

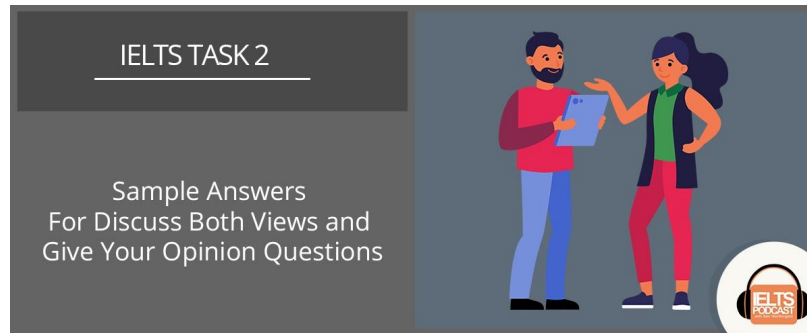
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**Female Voice:** You are now listening to the IELTS Podcast. Learn from tutors and ex-examiners who are masters of IELTS preparation. Your host, Ben Worthington.

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## INTRODUCTION

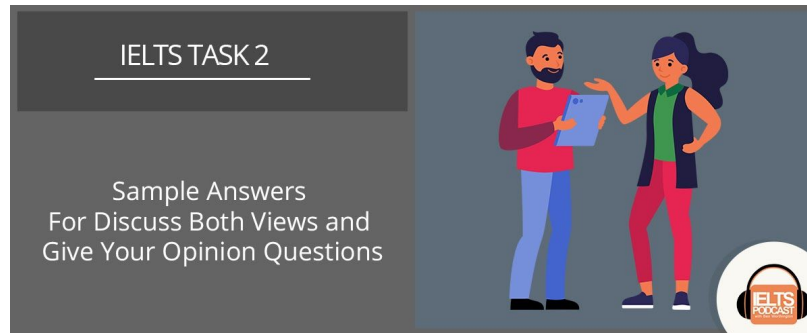
**Ben:** Recent IELTS Task 2 questions: discuss both views and give your opinion. Hello there, IELTS students. My name is Ben Worthington and in this tutorial, we're going to look at some questions seen by students who are doing the exam and we're going to look at sample answers for these and basically how to attack them. We've got about three questions all with the discuss both views and give your opinion.



Now, a lot of students do struggle with this. This is one of the issues that we aimed to solve with our online course because day in day out, we were getting emails and we still do get emails with students saying I don't know where to put my ideas, I don't know how to organize my thoughts, I don't know how to structure the essay and this is a very, very common problem.

So, in the course, we go into this in more detail and we've got a set process. It's quite straightforward. In this tutorial though, I'm just going to give you an overview on how I attack these because you can do it quite effectively and it's really sort of like the first step I guess in a series of steps that help you build a coherent essay.

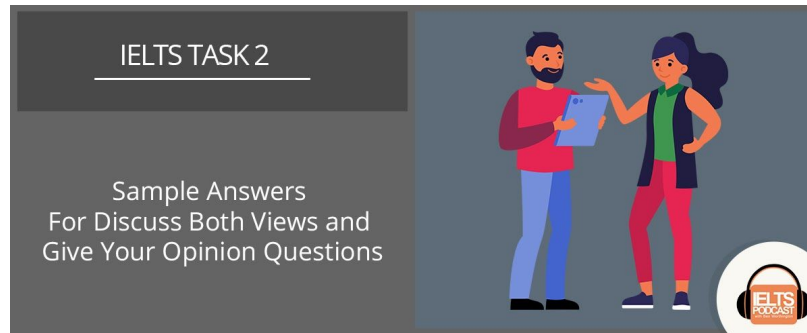
Now then, as you know, I'm Ben and I'm from England and I used to be an English teacher in Spain and I was struggling teaching IELTS for a while and that's how I got started with this podcast because I started to reach out to other professionals, to linguistic experts, to listening experts and interview them and IELTS experts-- ex-I IELTS examiners. I would interview them, test what worked-- I interviewed them. I asked them for their strategies, share those strategies,



and then test them with my students. I threw out a lot that didn't work, kept a lot that did work and that's how I managed to basically build the course which a lot of students are using day in day out to pass the IELTS exam.

