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The practice of illegally hunting wild animals continues to cause concern in many countries, particularly developing countries.

What are the causes of such hunting? What are the effects on the animals, and on the wider human society in these countries and beyond?

### Explanation of the Task

This is an Ideas>Causes/effects type Task. You should introduce the topic, describe two or three causes, then two or three effects, and then summarise briefly in the final paragraph. 'Animals' and 'wider human society' are important key words in the 'effects' part here.

Remember to avoid emotion or dramatic language, even if the topic is something you care about a lot.

### Student's Plan

**Essay Type: Ideas>Causes/effects (on animals & society)**

**Intro: Introduce topic & causes/effects**

#### **Causes:**

**1 Profit eg ivory, medical cures**

**2 Food; instability, war**

#### **Effects:**

**1 Extinction, disruption to food chain**

**2 Loss of heritage, eg Siberian tigers**

**Summary: Sum up the 4 main body ideas**

### Band 9 Model Essay

Poaching is a phenomenon with a variety of causes, both commercial and cultural. The effects can be extremely serious for animals and the community, as we will discuss now.

Possibly the most common cause of people turning to poaching is the profit which can be made from animal materials. We see this in the high prices attached to illegal ivory, furs and hides, which are highly sought after by a small but wealthy group of unscrupulous global collectors. In turn,

these prices may be the result of novelty or rarity value, or connected to imaginary medicinal properties, for example in the illegal trade for bear and gorilla body parts. A secondary cause is the more basic pressure of hunting for food, which forces some local people to kill animals purely for meat. The roots of this tend to be in localised famine or drought, or in political instability which disrupts the food supply, as we see in central Africa currently.

Turning to the effects of poaching, the most serious is the threat of extinction posed to species which are already rare or endangered because of habitat loss or other environmental factors. The resulting consequences of extinction may include damage to the food chain and the ecosphere, in addition, of course, to the loss of a precious form of life. A further effect is the further erosion of a country's natural heritage, which comprises its animals, landscape and natural resources, all of which may be under pressure already. Few could doubt, for example, that Siberia would be vastly poorer without its few remaining Siberian tigers.

Overall, the factors behind poaching tend to be commercial or connected to regional instability. The effects may include final extinction, with the damage to ecosystems and loss of heritage that this involves.

(296 words)

#### Examiner's notes

This Band 9 essay shows a clear argument and very strong language for describing cause and effect. The intro alerts me to the 'commercial and cultural' aspect of the causes, and these are explained in the first main body paragraph. The candidate shows that she can explain the underlying causes of a situation ('In turn, these prices may be the result of . . . 'The roots of this tend to be . . .') with relevant evidence about ivory/gorillas/central Africa.

The 'effects' paragraph is careful to answer the two elements in the task instruction (animals and society) suggesting to me that the essay is well-planned. The summary paragraph is slightly repetitive of the main body in its vocabulary, but as a recap it is very effective.

The language used displays an excellent range of vocabulary on the specific topic ('poaching, unscrupulous, famine, drought, food chain, natural heritage') and also in general language ('high prices attached to' 'The roots of this' 'The resulting consequences' 'the further erosion' 'Few could doubt, for example, that' in particular.) The IELTS examiners will always be impressed by this combination of advanced/academic phrasing and a certain amount of topic-specific vocabulary.

## Example Task 11

‘The use of software makes it unnecessary for people to know how to spell words correctly these days.’

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

### Explanation of the Task

This is another Opinion>Personal viewpoint task. You should give your opinion in the introduction, and use the main body to justify this with two or three reasons. The ‘concession’ paragraph should be one or two sentences, and the conclusion should state your opinion again.

Remember that you will improve your score by giving a balanced response (ie not saying ‘I totally agree/disagree’ but saying ‘I partly agree/disagree, because . . .’)

### Student’s Plan

#### **Essay Type: Opinion>Personal viewpoint**

#### **Introduction: Spellcheck is useful, but spelling can’t be ignored**

#### **Main Body:**

**1 Still need to write manually, eg in exams & notes**

**2 Spelling is part of language**

**3 Learning spelling helps mental development (thought, sight, writing etc)**

#### **Concession: Software is useful, but a supporting tool**

#### **Conclusion: Spelling is essential, for practical & mental reasons**

### Band 9 Model Essay

Almost everyone uses software to create texts these days, and we all find the ‘spellcheck’ type features useful. However, it would be unwise for people to completely ignore learning how to spell properly by themselves, for reasons which I will explain here.

