies and organisations to flourish.

As we have seen, despite knowledge being very important in the modern workplace, it is clear that the advantages of a greater emphasis on experience outweighs any disadvantages.

TG @Eugene_ielts

102. Old Buildings versus New Buildings

Some people think it is important to construct new buildings rather than wasting money on maintaining old ones. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

The skylines of cities around the world are changing rapidly as more modern building are being constructed, replacing older buildings, which require more money to renovate and maintain. Personally I feel that preserving older buildings is often a waste of money for various reasons.

There is no denying that it is worthwhile keeping certain old buildings. Many castles and mansions, for example, around the world are of great historical interest and they deserve to be preserved, but in some cases old buildings are often overrated, while many new buildings are undervalued. Instead of money being spent on improving them, many old buildings should have been demolished, because they are not fit for purpose. Many people like them for nostalgic reasons, and there is no doubt that they are evocative of another era, but they are in many instances not very practical to work or live in.

On the other hand, new buildings are generally cheaper to build and maintain than keeping old buildings. The costs involved in the latter arise because it is difficult sometimes to find the correct materials for renovation. It is also time-consuming to modernise them while at the same time keeping the original features.

Some people dislike modem construction methods because they use a lot of glass and steel rather than old-fashioned materials such as bricks. Personally,

I find certain modern skylines in cities like Doha in Qatar, Shanghai and New York, impressive and beautiful. Cities which don't have modem buildings can seem rather melancholic and not as dazzling as some people feel.

As we have seen, the construction of modern buildings is more worthwhile than maintaining older ones.

In recent years, the lack of such soft skills as communication and working in teams has grown. This development is the result of various factors, which can have a negative impact on both employees and employers.

A deficiency in soft skills is caused by various factors such as the current emphasis on computer-based work.

TG @Eugene_ielts

103. Soft Skills

In the modern world, many employees lack soft skills such as communication and working in teams. What are the main causes of this problem? What are the effects of the lack of such skills?

In recent years, the lack of such soft skills as communication and working in teams has grown. This development is the result of various factors, which can have a negative impact on both employees and employers.

A deficiency in soft skills is caused by various factors such as the current emphasis on computer-based work. automation, and as a consequence a lack of socialisation in general. Take the impact of working electronically, for example. This can lead to a decline in the experience of dealing with colleagues face to face on a daily basis. As a result, workers are less able to communicate effectively with their fellow workers, their managers, and, if applicable, the public. From the automation perspective, many business processes such as dealing with the public have increased the distance between people generally, and have further led to decline in overall socialisation.

The above factors have a direct impact both on the employees and businesses and the public. From the perspective of the employee, the effect can be both psychological and financial. A bank worker may, for instance, become dissatisfied with their work and their efficiency may decline. This, in turn, can lead to a lack of promotion or bonuses, leading to further dissatisfaction. From employers' perspective, such a situation is not healthy as it can affect profits and ultimately the viability of the organisation. The consequences are also felt by the general public who are then faced with a reduction in the quality of service.

As we have seen, there are various reasons behind the lack of soft skills like communication and team working among modern employees, which can have a huge impact on people in the workplace, companies and the general public.

TG @Eugene_ielts

104. Technology in Arts

Nowadays technology is influencing modern art in areas such as design, painting and film. Do you think this is a positive or negative development?

The advances in technology are being keenly felt in modern art in fields like design, painting and film. Such a trend I think is beneficial for those studying and working in these areas, as well as the public.

The main criticism levelled at the use of technology in the areas above is that it is de-skilling workers. With computer painting and design, including on tablets, students in the above areas are losing basics skills in producing objects by hand.

Likewise, children are losing the ability even to hold implements like pens and brushes, to coordinate their actions, to plan and to think through the basic processes for producing something. The same applies to workers in these areas.

This is a valid criticism, but the benefits derived from the increasing use of technology in the areas above are huge. Computer software, such as 3D printing, supplements the skills of the students and workers in design, paint and films. The technology does not replace people, but is an additional tool like any other.