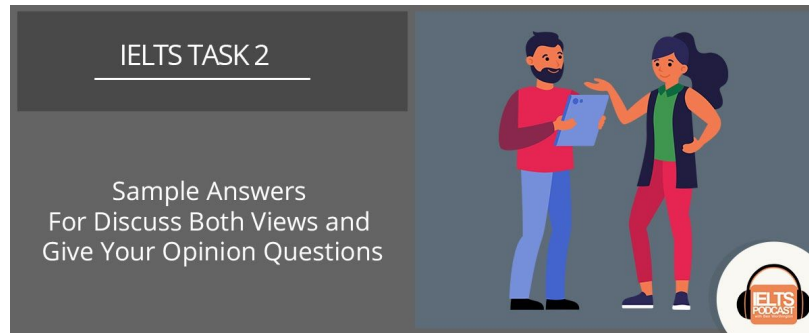
Right then, let's have a look at the first one. Some people prefer one-on-one lessons while others prefer groups. Discuss both views and give your opinion. Now, the way I do this is I split it up. I allocate a task from the question to a paragraph. So, in the first case here, I've got the pros of doing one-on-one lessons. So, the pros it could be-- I've got the pros and then I've got the pros of the group classes as well.

Now, what you have to be careful with is that if I had chosen the pros, for example, the advantages of one-on-one classes and then the disadvantages of groups, it could be sort of like contradicting. It could be the same argument. So, for example the pros of doing one-on-one are that you get more attention and the disadvantages of the groups is that you get less attention and it's the same-- it's more or less the same argument.



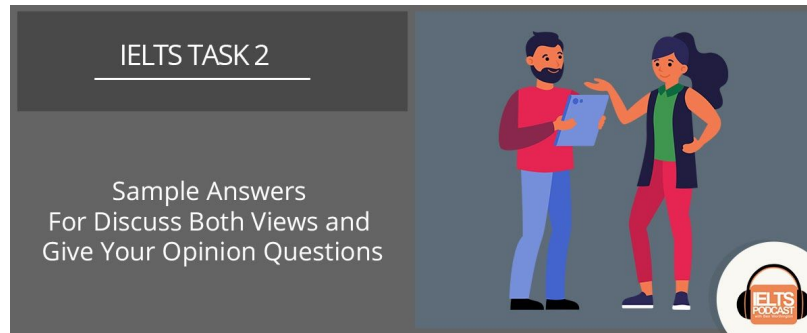
So, you have to be really sort of like switched on that you're not contradicting yourself and that you're not repeating yourself. So, in this specific case, I had to catch myself and you have to really just sort of like slow down before you start generating your ideas, before you even start writing and just make sure that there's no contradiction here with your sides of the argument. And so this is why I decided to go for the pros of one-on-one and then the pros of the group classes because this way I'm not going to contradict and there's no repetition there.

So, what I will do is I'll say for the pros of one-on-one classes you get individual attention. This means that you can progress faster. The teacher can adapt to your needs and this is really useful for language learning. Example: why is it good for language learning? Well, in some language classes, there can be shy students and these can be brushed aside by the louder extroverts. You see? So, I developed that last argument, that last point a little bit further with a real world example.



That's what you want to be aiming for because then it basically presents and enforces your point of view with irrefutable real world evidence and that makes your argument-- makes your whole paragraph much stronger. Also, you will have heard hopefully that these are quite simple ideas, but it's better to go for simple ideas that are eloquently expressed rather than complex ideas that are going to slow you down grammatically and possibly even be costly when you lose points or if you lose points for poor grammatical structure. Obviously, referring to the grammatical range and accuracy.