Firstly, although we mostly use typing devices, there will always be occasions when we need to write manually or without the support of software. This may be in examinations, which are still mostly handwritten, or when writing letters or notes on paper, or filling in forms. It is essential, for example, that police records or medical notes, which are often quickly completed by hand, are accurately and clearly composed. Secondly, understanding spelling is an integral part of learning a

language and the various ways that it can be used. Most educators would agree, for example, that it is impossible to divorce spelling from grammar and syntax as part of a rigorous approach to literacy.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the whole process of learning and distinguishing different sounds and spellings is a vital part of a child's mental development, involving the complex relationship between hearing, sight, thought and the writing process itself. To say that this relationship is 'unnecessary' is to neglect some of the most fundamental stages in human development which have driven our progress for the past five thousand years, since the era of hieroglyphics and primitive inscriptions.

It is true that the use of software is an invaluable tool, and may well have a role in the process of teaching children to use computers and improving their work accordingly. However, this means that is a supporting facility, not a replacement for human thought.

In conclusion, I feel that a knowledge of spelling is essential, both for practical reasons and to support the development of a person's mind as they learn to read and write, with all the mental benefits which stem from that. It seems that software is highly unlikely to replace the human mind in this very important respect.

(334 words)

#### Examiner's notes

This essay would achieve Band 9 due to its very well-organised argument, academic style and range of vocabulary.

In terms of the argument, the candidate gives his view in the intro and then explains his reasons, with clear signposting ('Firstly, secondly, finally.') Simple conjunctions like this are effective as long as the paragraph content is fairly advanced. The concession shows that the writer can consider opposing views and accept that they have some validity, while putting his own judgement on it ('invaluable . . . but a supporting facility.') The conclusion summarises well in new language ('practical reasons' 'mind.')

In terms of style, the writer is very persuasive in using outside opinions as evidence ('most educators would agree . . .') and in rejecting the Task statement ('To say that this relationship is 'unnecessary' is to neglect . . .') also showing that he has analysed the Task well.

The vocabulary includes some very natural and effective collocations which are typical of discussions in the quality media, such as:

an integral part of  
impossible to divorce spelling from grammar  
a rigorous approach  
the complex relationship between . . .  
since the era of . . .  
all the mental benefits which stem from that.  
in this very important respect.

Natural, advanced phrases like this encourage the examiner to award a very high Band score, especially if the structure is also strong.

## Example Task 12

The use of phones, tablets and other devices when people are walking in public is causing concern among many commentators. What dangers may arise when people focus on such devices when walking in the street? How could these problems be reduced?

### Explanation of the Task

This is an Ideas>Problem/solution type Task. The instructions may sometimes include synonyms for ‘problems’ such as ‘dangers, risks, drawbacks’ and synonyms for ‘solutions’ including ‘answers, remedies, ways to solve/reduce.’

### Student’s Plan

#### **Essay type: Ideas>Problems/solutions**

**Intro: Devices are universal; 2 problems, 2 solutions**

#### **Problems:**

**1 Accidents, eg people, cars, traffic**

**2 Anti-social & rude**

#### **Solutions:**

**1 Education about dangers, eg in colleges, advertising**

**2 put warning systems on phones, like on cars**

**Summary: Physical & social dangers; education & warning for solutions**

### Band 9 Model Essay

As hand-held devices become almost universal in our society, the number of accidents related to their use is increasing accordingly, in addition to various social dangers. I will outline two such risks, and also two possible counter-measures we could take.

Firstly, the greatest danger is surely the possibility of people failing to pay attention to their surroundings when they use such items while walking along pavements, public areas and streets. By diverting all their attention (both visual and in most cases mental) onto their device, the users may bump into other people, fall over uneven surfaces or even step into traffic lanes, with potentially fatal results. A number of deaths among teenagers in the UK, for example, is attributable to this cause each year. A second problem must be the rather anti-social nature of people focussing all their thoughts on a device, to the exclusion of others around them, who may need help or guidance as much as basic courtesy. The increasingly impolite atmosphere in many public spaces may well be connected to this phenomenon.



Turning to possible solutions, it would be helpful to see a joint initiative between the authorities and mobile phone producers to raise public awareness of these risks. Such a programme could take many forms, ranging from advertising to dedicated classes in schools and colleges, and could be aimed at both the problem of accidents and the unsociable nature of excessive device usage, which would make it very cost-effective. A further solution may be to install warning mechanisms on these devices, which detect when traffic or obstacles are nearby, so that the user does not walk blindly into danger. Such systems already exist in cars to alert drivers to impending trouble or the need to change direction.

