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TOP 10 BAND 9 MODEL ESSAYS

Task 2 can cover a wide range of essay topics for the IELTS Writing Task section of the test, so preparation is key. Use the following 10 Model IELTS essays to see how close you are to a band 9!

1. Essay Type : To what extent do you Agree or disagree?

Essay 1 : ***Doing an enjoyable activity with a child can develop better skills and more creativity than reading. To what extent do you agree? Use reasons and specific examples to explain your answer.***

Parents throughout the world spend time reading with their offspring to prepare them for school where their literacy skills are further developed; however, recent research suggests that focusing on reading at an early age can be detrimental, and participating in fun activities would be far more beneficial. I am a strong advocate of this approach, and the benefits of it will be covered in this essay.

A fundamental reason for this is that there is no biological age for reading, and pushing infants to acquire this skill before they are ready could have repercussions. For example, in the UK, many boys are reluctant readers, possibly because of being forced to read, and this turned them off reading. By focusing on other activities and developing other skills such as creativity and imagination, when they are ready to read, they usually acquire this skill rapidly. In addition, the importance of encouraging creativity and developing a child's imagination must be acknowledged. Through play, youngsters develop social and cognitive skills, for example, they are more likely to learn vocabulary through context rather than learning it from a book. Furthermore, play allows youngsters to mature emotionally, and gain self-confidence.

There is no scientific research which suggests reading at a young age is essential for a child's development, moreover, evidence suggests the reverse is true. In Finland, early years' education focuses on playing. Reading is only encouraged if a child shows an interest in developing this skill. This self-directed approach certainly does not result in

Finnish school leavers falling behind their foreign counterparts. In fact, Finland was ranked the sixth best in the world in terms of reading.

Despite being a supporter of this non-reading approach, I am not vehemently opposed to it and I strongly recommend incorporating bedtime stories into a child's daily routine. However, reading as a regular day time activity should be swapped for something which allows a child to develop other skills.

Essay 2 : ***Improvements in health, education and trade are essential for the development of poorer nations. However, the governments of richer nations should take more responsibility for helping the poorer nations in such areas. To what extent do you agree?***

Undoubtedly governments of developed nations should share the responsibility of helping less fortunate nations. Different measures exist, ranging from market access to direct financial payments or even medical assistance. This essay will explain why certain measures are inherently better than other methods.

Firstly, the most adequate manner to assist the lesser developed countries is not through health or education 'hand-outs'. This method is flawed and only offers temporary relief from long-term challenges; also this assistance can be cut at any moment, leaving the country stranded. For example, economical help from the UK to disadvantaged regions in Africa has gradually been reduced since the onset of the financial crisis. Although some parts of the continent may be better educated or in better health, the benefit was short lived, thus leaving the countries of Africa to look for other donors.

Commerce is without doubt the most essential type of assistance that can be given. If the lesser developed country has the opportunity to develop trade, then it will build strong capabilities to serve it for the long term. These strengths can develop the local economy and are more reliable than education or health. For example, while trading with the richer country the government can search for other foreign markets to trade with. This would offer more stability and diversification for the nation.

To conclude, assistance is definitely necessary for the poorer regions; however, 'hand-outs' are short-term solutions. The optimum solution is to offer market access so the region can produce products and generate regular income.

2. Essay Type : Discuss both views and give your point of view?

Essay 3 : ***Nowadays most green energy is becoming ever more prevalent in both developed and developing countries. Some argue they greatly reduce costs and are better for the environment, others believe they are a serious threat to energy security. Discuss both views and give your opinion.***

The world today uses more renewable energy than ever before since it contributes to the preservation of the environment and is economically sound; however, some argue that green energy could undermine the reliability of the global supply as a result of its dependency on climatic and meteorological phenomena. This essay will examine both views, but personally, I strongly advocate the adoption of renewable sources of energy.