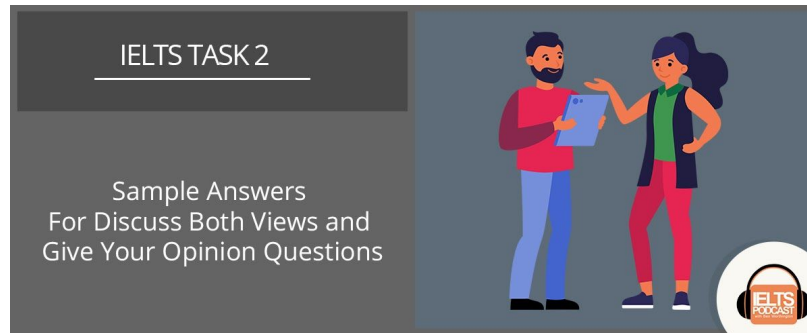
Now, here's just a pro tip that what I'm going to do for this paragraph is that I'm going to start with a conjunction. So, I'm going to say although it can be prohibitively expensive, one-on-one classes are undoubtedly better for the student. It's just semi-basic vocabulary there at the moment, but I just wanted to demonstrate that I'm going to start with a conjunction and then develop the whole paragraph with the pros.



Why am I going to throw in a conjunction there? Because this is just a stylistic element. We talk about these a lot in the online course, but it just shows the examiner that I will get full points for grammatical range and accuracy-- not full points, but I'll definitely improve my score by using these conjunctions. And it just is a stylistic element more than anything and it helps you pick up the points.

Now, second paragraph. The pros of group teaching. Well, it's cheaper. It's more cost effective for the students. It can create a class dynamic. You can learn from other students and in a group class, there is more pressure on the teacher to perform and it's also great for introverts because they can hide. They can hide at the back and not participate.

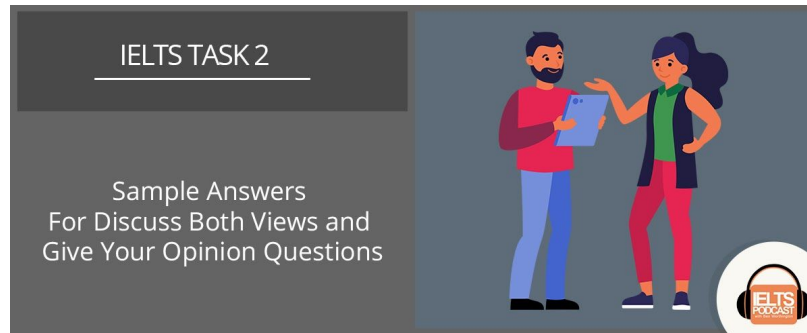
So, in the end, I decided to go against that last argument. I crossed it out in my notes. I was like it's going to be a bit too complicated and there's not really that much merit in it. So, I just decided to delete that and plus it goes against my earlier point of that the class could be dominated by extroverts. So, we don't really want such direct contradiction.



So, just to summarize. The pros of group teaching are that it's cheaper. It's more cost effective. 10 students can get taught at the same time as just one student could get taught with one-on-one classes. You can create a class dynamic. Students can learn from other students and there's more pressure on the teacher to perform. That last one could be debated; there's more pressure on the teacher to perform. Perhaps there's less pressure because there's a group class.

Anyway, what I would do next is pick one of those points and then develop it with a real world example just like I did before with the language class classes and the shy students.

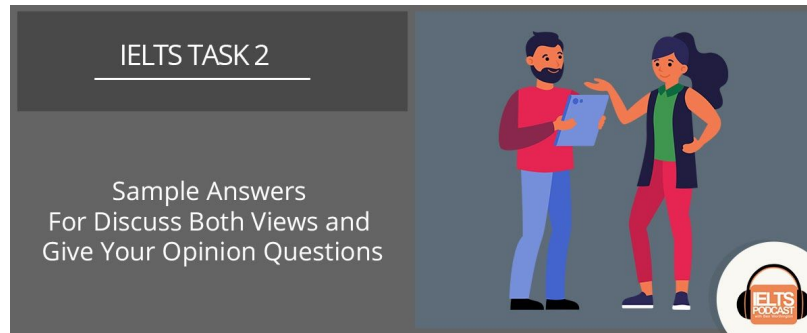
And then I've got my conclusion which I will probably do a little summary of both paragraphs and then choose a side which I think is best. I think in this case it doesn't really matter just as long as I've got a strong argument. So, I'd probably go for one-on-one tutoring. Being a language tutor, being an IELTS tutor, I know that you can go faster with one-on-one tutoring, but obviously it is more expensive.