Overall, the dangers in this situation are both physical and social. Potential remedies may involve better education, and also enhanced danger detection along the lines already used successfully in motor vehicles.

(321 words)

#### Examiner's notes

This candidate has answered the Task in an imaginative way, with organisation which makes the essay clear and persuasive and achieving Band 9. The intro impressed me immediately, with its clear outline of the essay and use of 'counter-measures' as a synonym for 'solutions.'

The 'problems' section proposes physical and social dangers, and both are supported by relevant evidence (although I would have liked to see something a bit more definite as evidence for the 'anti-social' idea.) The candidate uses the 'By + -ing . . . the (subject) may + verb' structure ('By diverting all their attention onto their device, the users may bump into . . .') to explain the physical problem; this is a simple device which works well here.

The 'solutions' section is quite creative ('joint initiative' and 'warning system' ideas) and the ways of implementing the 'initiative' are clearly explained ('could take many forms, ranging from advertising to dedicated classes . . .') using 'would' and 'could' to show that this is an idea, not a reality. It would be awkward to use 'will' or 'must' in these situations. The writer links between the sentences well using 'such' (eg '. . . these risks. Such a programme' '. . . blindly into danger. Such systems . . .')

The summary uses fresh vocabulary to sum up, which impressed me again.

The language throughout is advanced, and shows a strong grasp of collocations (eg 'Potentially fatal, anti-social, increasingly impolite, joint initiative, walk blindly, impending trouble.')

Phrases such as 'Turning to possible solutions' and 'along the lines already used' add to the very natural tone of the essay.

## Example Task 13

Some governments today seek to monitor the general public's electronic communications (in the form of phone calls, texts and emails) saying that this reduces crime. Many people oppose this, however, saying that it erodes individual freedoms.

Discuss the aspects of this debate, and give your own conclusion to the discussion.

### Explanation of the Task

This is another Opinion>Discussion type Task. There is quite a lot of information in the instruction; you are not expected to discuss the differences between 'phone calls, texts and emails' but focus on the principle of 'monitoring' and 'reducing crime' versus 'individual freedoms.'

Notice how the candidate's plan connects the 'against monitoring' paragraph to the 'against monitoring' conclusion.

### Student's Plan

#### **Essay type: Opinion>Discussion**

**Intro: background; confirm 'discussion' type essay**

#### **Main Body:**

##### **Supporting monitoring:**

- 1 Known to reduce crime (eg in USA)**
- 2 'Nothing to hide, nothing to fear' idea**

##### **Against monitoring:**

- 1 Breach of liberties (eg would we allow police to search our homes?)**
- 2 Very low conviction rate; better to act on specific information**

**Conclusion: monitoring does not justify loss of freedom; police need to be more focussed**

### Band 9 Model Essay

It is admirable that governments seek to reduce criminality, and are prepared to use modern methods to achieve this. However, the arguments on both sides of this particular discussion (about monitoring private electronic correspondence) are by no means straightforward, as we shall see now.

On the one hand, those who favour the interception of private digital messages and calls say

that only by doing so can criminal messages be tracked and the culprits detained. Indeed, there are many examples of violent and sexual criminals (especially in the USA) who have been caught by these methods. A further argument is that people with nothing to hide should have nothing to fear from being monitored, and that monitoring is an exercise in public safety, rather like CCTV or having police officers watch a large crowd for potential trouble-makers. Such arguments are persuasive and are often used by media supporters of interception and monitoring.

By contrast, though, other people point to the fundamental breach of civil liberties which this policing activity involves. After all, they say, we would not allow the police to search our homes entirely at random, or open our paper correspondence without reason, purely on the chance of finding something incriminating. Another counter-argument is the extremely small number of convictions that actually stem from these methods, compared to the overall population. It appears to be true that the security services are most effective when responding to specific information or observations, rather than ‘trawling’ the entire population’s messages in the hope of detecting tiny numbers of criminals.

Overall, I feel that the monitoring of the general population in this way is unjustified, in terms of personal freedoms and the evident lack of effectiveness of such methods. We should urge our police to focus on gaining information through informants and leads from concerned citizens, which would have a higher benefit in terms of conviction rates and consequent public safety.

