

Writing Workshop An opinion essay

In an **opinion essay** you say what you think about a statement or a topic, giving reasons for your views.

Example task: People should avoid using mobile phones on public transport.

A GET IDEAS

- Think about the statement or topic. What do you already know? (= *the background information*)
- Decide what your own opinion is. Remember, there is no 'right' or 'wrong' answer!
- Think of as many arguments as you can to support your opinion.
- Choose your two or three best ideas.

B PLAN

- Organize your ideas into paragraphs. Use a new paragraph for each main subject or argument. For example:

Paragraph 1	Introduction to the topic
Paragraph 2	Your first main argument
Paragraph 3	Your next main argument
Paragraph 4	Summary of your opinion

C WRITE

Use linkers of reason, addition and contrast to connect ideas

Use a variety of opinion expressions

Give the main idea of the paragraph in the first sentence

Give examples or reasons to support your ideas

Sum up your own opinion at the end

Qualify your opinion if necessary

It is well-known that mobile phone use has increased over the last few decades and most people now use a mobile to communicate with others. **However**, some people feel that we should not use our mobiles on public transport.

Personally, I believe that it can be annoying to listen in on people's phone conversations while travelling. **For example**, some people speak very loudly on the phone and this can make travelling unbearable in the small space of a bus or train.

Furthermore, in my opinion people's conversations should be private. **Consequently**, they should make calls when they will not interrupt or be interrupted by others.

On the whole, I think people should make any important calls before they get on public transport or wait till they get off. If they receive an important call while travelling, they should quickly and quietly tell the caller they will phone them back later.

Tips for ... opinion essays

- ✓ Keep on topic. Discuss the ideas in the question – do not introduce new ideas!
- ✓ Introduce the topic at the start. You can give background information or say what other people think.
- ✓ Use a variety of opinion expressions, not just *I think*.
- ✓ End with a clear conclusion summarizing your views. You can qualify your opinion if you don't 100% agree or disagree.

USEFUL LANGUAGE

Giving background information

Some / Many people think / believe / argue / consider (*that*) ...
According to (*the media*, etc.), ...
Studies show / suggest that ...
It is well-known that ...
It is generally agreed that ...

Expressing opinions

I think / believe / feel (*that*) ...
Personally, I think ...
I personally think (*that*) ...
I (*strongly*) agree / disagree that ... / with the statement that ...
In my opinion / view, ...
It is clear (*to me*) that ...
It seems to me that ...

Adding ideas

Furthermore, ...
Moreover, ...
What is more, ...
In addition (*to this*), ...

Contrasting ideas

On the one hand, On the other hand, ...
However, ...
Although ... , ...

Giving reasons and results

... , because / as ...
Because of this, ...
As a result of this, ...
One result / effect of this is that ...
Consequently, / As a consequence, ...

Giving examples

For example, ...
For instance, ...
One (*possible consequence might be / reason for this is*, etc.) ...
... , such as ... (e.g. *illnesses, such as colds*.)
... , like ... (e.g. *illnesses, like colds*.)

Highlighting specific ideas

... , especially ... (+)
... , particularly ... (+)
... , apart from ... (-)

Concluding

All in all, / To sum up, ...
In conclusion, / To conclude, ...
In general, I think However, ...
On the whole, I think
However, ...