So, let's move on to the next one. Many people believe that we should protect all wild animals while others believe we should just protect some of them. Discuss both views and give your opinion. If I were you, now I'd pause this recording and scribble down a few notes because this is not an easy question. I had to think about this for a while and I was like hmm. So, I'll just give you the question again. Many people believe that we should protect all wild animals while others believe we should just protect some of them. Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Let's split up the question. So, the first part of the question is we should protect all wild animals. That's view no. 1. View no. 2 is we should protect some of them. So, discuss both views and give your opinion. Now again, we can fall into this contradictory trap where if I say yes, we should protect all wild animals because and then I say no, we should just protect a few. It's very dangerous because I can start repeating myself, contradicting myself and before I know it, I'm in a mess and I'm panicking and I'm confused and I'm frustrated.

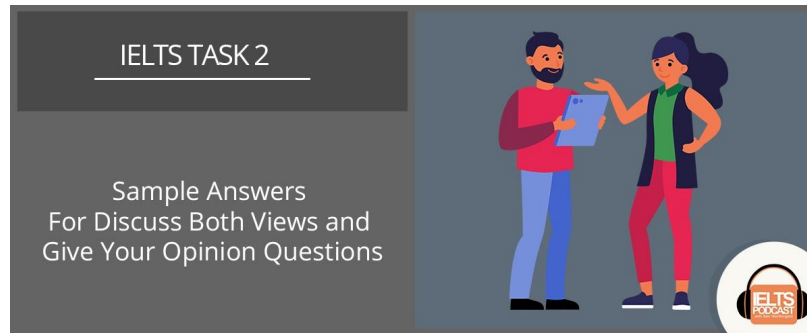




I see this all the time with students and I used to do it a lot when I was tackling these Task 2 questions. And after writing out about a couple of hundred probably near a thousand and then also correcting over a thousand-- yes, I'd probably say I've written over a hundred Task 2 essays and corrected over a thousand, I see it day in day out with students just getting frustrated with this and it's so heartbreaking.

So, how do we solve this? Well, once again, we're going to just take-- we're going to get our positions crystal clear. So, body paragraph no. 1: yes, we protect all wild animals because or we should protect all wild animals because... and then body paragraph no.2 we should just protect a few because... This way I'm not going to contradict myself.

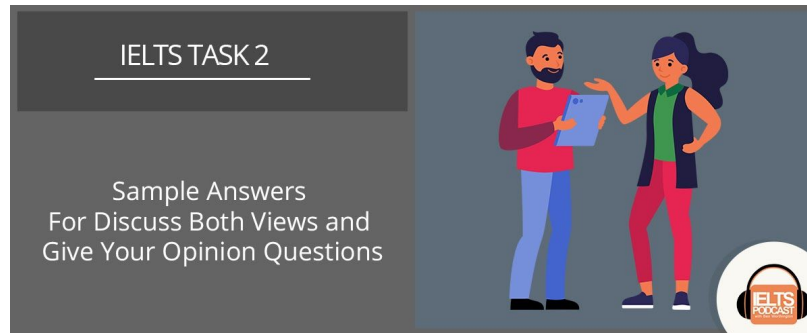
Let me just emphasize. If I say we should protect all wild animals because global warming, animals are in danger and then I said we shouldn't protect a few, what I'm saying is that we need to protect them all. If I say we should not protect a few, I'm basically saying we should protect



them all and I'm going to be repeating the same arguments as I just made and it's going to be confusing to write and even more confusing to read.

So, this is why I prefer just to say yes, we should protect all wild animals in body paragraph one. Body paragraph two: yes, we should just protect a few. This way I've got different arguments and in the conclusion, I can give my opinion. So, I'm doing exactly what the question says. Discuss both views and give your opinion.