(317 words)

#### Examiner’s notes

This essay would definitely receive a Band 9 for its clear structure and the way that the writer reports the opposing views before reaching a conclusion.

The intro gives some brief background, and confirms that this will be a ‘Discussion’ essay. The first main body paragraph reports on the ‘supporters’ of monitoring effectively by using impersonal or third person structures: ‘those who favour’ ‘A further argument is that.’

The ‘opponents’ paragraph uses similar structures well: ‘By contrast, though, other people point to’ ‘After all, they say’ ‘Another counter-argument is’ ‘It appears to be true that.’ These phrases give the essay a very objective and academic tone, which is made even stronger by the well-chosen topic-specific vocabulary such as:

to detain culprits  
potential trouble-makers  
fundamental breach of civil liberties  
convictions/conviction rates  
informants and leads

It is not essential for a strong IELTS Task 2 essay to have this level of topic-specific language, but it certainly helps to raise the essay above many others and to justify a Band 9 score.

The conclusion feels logical because it summarises and paraphrases the preceding ‘opponents’ paragraph which the reader has just digested.

## Example Task 14

‘A country’s museums should always be free for people to visit, whatever the visitor’s age, income or nationality.’

To what level do you agree with this idea? Should museums always be free for all visitors?

### Explanation of the Task

This is an Opinion>Personal viewpoint type Task. Remember the importance of having a balanced conclusion (an opinion with ‘as long as . . .’ or ‘provided that . . .’ or similar) after the small concession paragraph. The instructions are inviting you to think about the matter of ‘always free’ and ‘all visitors’; note how this candidate covers this aspect in his conclusion.

### Student’s Plan

#### **Essay Type: Opinion>Personal viewpoint**

#### **Introduction: Museums’ importance; free entry is unnecessary**

#### **Main Body:**

**1 Most visitors able to pay (eg London)**

**2 Fees can be used to help museums (new displays etc)**

**3 Many museums are private anyway, subsidies would be impossible**

**Concession: Free museums are a national symbol; but fees would help them, though not for children etc**

**Conclusion: Charges are justifiable, provided there are exemptions**

### Band 9 Model Essay

Museums are a vital part of any nation’s cultural life, and high visitor numbers are a desirable indicator of their health and popularity. However, it seems to me that making museums universally free is unnecessary, and even counter-productive, in our efforts to make them more attractive.

For one thing, we should remember that many potential visitors to museums are able to pay an admission charge and would not object to this. For example, in London we see many thousands of wealthy tourists who have paid large sums to travel, and for whom a modest entry charge would be no inconvenience. Indeed, applying a small fee would enable museums to collect revenue which could be used to conserve the exhibits, extend the collections and put on further displays and so on. This would in turn make the institution more attractive, so that more visitors arrive. The Guggenheim

museums in the USA and Europe are an interesting example of museums which constantly refresh their contents in this way. Finally, we should remember that not all museums are publicly owned, and indeed there are numerous smaller, private institutions (for example in Russia or the Middle East) which rely on entry fees to survive. Abolishing such fees would be vastly expensive in terms of state subsidies, and would surely have little impact on visitor numbers.

Admittedly, I agree with those who say that universally free museums are a symbol of an equal and advanced society, showcasing national heritage and learning for everyone. However, the use of affordable entry fees (certainly with exemptions for children, the unemployed, students and others) may well add to the museums' effectiveness as such showcases.

Overall, I feel that modest charges are justifiable, and indeed useful, in our efforts to broaden access and improve our museums, provided that nobody is excluded on the grounds of cost.

(304 words)

### Examiner's notes

This candidate has evidently planned his essay carefully, because he has quite a complex opinion (fees are justifiable, and even helpful, but with exemptions) which he expresses with a persuasive series of ideas.

The only real weakness in this essay for me is the quality of the examples (London, Guggenheim, Russia, Middle East) which don't add much concrete evidence; on the other hand, this can be a difficult topic to think of evidence/examples, and so I would not reduce the Band score because of this. In fact, I would award a Band 9 because of the clear structure and well developed argument.

The introduction gives the opinion effectively, and alerts me to the 'universally free' part of the argument.

The main body is extremely well staged, with signposting to show the development:  
'For one thing . . . For example . . . Indeed . . . This would in turn . . . Finally . . .'

The use of 'Admittedly . . . However' in the concession is a classic way to organise this important section.

