

CAE Writing an Essay

Paper 2 Part 1 - Essay

The **Part 1 question** will be an essay on a given topic. A set of notes on the topic will be provided, and will include three bullet points. **Candidates will be asked to select two of the bullet points and to base their essay on those two points.** They should not attempt to discuss more than two of the points, as this will lead to the essay being less developed than required. Candidates will also be asked to explain which of the two points is more important in a given respect, and to give reasons for their opinion.

Candidates will be given three short opinions related to the bullet points. They may, if they wish, use these to help develop their essay, but they should do so in their own words, as far as possible.

AN ESSAY is usually written for an academic tutor and may be a follow-up to an activity, such as attending a panel discussion or watching a documentary. It should be **well organised**, with an **introduction**, **clear development**, and an **appropriate conclusion**. The main purpose of an essay in the Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) Writing paper is to underline relevant salient issues on a topic, and to support an argument with subsidiary points and reasons.

Hints

- **[PLANNING]**
 - **Use the task input to help you plan** but try to avoid copying phrases from the input in Part 1. Use your own words.
- **[INTRODUCTION and CONCLUSION]**
 - **Effective introductory and concluding paragraphs.** In the introduction, state the topic clearly, give a brief outline of the issue, saying why it is important or why people have different opinions about it.
 - **DO NOT express your opinion** at the beginning of your essay (develop your essay in such a way that it guides the reader to the conclusion you draw).
 - **DO give your opinion in the final paragraph.**
- **[SECOND and THIRD PARAGRAPHS]**
 - **Structure your argument.** Each new paragraph has *one* main idea, stated in a **topic sentence**.
 - Include relevant details to support the main idea: these might include examples, rhetorical questions

(do not overdo it), controversial or surprising statements... If you include a drawback, give a possible solution, too.

▪ **[GENERAL]**

- **DO use a relatively formal register** and an objective tone. Do not be too emotional.
- **Remember to use linking adverbials** to organise your ideas and to make it easy for the reader to follow your argument.
- **In the exam**, allow yourself time to check your grammar, spelling and punctuation thoroughly.

Model questions and answers

Essay 1 - Model question

TASK

Your class has attended a panel discussion on what methods governments should use to discourage the use of private cars in the centre of the city. You have made the notes below.

Methods governments could use to discourage the use of private cars in the city centre

- investment
- education ✓
- taxes ✓

Some opinions expressed in the discussion

'Make businesses pay parking levies for their employees and they'll move out of the city centre.'

'Improve the public transport system, then people won't need their cars.'

'If people understood how much better pedestrianised city centres are, they wouldn't want to bring their cars in.'

Write an essay for your tutor, discussing **two** of the methods in your notes. You should **explain which method you think is more important** for governments to consider, **giving reasons** to support your opinion.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed in the discussion but you should use your own words as far as possible. Write your **essay** in **220-260 words** in an appropriate style.

Essay 1 - Model answer

Too much traffic is a major headache for everyone in the city due to the noise, pollution and, of course, terrible delays during the rush hour. How can the government reduce traffic and dissuade people from driving their cars into the centre every day? In this essay, I will discuss two possible approaches to this pressing yet complex issue.

The first option to consider is an education campaign which could comprise of visual and radio advertising, presentations to businesses and special designated days such as 'Wall to Work day'. Compared to the high cost of significantly upgrading our public transport system, advertising is relatively low-cost and straightforward to implement. On the other hand, it is difficult to gauge the effectiveness of such campaign in advance because it relies on individuals changing their ingrained habits.

A second alternative would be to levy a tax on parking in the city. This could be applied both to businesses and directly to consumers. While it is true that this would have immediate gains in revenue and change behaviour, taxes are unpopular and could also place unfair pressure on small businesses and individuals who do not have other transport options for work.

In my view, a multi-faceted education campaign would be the most effective starting point. In the future, a tax could be a possible option but it would be tolerated better once citizens are educated about the benefits of fewer cars and a more pedestrianised centre.

[+/- 240 words]

Essay 2 - Model question

TASK

Your class has attended a panel discussion on the action governments can take to promote health and fitness among young people. You have made the notes below.

Action to promote health and fitness among young people

- improve teaching in schools.

- improves attitudes to competitiveness.
- improve the image of sports.

Some opinions expressed during the discussion

'There need to be specialist sports teachers for children and students of all ages.'

'Some young people are put off by the pressure to compete.'

'A lot of young people don't think it's cool to take part in sports.'

Write an essay for your tutor, discussing **two** of the actions in your notes. You should **explain which action you think is more important, giving reasons** to support your opinion.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed during the discussion but you should use your own words as far as possible.

Write your **essay** in **220-260 words** in an appropriate style.

Essay 2 - Model answer

We often hear about the many benefits of health and fitness. However, less often do we hear concrete suggestions for how to improve participation rates, particularly among young people. In this essay I will discuss two possible actions that governments could focus on in order to promote health and fitness to youth today.

The first possible action is to improve physical education teaching in schools. Local students have at times complained that the curriculum is rigid and emphasises repetitive activities instead of team sports and enjoyment. Better role models and more adventurous options could lead to improved attitude and participation. Naturally, employing specialist sports teachers would incur considerable cost.

A second option would be to attempt to change the overly competitive attitudes that seem ingrained in many of the sports competitions for youngsters. When adults such as parents and teachers focus on winning above having a good time, it puts undue pressure on the participants. They may feel a sense of failure if they lose and also be less inclined to try a new sport.

To sum up, either approach would be a step in the right direction. In my view, it would be wise to prioritise dealing with reducing competitiveness first because I believe it would help young people feel better about the sports they already do. They could then, in turn, influence their friends to join in.