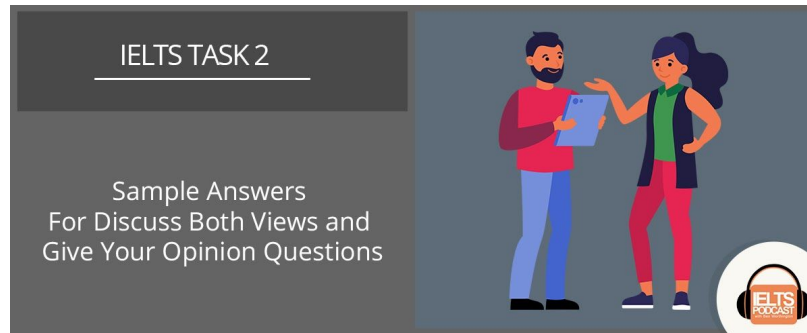
Now, if you haven't thought of a few ideas perhaps pause the recording, grab a pen, scribble some down. It will help you. If you can't scribble them down, perhaps search online. Here are my ideas. Body paragraph no. 1: yes, we should protect all wild animals because 1) humans have already damaged the world enough as it is. 2) It could cause an imbalance in nature by just protecting a select few. For example, in California, deer were protected and wolves were hunted. This led to an explosion in deer numbers which resulted in over grazing of the woodlands ultimately damaging the flora.



I don't know if that's true. It sounds realistic. I vaguely remember some kind of similar story, but that's why we should protect all wild animals. If we'd have protected the wolves as well as the deer, we wouldn't have had over grazing which is where the animals or the deer in this case eat too much of the woodlands. Normally, the wolves would kill the deer, keep the numbers low which would basically keep it all balanced. That's my argument.

Once again, I've got a real world example there. It demonstrates my point and it's just going to strengthen my argument considerably. Also, like the last one, it's a beautiful, beautiful opportunity to squeeze in some topic-specific vocabulary. Look at this: flora, woodlands, over grazing, wolves, deer, an explosion in deer numbers. All of these is just amazing vocabulary the examiner will love to see.

Moving on to body paragraph no. 2. We should protect just a few animals because not all of them are endangered. For example, rats are wild, but protecting them would cause a pandemic.

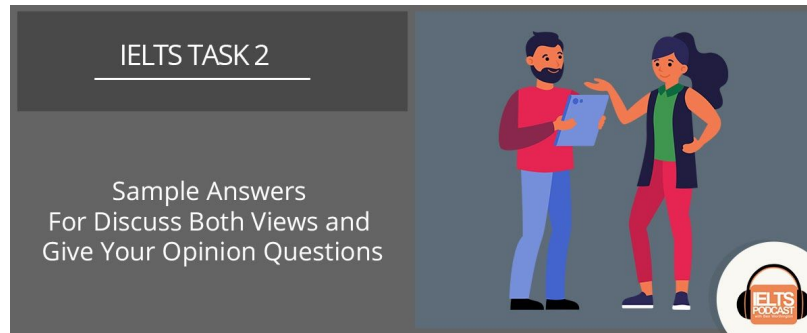


It's just a real world logical argument. We're not going to start protecting some other wild animals; pigeons, rats, whatever. It's ridiculous.

Second point: when I'm adding my second points in the paragraph, I'm going to use words like furthermore. You may hear me say also. This is because I'm obviously using spoken English, but in your essay, you want to be using more formal language such as furthermore.

Furthermore, the cost to protect all wild animals is astronomical and could be better spent elsewhere. For example, Australia recently rescinded a kangaroo protection law that was too expensive to maintain. The money we saved was diverted towards drug rehabilitation welfare programs. I don't know if that's true. It sounds realistic. We're going to cut some money here in the government budget and allocate it over here.

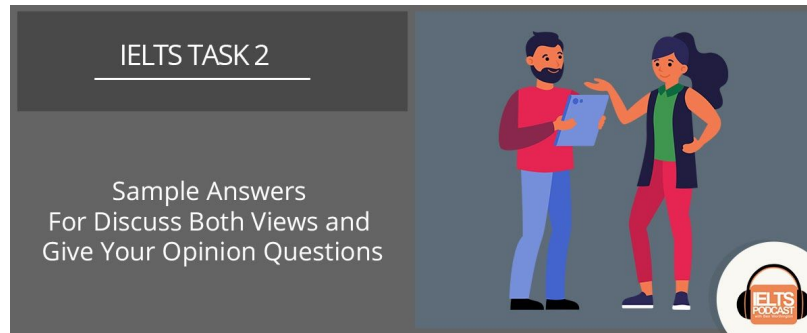
Final argument: humans have caused an imbalance in nature. For example, in the savannah, only elephants needed protection from hunters. The hyenas are never endangered. I'll probably change that to were never endangered just to keep it consistent with the tenses. After this, I've



just got my conclusion to write; quite straightforward, quite easy, and of course my introduction which I would have done before.