The writer uses 'we' ('we should remember' etc) to avoid personalisation; where he uses 'I' ('I agree, I feel') this is part of giving opinion in the concession and conclusion, and so seems natural in this context. The conclusion has a balanced view which comes logically out of the main body and the concession, with the point about 'exemptions.'

## Example Task 15

It is sometimes said that governments should dedicate a fixed proportion of their country's income to foreign aid each year, and this fixed proportion should always be donated to other countries. Opponents of this idea, however, say that aid should have no fixed proportion, and help should only be sent to other countries at times when it is really needed.

What are the arguments on both sides of this debate? What is your own view on the matter?

### Explanation of the Task

This is an Opinion>Discussion type Task. It is not asking you to discuss foreign aid by itself, but the way it should be given (either fixed amounts or as necessary.)

### Student's Plan

#### **Essay type: Opinion>Discussion**

**Intro: International cooperation is important; clarify 'discussion' type structure**

#### **For quotas:**

- 1 Moral duty, especially ex-empire countries (UK etc)**
- 2 easier for recipient countries to budget**

#### **Against quotas:**

- 1 Budget becomes inefficient, corrupt (eg developing countries)**
- 2 More money would be available for emergencies (floods etc)**

**Conclusion: Better not to have quotas; better to send funds as needed**

### Band 9 Model Essay

The issue of foreign aid goes to the heart of how nations should cooperate together, and whether this should be on a 'quota' system or more 'as needed.' In this often heated debate, the opposing arguments can perhaps be summarised as follows.

Proponents of the quota system claim that wealthier nations have a moral duty to sacrifice some of their income to help poorer countries, and that this duty does not rise or fall depending on circumstances. This argument is often used to justify the quota arrangement for former imperial states such as Holland, France or Britain. Moreover, the argument goes, the fixed proportion system allows the receiving countries to plan and budget reliably, building the foreign aid into their economic

calculations.

However, opponents of the fixed donation system respond that this budgetary aspect is in fact the most damaging aspect of the idea. They point out that, if aid money is provided regardless of whether it is actually needed, the funds become part of the recipient country's administrative system, with all the dangers of inefficiency and corruption that this involves. It must be said that fixed aid to some developing countries falls into this trap, as even the local charities themselves will agree. What is more, if aid funds could be held back until times of emergency, such as floods, famine or civil war, the money available would then be far higher and thus would help more people in distress.

To conclude, it appears to me that opponents of the quota system have the more robust argument, with their concerns over unnecessary donations which reduce emergency funding in future. We all recognise a moral duty to help those in need, but surely these resources should be targeted more strictly towards sufferers, rather than sent permanently to government departments to become part of the local economy.

(305 words)

#### Examiner's notes

The language in this essay shows a good command of both general argumentative terms and topic-specific vocabulary. The introduction provides background to the debate and then outlines the content ('opposing arguments . . . as follows.')

The main body uses noun persons effectively to introduce the contrasting view ('proponents/opponents') and uses third person reporting to avoid confusing these views with the writer's views:

'This argument is often used to'

'Moreover, the arguments goes'

'They point out that'

In the conclusion paragraph, the candidate refers back to this impersonal approach:

'opponents of the quota system have the more robust argument'

This is a useful way to unify the conclusion and the preceding paragraph in a 'Discussion' type essay. General English phrases such as 'goes to the heart of' 'with all the dangers of' and 'It must be said that' also help to build a cohesive academic-style argument without using especially formal language.

The topic-specific vocabulary is quite impressive here, with eg 'former imperial states' 'a moral duty to sacrifice some of their income' 'inefficiency and corruption' 'floods, famine or civil war' and 'targeted more strictly' all giving a sense that the writer has read about the topic somewhere in the media.

I would want to recognise this very cohesive structure and effective language with a Band 9 score.

## Overview: The IELTS Academic Task 2 essay types

There are two possible types of IELTS Academic Task 2 writing Tasks: OPINION Tasks and IDEAS Tasks. Let's explain the difference, because this is very important.

Firstly, there are OPINION Tasks, which ask for your opinion on a topic, such as whether you think something is good or bad. These OPINION Tasks take two forms.

Some of these are OPINION > DISCUSSION Tasks, which typically say 'Some people think that X is a good thing, while other people disagree. Discuss both sides and give your own view.' Remember that the exact words used could be different (for example, it might say 'consider both aspects' or similar) but the concept will be the same. In these OPINION > DISCUSSION Tasks, you should write about each side of the discussion, and finally give your opinion at the end of your essay.