Another reason why the effect technology is having on the fields above should be seen in a positive light is that these areas have through the ages adapted to the available technology to improve their work for the benefit of society. The latest technology now allows efficient car design and mechanics, as in hybrid cars. Artists and film makers can use computers to create more entertaining interactive art works and films with computer-generated imagery for the publics benefit.

As we have seen, while there may be some downsides to the increasing role of technology in modern art such as design, painting and film, its increasing influence is a positive development.

TG @Eugene_ielts

105. Business Responsibilities

Companies are responsible only for making money for their investors. Therefore, they should not be held accountable for the environmental and social costs of their business activity to society as a whole. Businesses should do no more than concentrate on making profit. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

From a strictly capitalist point of view, companies exist simply to make profits and there are businesses that focus on this aim regardless of social or environmental consequences. In this essay I will discuss why such an approach to business is not only irresponsible but may be self-defeating, in that firms who continuously ignore such factors may even be harming their profits.

First of all, from a business point of view, public awareness of green issues is at an all-time high, and firms that are seen as working hard to restrict pollution and encourage recycling are often looked on more favourably by consumers. Therefore being environmentally friendly is not only better for the planet, it could also give companies an advantage over competitors. In addition, in many countries there are government incentives for companies to lessen their environmental impact. For example, the introduction of carbon credits means that firms can protect the environment and receive tax credits in return, so clearly there are also economic rewards to being environmentally friendly.

Equally, businesses who disregard public opinion or engage in socially irresponsible practices do so at great risk. They may find themselves subject to strikes and boycotts of their products, and firms who continuously provoke negative social reactions may eventually be barred from trading within certain markets. On the other hand, those businesses who work hard to maintain the public trust are more likely to experience increased sales, leading to more revenue.

In summary, businesses should not be blinded by profits. They need to remember that they are subject to the will of the public on issues such as the environment and their social stance. If they want to succeed, these factors should not be ignored and, properly managed, could even help boost revenues.
(280 words)

TG @Eugene_ielts

106. Science versus computer technology

Fewer students are studying science at school and university, favouring more computer-based subjects instead. Is this a positive or negative development? What are the reasons for this?

In recent years, it has become evident that there has been a shift among secondary and university students away from traditional sciences and towards IT-based subjects. In this essay I will talk about the reasons behind this shift and explain why I think that overall this is a negative development.

The rise on popularity of IT and similar computer-based subjects is unsurprising given how pervasive computer technology is within society. Our lives are so dependent on devices and the Internet that it has become one of the world's main industries. What is more, the media is full of stories of tech start-ups that have made their founders / inventors into millionaires or even billionaires, so it is easy to see why young people would be attracted to the industry as a field of study. It certainly seems a safer bet than a career in science, which typically requires a longer term commitment and at least at first glance less rewards in terms of salary and social prestige.

However, both academia and society as a whole depend on a sustainable stream of talented scientists, pushing the boundaries of what is possible. These are the people who develop our medicines, design our cars, improve our manufacturing processes, invent new materials – the list is endless and their work is vital for maintaining and improving the quality of life that we enjoy. A fall in the number of students taking sciences therefore means a fall in the number of talented people doing such valuable work.

In conclusion, the move to towards computer-based subjects and careers is understandable, given the importance of the computing industry in today's world. However, if this is at the expense of having new scientists and engineers, then it is also potentially very detrimental. Without scientific innovation, the world will be a very different place.
(304 words)

TG @Eugene_ielts

107. Budget for healthcare

In many societies in the world, the population is ageing rapidly and this is leading to an unsustainable increase in the cost of public healthcare. A nation's population should pay for their healthcare provision in the future.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Advances in medical science are resulting in prolonged lifespans but there is a knock-on effect for public health services with many hospitals struggling to cope with an aging populace. Many countries enjoy the benefits of free or subsidised national public health services. However, there are some within senior health management who claim that such provision will become unsustainable, and I firmly agree that changes need to be made in order to reflect this changing reality.