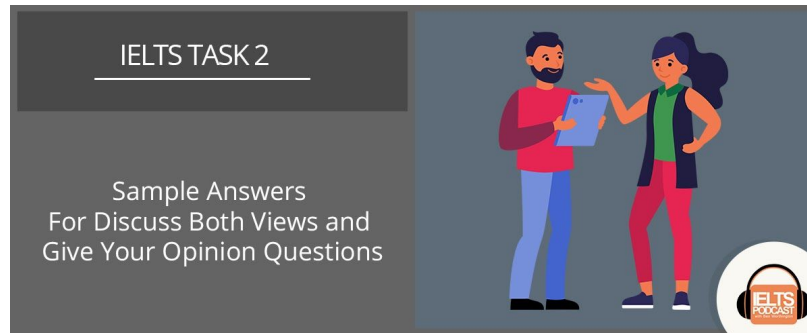
If you struggle with organizing your ideas, perhaps you've overcome this stage of generating ideas. Now you just need to organize them. Well, the online course we've got a couple of modules where we start out with a very basic framework. Once you've written a few essays with that framework, we give you feedback. You improve and then we give you the famous C2 template where it's just a matter of dropping your ideas into that template and it's straightforward.

Also, if you're not at that stage yet and you're still struggling with ideas, we've got a whole module on how to solve this and in the new updated version, it's basically how to solve it and boost your vocabulary simultaneously. So, you can start using all this lovely juicy high scoring topic-specific vocabulary.



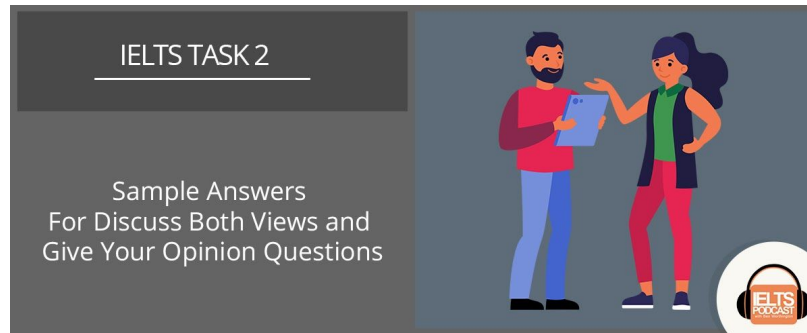
Final question. Many people believe that individuals are responsible for their own happiness. Hopefully, you might have spotted that as sort of like okay, that's got to be body paragraph no. 1. Second part of the sentence: while others think happiness is dependent on other external factors. Hopefully, you'll have spotted that body paragraph no. 2. Discuss both views and include your own opinion. Give reasons for your answer and examples from your experience.

Be careful here. Examples from your experience is really tricky from the examiners. They don't want examples from your experience of looking after Uncle David in your village, for example. They don't want examples from your experience of your friend Peter who was suffering from depression. That's all just-- it's almost like a trick really and personally, I'm not a big fan of that. When they say from your experience, they obviously-- you cannot talk about your direct personal experience. This is what a lot of students interpret it as. Examples from your experience are my personal experience of me; my interactions day in day out over the last couple of years.



No. It should say something like and examples from your academic reading and experience. So, you should be putting in here examples from your experience. You should be talking exactly like we've done before. Like I talked about the example of elephants being protected and hyenas not being protected. So, anyway in this case, I'll probably or I could even say scientific psychological studies show that happiness is derived from effort and winning awards. For example...That's how I would interpret this as my experience. I'm just going to say scientific evidence shows that happiness comes from a sense of achievement and effort and well-being. Something like that.