On the one hand, opponents of renewables claim that the world could face disruptions to the power supply should they be fully adopted. This is largely due to the fact that many green energy technologies currently in use depend on changeable and unpredictable phenomena such as wind, rain and cloud cover. To take the fastest growing sector as an example, solar panels can only be used in the presence of strong and direct sunlight, and although the problem of directness has already been somewhat solved with moving panel arrays, a cloudy few days could still result in a blackout if we depended entirely on solar power; something that is unlikely to occur today given current oil stockpiles.

However, fossil fuels are a larger threat to energy security since they are certainly finite in quantity, whereas renewable energy is effectively infinite; once the Earth's oil is depleted, there will be no energy security without green energy technologies. Furthermore, problems of unpredictability can be mitigated by improving battery technologies (to create a larger buffer), building more renewable energy generators (to increase supply during ideal conditions) and improving current technologies (to increase efficiency), such as in the moving solar panel example. Proponents of renewables therefore claim that they are the most economically sound option.

To conclude, while many may believe that green energy technologies are a threat to energy security, the fossil fuels they frequently promote are a greater threat, and renewables are in fact the only sound option, both economically and environmentally.

Essay 4 : ***Some people are of the opinion that children should be rewarded for good behaviour. Others think they should be punished for bad behaviour. Discuss both views and give your personal opinion and reasons.***

The debate over a child's moral education is difficult due to the various view points each party holds. The question of discipline is exceptionally important, moreover whether to treat good behaviour with a neutral attitude or to just focus on correcting incorrect actions. My personal opinion is that any positive actions ought to be immediately recognised by the parent and vice versa for negative conduct. This balanced approach makes for a more positive outcome for both the child and family.

Firstly rewarding a good act immediately signals a positive reaction in the child's brain which should encourage the child to want to behave similarly in the future. Failure to recognise such behaviour leaves the child with the same emotional feeling as if they had done nothing. Therefore rewarding the child regularly for good behaviour enforces the action making it more likely to repeat itself in the future.

Secondly punishing the son or daughter is also necessary, failure to discipline could have serious consequences in the future. For example if a child has no clear concept of respect for elders or authority it is quite possible to encounter more serious problems later in life. This pattern is prevalent in marginal neighbourhoods throughout the world. Therefore it is essential to immediately discipline the child whenever witnessing an unruly act so as to enforce the correct behaviour from an early age.

To conclude both bad and good actions need to be recognised and dealt with immediately to correct or encourage the future actions. Failure to do either of these could result in a less fortunate life or a youth who rarely performs any good acts for anyone. Therefore it is critical that both types of behaviour are recognised and dealt with accordingly for the benefit of the child in the future.

3. Essay Type : Discuss the advantages and disadvantages

Essay 5 : ***Is it good for children to start using computers from an early age and spend long hours on them? Discuss the advantages and disadvantages.***

In recent years, children, like adults, have become increasingly exposed to computers. While some child psychologists have claimed that this is a good thing, others have claimed that it has an overwhelmingly detrimental impact on children. In this essay, I shall draw upon a number of studies in cognitive science and industrial psychology that reveal the positive and negative aspects of this phenomenon.

To begin with, there are clearly reasons why computers do not allow children to develop long attention spans. This is because computers are packed with many supposedly child-friendly games that require minimal levels of concentration in order to be enjoyed. For example, a study by the New York Child Learning Association found that children

who read from picture books were 50% less likely to get distracted than children who played educational computer games. Therefore computers almost certainly have a negative impact on young children.

However, since the world has become heavily reliant on computers, there are also clearly advantages to exposing children to computers. This is because children with such exposure will stand a better chance of finding employment. For example, after being interviewed by Yale psychologists, over 70% of young office workers admitted that they had spent long hours on computers in their middle and late childhood years. Therefore it is clear that computer exposure can be beneficial to children.

In conclusion, there are advantages and disadvantages to early computer exposure. However, if, in the future, the quality of educational gaming is increased, there is good reason to believe that these negative consequences will fall entirely away.