Despite the notion that healthcare should be 'free', such care is predominantly funded by the taxpayer. To give a specific example, a recent report in my country established that almost 40% of the nation's tax spending is distributed to healthcare and some 80% of that figure is reserved for treating the elderly. This is a disproportionate amount of money which has greatly increased the burden on the state and existing funding is no longer sufficient to meet these needs. This is turn impacts on the standard of care that can be provided as shown by numerous negative media reports about the conditions for both staff and patients. If we want quality healthcare then, clearly this financial burden needs to be alleviated.

One way to do so would be to increase the contributions made by citizens through increased taxation. Alternatively, governments could encourage those who can afford it to take up private healthcare arrangements. By switching to a private model, the well-off can afford a higher quality of care, while at the same relieving pressure on public services for those who do not have the means to go private.

One thing is for certain, an ageing population has increased the pressure on existing health provision. If we are going to maintain the standards of healthcare that we are used to, more funding needs to be found either through taxation and alternative forms of provision should be considered. Otherwise, standards will fall and people's lives will be put at risk.

(323 words)

TG @Eugene_ielts

108. Aging poulation

In many countries around the world, life expectancy is increasing. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this situation and give your opinion.

Medical care over the past century has improved dramatically. As a consequence, the world's population is increasingly living long into old age. Is this having a harmful effect on societies across globe, or are there more benefits than drawbacks?

One obvious issue with an ageing population is that it can create enormous demands on a nation's health service. As people live longer into their old age, the chances of them suffering from serious illnesses increases. As a result, the likelihood of them requiring medical treatment becomes higher, and it becomes more difficult to provide care for everyone. A further downside is that living longer does not necessarily bring happiness. By this I mean, an older person is unable to do many of the activities that they want to do, leading to the likelihood of depression and a deterioration in their physical health.

Having said that, one obvious benefit to people living longer is that young people can benefit for a longer time from the wisdom handed down to them by older members of their families. In today' fast-paced world, it is often comforting to seek advice from older generations. Consequently, the physical health of a grandparent is almost irrelevant, as the children and grandchildren will benefit from the experience of an older mind. What is more, retired people today are generally much healthier than they have ever been, and often enjoy their lives more than they did when they were young. They have the best of both worlds – a family that can care for and look up to them, and better health than at any time in human history.

Weighing up both sides of the argument again, although there are a number of problems that old age brings – predominantly health-related – the benefits that it brings to the family unit and to society as a whole are impossible to ignore.

TG @Eugene_ielts

109. Salary and job satisfaction

The most important consideration when choosing any career or job is having a high income. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

It is widely accepted that, for most people. their daily working lives will not be spent in their dream jobs. Despite this, I do not feel that people should instead prioritise becoming a higher earner above all other concerns.

To begin with, I strongly believe that people need stimulation in their daily working lives in order to feel a sense of reward. Very few of us can go through an entire career staying in a position or an industry that we find boring purely for the financial incentive. Secondly, there are so many people who see their working life as a search for fulfilment and contentment in helping others, rather than a search for wealth. It seems unlikely that the priority, for, say, every nurse or teacher in the world is to become well-off, and jobs such as these are rarely extremely well-paid.

Despite this, some would argue that those people who have families to support should always prioritise earning a high income; after all, it means securing their children's future. Others point out that, as the job market becomes increasingly unstable across the globe, it is vital to earn more than therefore save more. However, I do not agree that a good salary should necessarily be the number one concern for everyone. Too many people become preoccupied with the next pay rise or career move, and eventually become unhappy or even depressed, neither of which helps them to save or to provide for their family.

In summary, earning as much money as is humanly possible should not be anyone's main concern. Granted, it arguably brings financial stability, for individuals and for their families, but it is simply not worth tolerating a lifetime of unhappiness at work purely for the money.

TG @Eugene_ielts

110. dependency on technology

We are becoming increasingly dependent on computer-based technology. How do you think it will change in the future? Is it good for us to rely so much on computers?