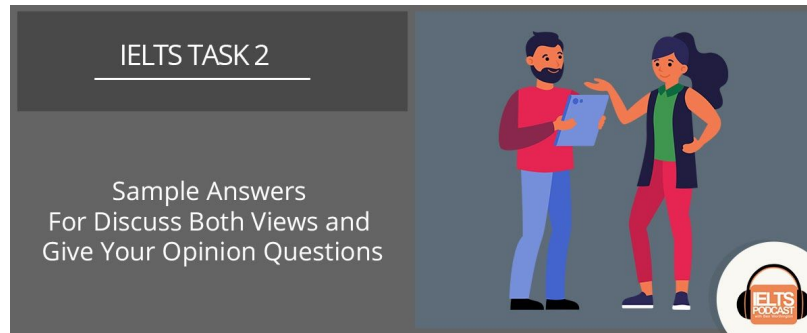
Let's have a look. So, many people believe that individuals are responsible for their own happiness-- body paragraph one-- while others think happiness is dependent on other external factors-- body paragraph two. Discuss both views. By allocating a paragraph to each of those viewpoints, I'm definitely discussing them. Definitely.



I'm going to include my own opinion in the conclusion just so I don't need to-- just so it's nice, clean, and organized. Obviously, I'm going to give reasons because I've got this template I'm following and I'm going to give examples from academia, from real world experience, not personal stories. Big difference between your experience and your personal stories about your Uncle Dave.

Right. Body paragraph one: individuals are responsible for their own happiness because... I gave a position. It's taken directly from the question and then I'm going to develop it. Individuals are responsible for their own happiness because taking this approach makes it easier to correct the situation. For example, if you wait for external factors, you could be waiting a long time. So, it's basically if you believe that your happiness is entirely dependent on outside factors, you've got no control over it.

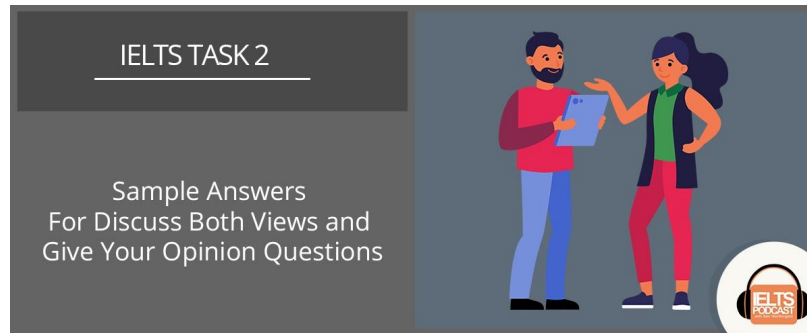




Second point: if you realize or believe you are responsible, you can start to take actions to improve your situation. So, if you believe you're responsible for your own happiness, then you're going to take action. Again, similar to the earlier argument.

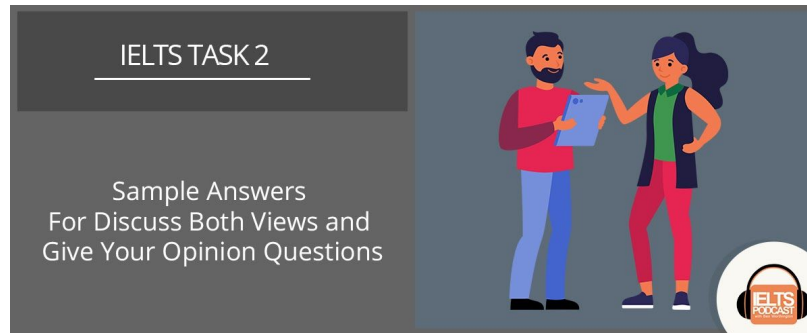
Final point: It is a more responsible attitude to take i.e. looking after yourself and you are a burden to nobody. So, if I just know that my happiness is just dependent on me alone, then I'm not going to be dependent on anybody else to make me happy. I'm not going to be a burden to anybody else.

Now, here maybe I would probably have to invent some kind of scientific study just to build it out a little bit. So, how would I invent this scientific study? This is a great tip, by the way. If you don't get it this time, we go into it in more detail in the course, but I'll just very briefly mention. So, my last point. It is a more responsible attitude to take. Looking after yourself, you are a burden to nobody. What I'm going to do is just make that into a scientific example.



I'm going to say studies showed--studies from the University of Cambridge showed that when--let's see-- that when people had an opinion to look after themselves to maintain their own happiness, they found that they were reliant on nobody. This ultimately led to happier students or happier people. Not the best way, but I just did it on the fly, but what I'm trying to do is just rephrase that sentence. So, I'm saying exactly the same, but it's in an example format.