The other type of OPINION Task is the OPINION > PERSONAL VIEWPOINT Task. These Tasks typically say 'X is a good thing. To what extent do you agree with this statement?' Again, the exact words will often vary (for example, it might say 'Many people support the suggestion of X. How far do you support this proposal?') but the concept will be the same. In these OPINION > PERSONAL VIEWPOINT Tasks, you should state your personal viewpoint at the beginning of the essay, and then explain why you have this opinion.

The second type of Task are IDEAS Tasks, which ask you to think of some ideas on a topic (such as the reasons for a problem or some ways to solve it) or to evaluate a situation. In these IDEAS Tasks, you will get high marks for thinking of a number of ideas on the topic, but you will lose marks if you give a strong personal opinion.

The common IDEAS Tasks are IDEAS > PROBLEM/SOLUTION, IDEAS > CAUSE/EFFECT and IDEAS > EVALUATE.

Sometimes, an IDEAS type Task will mix different elements, for example by asking you about Problems and Effects or about Causes and Solutions.

This book has examples and explanations of all these types.

In the exam, you should analyze the Task carefully before you start writing, to make sure you understand which type you need to write. Ask yourself: is this an OPINION or an IDEAS Task? Is it asking me to give my personal view, or is it asking me to think of some ideas on a topic? Which type of OPINION or IDEAS Task is it? Then you should spend a few minutes planning your essay with some simple notes.

Don't try to write anything very different in structure from the models in this book. These model essays are exactly what the examiners want to see from you. Read our model essays, and then practice writing your own essays in a similar way.



## The most common mistakes in IELTS academic writing

**Using contractions** (for example ‘I don’t think’ or ‘We can’t say’ ) **instead of the full form** (‘I do not think’ or ‘we cannot say.’) Never use contractions in academic writing.

**Writing too few words.** If you write much less than the required word count, the examiner has to reduce your score, even if your essay is good quality. You should count the number of words in your essay after each paragraph and keep a continuous total; this way, you can be sure of reaching at least 250 words in 40 minutes.

**Writing too many words.** The examiner is paid to mark on an ‘essay per hour basis,’ and so will not read the end of an essay if it exceeds the minimum word count by more than about 100 words. This means he or she will not see the end of your argument, and your score will reduce considerably. Remember: 250 words minimum, and about 350 words maximum in Academic Task 2 writing.

**Having handwriting that is difficult to read.** IELTS is still a handwritten exam, and the examiners will not spend time trying to understand your writing. You must make sure that your handwriting can be read quickly. You should focus on writing clearly when you do your practice essays. Ask friends or other students to give you an honest opinion about whether your writing is easy to read.

**Using informal words** (for example ‘a nice idea’ or ‘a silly thing to do’) **instead of academic words** (for example ‘a positive idea’ or ‘a regrettable thing to do.’) Remember that academic vocabulary is different from the language you would use in English when talking to friends.

**Giving personal opinion in an IDEAS type Task.** Check if the Task is asking for your opinion or not. The first question you should ask yourself is ‘Is this an OPINION or an IDEAS Task?’

**Telling stories about your personal history, friends or family.** The Task tells you to use ‘examples from your own experience,’ but this does **not** mean describing stories from your life or people you know! It means describing examples of things in the world that you know about, have studied or have learned about in the media.

**Giving evidence which is too detailed or specific to a subject.** You may be an expert in a particular social or scientific field, but the examiner probably has a different specialty. You need to make your ideas and examples accessible to a general reader. For example, if the Task topic is about money and you are an accountant, do not use specialized accounting terms.

**Being emotional or too dramatic when giving your opinion in an OPINION Task.** You may feel strongly about issues such as animals or crime, but academic writing must be unemotional. So avoid phrases such as ‘a disgusting idea’ or ‘I detest this concept.’ It is much better to say ‘an unacceptable idea’ or ‘I disapprove of this concept,’ which is more impersonal and academic; similar to the type of writing that people use in business reports or university essays.

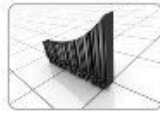
**Not following the basic structures presented in this book.** The examiners want to see a clear, well-structured essay that is easy to read. They are accustomed to seeing the structures we have presented in this book, and they will feel more positive about your essay if they can recognize these structures in what you write.

Give the examiners what they want, and they will reward you with a high score, even if there are some grammatical mistakes in your English.

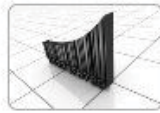
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