It would be difficult to imagine life without computers. Over recent years in particular, their use and potential have grown at an incredible rate and I strongly believe that this growth will continue as more innovative ways to use them are developed. Although there are definitely some downsides to their use, I do believe the positives outweigh the negatives.

Computers enable us to do a wealth of tasks that would have been unthinkable for previous generations. We can bank online, book holidays, do our weekly shopping – the list of labour -saving activities is almost endless. Given the speed at which they have evolved and altered the way we do things, I am convinced that this evolutionary trend will continue. Take, for example, the rise of virtual reality. We can already do amazing things with it, and, as a computer-based technology, it is only in its infancy. It has so many practical applications, from improving gaming to providing training for doctors or pilots to handle real-life situations. As computer processing power increases, so will its potential to enhance everything we do.

Despite this, there are dangers in relying quite so heavily on computers. So much of our daily lives is controlled by them, that without them, modern-day life as we know it would be impossible. Furthermore, computers store all our important data and the risk of hacking exposes us to crimes such as fraud. However, I would argue that the technological advances made possible by computers have improved our world in so many ways. I believe that most people would argue that any negative aspects of computers are outweighed by all the benefits they have brought.

In conclusion, I believe we will probably become more dependent on computers but that our lives will improve as the technology improves. While there is a negative side to such a dependency, there are many more positives that we can focus on.

TG @Eugene_ielts

111. Preserving cultures

Some believe that people today have no interest in maintaining the traditional culture of their country or region. Others believe that it is still important to people that we preserve a traditional way of life. Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Today we live in a globalized world and the development of global culture is often at the expense o local traditions. There are certainly many people who show indifference to local customs in favour of embracing global ideas, but there are still many who see the value in maintaining them, myself included.

It is easy to argue that people are strongly influenced by the effects of globalization. Technology in particular seems to dominate the leisure time of young people, whether it be gadgets or the Internet. As a result, there are trends which can be described as global in all aspects of culture. For instance, many people now prefer listening to music by Ed Sheeran or Beyoncé rather than the traditional music of their country, which is often seen as outdated by comparison. Similarly, many would rather try exotic 'foreign' foods than use traditional recipes, which they might see as dull or old-fashioned.

However, it would be a mistake to think that everyone thinks this way. Older people especially feel nostalgia for how things used to be done. For example, in the UK, the Royal Family are as popular as ever, and thousands of people turn out to see them wherever they go. It should also be remembered that any of today's global pop stars were themselves inspired by more traditional genres of music. Ed Sheeran, for example, embodies many musical traditions, such as folk music and busking. In the same way, it is still common to see performances of more traditional forms of music, such as classical and jazz.

My own opinion is that there is truth in both views. There are certainly people so focused on global trends that there is so space in their lives for, or interest in, preserving the past. On the other hand, there are many who prefer to live in their lives more nostalgically and value the traditions that have been handed down. I would say that I belong more to this second group of people, although I admit I would struggle without the Internet.

TG @Eugene_ielts

INDEX

Abstract, 70, 74, 75, 78
Aging, 120
Agriculture, 70
Animal, 14, 34
Building, 114
Business and Commerce, 9, 39, 117
Child Development, 15
Crime, 12, 31, 80, 101, 102
Culture, 7, 13, 23, 33, 43, 95, 123
Education, 15, 22, 30, 35, 38, 40, 50, 68, 84, 111, 118
Environment, 10, 42, 76, 97, 99, 106, 112
Family, 26, 44
Government, 28, 31, 46, 102, 119
Health, 8
Healthcare, 80, 119
History, 68
History and Arts, 19, 25, 36, 58, 116
Hobby, 18, 38, 47
Language, 29, 92
Society, 75
Society and Community, 20, 21, 32, 37, 41, 45, 46, 47, 48, 63, 81, 93, 104, 110, 115, 120
Sport, 56, 87
Technology, 11, 23, 40, 48, 111, 116, 118, 122
The Media, 11, 16, 24
Tourism, 107
Traffic, 57, 109
Transport, 72
Work, 17, 27, 35, 49, 52, 77, 100, 121

TG @Eugene_ielts