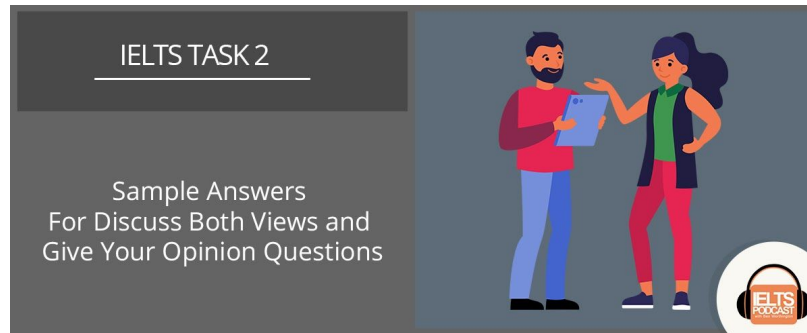
I'll give it another shot. So, a survey by Cambridge University showed that their respondents who believed they were responsible for their own happiness ultimately scored higher in the happiness levels than those who believed it was somebody else's responsibility. Now, I've definitely fulfilled the question. This is from your own experience. It says give reasons for your answer and examples from your own experience. Cambridge University; that was from my own experience. I read it and that's a reason. Now, I've built up my paragraph. I've developed my argument and it's a very strong paragraph now.



Final paragraph or second body paragraph. An individual's happiness is dependent on external factors because... These are just my notes. That's my header. That's the position. That's the direction I'm going in. When I've got it like that it just makes it so much easier to start generating ideas.

An individual's happiness is dependent on external factors because 1) we cannot control 100% of our environment as much as we may try. For example, the recent COVID pandemic has put a lot of people in isolation working from home quarantining. This has had an impact on people's mental health. Other factors such as wars, recessions also have a significant impact on a person's well-being.

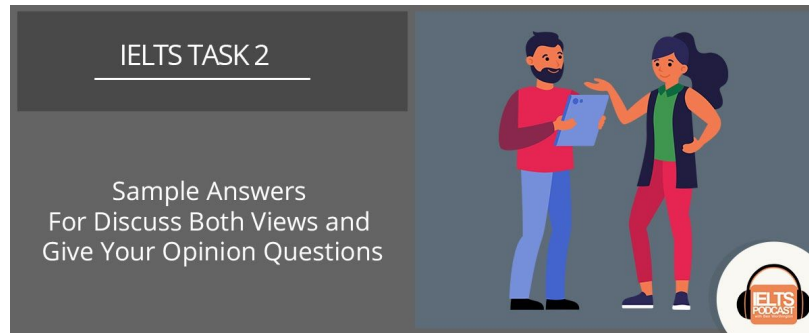
So, I am contradicting what I was saying before because that's these two different views. I'm making sure that I'm not arguing the same points in both paragraphs and in this one, it was much easier to think of examples from my experience. Obviously I'm-- not obviously, but I've never lived in a country that has been at war, so it's not my own experience, but having read about this,



having been aware of this, I can call it my own experience. It's not my own direct personal experience, but it is obviously my deduction. It's part of my experience being it's interpreted on the news channels.

Conclusion: it is both. It is not what happens to a person. It is how they respond. However, we have to have compassion and take into account the external factors, too. That's just a summary. I would develop that a little bit more. Two or three sentences. Put in a sentence about the future as well to pick up some points for the using the future tense. I'd probably start that sentence with it is predicted that something something something. These kind of sentence structures, the Sentence Guide, the C2 template is full of them and it just makes it so much easier.

So, that would be how I'd finish that conclusion and obviously, the points that I've just mentioned are just rough notes. It all needs to be developed and transferred into an essay, into coherent paragraphs. That step is relatively easy, but it's really important to get this part of the



process down, to get comfortable with this part of the process because then it just makes the whole rest of the essay writing procedure so much easier.

Thank you very much for listening. If you're still struggling with this, please get in contact. When you sign up for IELTS Podcast, if you sign up to our newsletter you'll get a special offer for some low price essay corrections just as a trial offer and I'd strongly recommend that if you are serious about improving. My name is Ben Worthington. Thank you very much for listening and good luck with your IELTS exam.

[Music]

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