

A discussion essay

In a discussion essay you consider a topic or statement from opposite points of view, before giving your own opinion.

Example task: 'The internet is making people better informed.' Discuss.

A Get ideas

- What do you already know about the statement or topic?
- List as many arguments as you can *for* and *against*.

For	Against
help to learn language	freedom to choose?

- Now choose your *two* strongest arguments in each category.
- Decide what your own opinion is.

B Plan

- Organize your ideas into paragraphs.

Paragraph 1	Introduction to the topic
Paragraph 2	Arguments <i>for</i> / advantages
Paragraph 3	Arguments <i>against</i> / disadvantages
Paragraph 4	Your own opinion

C Write

give a general introduction

use linkers of contrast

separate arguments for and against into two paragraphs

give your own opinion at the end

use modals to make suggestions and recommendations

qualify your opinion if necessary

Many people believe that thanks to the internet, people are better informed than they used to be. Others, however, argue that the opposite is true.

On the one hand, by surfing the internet, we have access to information and the latest news at the push of a button. As a result, people no longer have to spend a great deal of time researching a specific subject. As a result, they can be fully informed about it promptly.

On the other hand, some people say that many websites publish information so quickly that they do not have time to edit it properly. The result of this is that some of the information we have access to is inaccurate.

In my opinion, we **must** be careful when using the internet as a source of factual information. **Only by double-checking information on various sites can we be properly informed about an issue.**

Useful language

Introducing the topic

Some / Many people think / believe / consider (*that*) However, others ...

There are (*strong*) arguments for and against this idea.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to this idea.

Adding ideas

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

Giving reasons and results

... , because / as ...

Because of / As a result of this, ...

One *result* / *effect* of this is that ...

Introducing contrasting ideas

On the one hand, On the other hand ...

However, / Nevertheless, it can also be argued that ...

One (*dis*)advantage of ... is ...

An(*other*) argument for / against ... is ...

A(n)(*other*) (*dis*)advantage is (*that*) ...

Giving evidence

According to ...

It is clear that ...

It has been proven that ...

We do not have any evidence that ...

(*Research*) has shown that ...

Making suggestions or recommendations

... should (*not*) / ought (*not*) to ...

Shouldn't we / people (*be able to*, etc.) ... ?

Would (noun / + *-ing*) be a better solution / alternative?

Expressing your own opinion

(*Personally*,) I think / believe / feel / am of the opinion (*that*) ...

I (*strongly*) agree / disagree that ... / with the statement that ...

In my opinion / view, ...

Although I partly agree that ... , overall, I think ...

Tips for ... discussion essays

- ✓ Do not give your opinion in the first paragraph, just give a general introduction to the topic.
- ✓ Do not mix up arguments for and against in the same paragraph.
- ✓ Try to write a similar amount for both your for and against paragraphs to show you are giving a balanced view.
- ✓ Support your arguments by giving evidence or thinking about the possible consequences of any changes.
- ✓ Only give your own opinion in the final paragraph.

Writing Workshop A discussion essay

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For	Against
help to learn language	freedom to choose?

- Now choose your *two* strongest arguments in each category.
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B PLAN

Organize your ideas into paragraphs.

- Paragraph 1** Introduction to the topic
- Paragraph 2** Arguments *for* / advantages
- Paragraph 3** Arguments *against* / disadvantages
- Paragraph 4** Your own opinion

C WRITE

Give a general introduction

Use linkers of contrast

Separate arguments for and against into two paragraphs

Give your own opinion at the end

Use modals to make suggestions and recommendations

Qualify your opinion if necessary

Many people believe that thanks to the internet, people are better informed than they used to be. Others, however, argue that the opposite is true.

On the one hand, by surfing the internet, we have access to information and the latest news at the push of a button. As a result, people no longer have to spend a great deal of time researching a specific subject. As a result, they can be fully informed about it promptly.

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USEFUL LANGUAGE

Introducing the topic

Some / Many people think / believe / consider (*that*) However, others ...

There are (*strong*) arguments for and against this idea.

Adding ideas

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

Giving reasons and results

..., because / as ...

Because of / As a result of this, ...

One result / effect of this is that ...

Introducing contrasting ideas

On the one hand, On the other hand

In spite (*of the fact that*)

Despite (*the fact that*)

One (*dis*)advantage of ... is ...

An(*other*) argument for / against ... is ...

Giving examples

According to ...

It has been shown that ...

(*Research*) has shown that ...

Making suggestions or recommendations

... should (*not*) / ought (*not*) to ...

Would (noun / + *-ing*) be a better solution / alternative?

Expressing your own opinion

In my opinion / view, ...

Although I partly agree that ... , overall, I think ...

Tips for ... writing articles

- ✓ Just give a general introduction in the first paragraph – don't give your own opinion.
- ✓ Don't mix up arguments *for* and *against* in the same paragraph.
- ✓ Organize your ideas and give examples to support them.
- ✓ Only give your own opinion in the final paragraph.