[+/- 220 words]

Essay 3 - Model question

TASK

Your class has attended a lecture on the action governments can take to make sure cultural heritage is preserved for future generations. You have made the notes below.

Priorities for governments aiming to preserve cultural heritage

- increase funding for museums.
- protect old buildings.
- teach the importance of cultural heritage in schools.

Some opinions expressed in the discussion

'Cultural heritage isn't just about buildings - it's about a way of life.'

'It's the responsibility of the older generation to pass on a cultural heritage to the next generation.'

'Museums are the best places to keep shared memories of a community.'

Write an essay for your tutor, discussing **two** of the priorities in your notes. You should **explain which priority you think is more important, giving reasons** to support your opinion.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed in the discussion but you should use your own words as far as possible.

Write your **essay** in **220-260 words** in an appropriate style.

Essay 3 - Model answer

Cultural heritage is an invaluable asset for all generations to enjoy. It is about knowing where we have come from and having pride in the place we live. In this essay I will discuss two priorities for the government's support of the cultural heritage in our community.

The first idea is to increase funding to museums. People say that museums are the heart of cultural heritage preservation. Not only do they display objects, they also teach and provide information about them. Increased funding could attract better care of objects, more specialised staff and more fun displays, in turn attracting more people to visit and learn. On the other hand, I would argue that it's unreasonable to expect governments to give more money to museums when they have got more important things to spend people's taxes on.

The second idea is to protect old buildings. It has become clear in recent years that governments can no longer afford to provide generous grants to help people maintain their historically significant houses. I am sure there are many voluntary organisations which would be prepared to work on conservation projects. Nevertheless, the government could provide protection to ensure that old buildings are not demolished or transformed out of character.

In my view, the most pressing priority is to provide protective legislation for old homes and buildings. I'm not alone in my concern about the loss of historical features which take such pride of place in and give character to our communities.

[+/- 240 words]

Essay 4 - Model question

TASK

Your class has been involved in a discussion on whether a dress code should be introduced at the college where you are studying. You have made the notes below.

Advantages of proposed dress code

- image of college.
- health and safety.
- discipline.

Some opinions expressed in the discussion:

'Wearing more formal clothes will prepare students for the workplace.'

'College isn't work or school, so students should be free to wear what they want.'

'Students are turning up to college in inappropriate clothes more frequently, so it's time for a dress code.'

Write an essay for your tutor, discussing **two** of the advantages in your notes. You should **explain which of the advantages you think would be most important** for the college to consider in deciding whether to introduce a dress code, giving reasons to support your opinion.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed during the discussion but you should use your own words as far as possible.

Write your **essay** in **220-260 words** in an appropriate style.

Essay 4 - Model answer

Introducing a dress code

We often hear that it is important for young people to be able to express themselves by what they wear. At our college, our lack of clothing guidelines has led some students to dress in a way that compromises both safety and our reputation in the community. Items of concern include ripped clothing, hoods that obscure the face, offensive T-shirts and very high platform heels. In this essay, I will discuss two advantages of introducing a dress code at our college.

The image that we present to the community is important for a number of reasons, but primarily because overly casual dress makes it more difficult to place students in homestays and on work experience. Recently, this problem seems to have escalated as we have received some phone complaints about students' scruffy appearance. Additionally, it has come to my attention that a few students have worn T-shirts with slogans that could be considered xenophobic. It seems obvious that implementing a dress code will improve the college's image.

With regard to health and safety, three students have fallen down the stairs during the last month. One of them, who had been wearing a pair of stiletto heels at the time, unfortunately broke her leg. I have grave concerns that without a dress code outlining suitable footwear choices, further accidents may be inevitable.

In my view, keeping people safe at our school is our responsibility. Consequently, this is the most pressing reason why it is time to introduce a dress code, even if it is initially unpopular with the student body.

[+/- 255 words]

Essay 5 - Model question

TASK

You have attended a Science Club lecture on how schools could encourage young people to train for careers in science. You have made the notes below.

Ways in which schools could encourage young people to train for careers in science

- enjoyable science lessons.
- careers advice.
- guest lectures from professional scientists.

Some opinions expressed in the discussion:

'Kids should be able to design their own experiments.'

'A lot of the careers advice given is already out of date.'

'A lot of the scientists are too busy to spend time visiting schools.'

Write an essay for your tutor, discussing **two** of the methods in your notes. You should **explain which method you think is more important** for governments to consider, **giving reasons to support your opinion**.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed during the discussion but you should use your own words as far as possible.

Write your **essay** in **220-260 words** in an appropriate style.

Essay 5 - Model answer

Ways to encourage young people to train for careers in science

Nowadays we frequently hear about the lack of students pursuing scientific careers. How can we demonstrate to the younger generation that science is a rewarding and satisfying field? In this essay I will discuss two methods that schools could employ to help persuade teenagers to consider further study in this area.

One possible approach would be to ensure that career advisors are on board by providing them with materials, training and even incentives for promoting science. While this would be fairly easy to implement superficially, a lot of information dates extremely quickly. In addition, generally speaking, career advisors have little background themselves in physics, chemistry and biology and therefore may not be able to drum up genuine enthusiasm.

A second tactic that schools might take would be to invite scientists to come to their school to talk about their work. What might prove difficult would be to secure the scientists themselves, as they are often extremely busy. It would also be crucial to enlist experts able to relate to adolescents or they might actually have an adverse effect.

Overall, I would say that the most effective measure would be to have guest speakers. Hearing an exciting story from the field is much more likely to influence career choice than some second-hand advice.



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