Essay 6 : ***Some people think high school graduates should travel or work for a period of time instead of going directly to study at university. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both approaches. Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.***

It is common for a student to take a gap-year in a foreign country or even work for a year prior to university. Whether a student should engage in travelling or working before embarking on a formal qualification has been a topic of debate for various years. Firstly the advantages of such activities will be discussed, followed by all the economical disadvantages one encounters on such endeavours.

The benefits of resisting university for a year to travel or work open the students mind to new worlds, such as having responsibility at work or learning a new language abroad. Having spent a year in Australia prior to university I learnt how to look for work, become responsible with finances and other essential life skills such as cooking. Upon starting university various tasks such as money management and employment were second nature thus allowing more time for studies. Without having gone abroad university life would undoubtedly be more challenging.

The disadvantages are mainly cost related, the airfare, travel insurance, national insurance and personal living costs are large sums. However finding another opportunity to go abroad is difficult once the pattern of normal life is resumed. In addition it also an opportunity to experiment with different jobs before choosing a career at university. Therefore there is a considerable advantage of taking a year out before higher education.

To conclude, the main disadvantages are the costs involved, however the benefits dramatically outweigh the disadvantages. Time should be spent wisely as it can never be recuperated unlike money which can be spent and earned.

4. Essay Type : Is this a positive or a negative development?

Essay 7 : ***These days some people spend a lot of money on tickets to go to sporting or events. Do you think this is a positive or negative development?***

The issue of whether to spend one's hard earned wages on attending expensive football, rugby or baseball matches or other exclusive diversions as opposed using it more wisely and prudently has become a matter of concern for many. Critics argue that such frivolity is a misuse of precious funds however, I personally believe the opposite. This essay will discuss why the benefits of attending sport or cultural occasions are worth more than the actual ticket price by using examples taken from the Harvard Business Review and the Woodstock Festival.

On the one hand those festival goers and sports fans who attend concerts, gigs, matches or athletic competitions happily extol the virtues of these on their overall well-being, both physical and mental. The main reason for this is twofold, firstly by watching, participating and enjoying a game people's overactive stress levels can be radically reduced. Secondly, many such important and well-respected events have become a noteworthy opportunity for socializing or networking. For example, a recent article published by the Harvard Business Review showed that key, ambitious top executives in the 500 Fortune companies had invested in tickets for basketball games not only for themselves but for their clients aiming to seek distraction and amusement while entertaining and nurturing future business contacts. Therefore, although it could be suggested that the high price of ticket sales has been exacerbated by powerful Corporates or event organizers with sky high budgets, there is no doubt of the positive spin-offs to health and business.

On the other hand, if money is no object, then there is overwhelming evidence that going to festivals, attending concerts or investing in experiences is a growing trend which is appreciated because of its ability to build fond and durable memories which last a lifetime and become part of a family's history. An example of this was the mythical Woodstock music festival in 1969, which was a peaceful milestone witnessed by thousands of people who have afforded it legendary status. Thus, the emotional value of such events cannot be overstated.

To conclude from the aforementioned arguments, I firmly believe that despite the frequently prohibitively high prices of attending sport and cultural events, doing so can

be enormously positive and justifiable for the benefits it brings to those who are there. From the significant growth in richly diverse Festivals worldwide, it could be predicted that in the future this kind of events will continue to grow in popularity as people elect to spend their earnings on experiences rather than on material goods.

Essay 8 : ***Some people like to travel outside their country. Others would rather travel to tourist spots in their own country first, before travelling abroad. Which do you prefer to do and why? Include specific details and examples to support your choice.***

Over the past few decades the international tourism industry has gone through a boom period. Cheap air travel, in particular, has allowed ordinary working class people to travel to more international destinations than ever before. In this essay, I shall refer to number of sociological studies to show why – contrary to popular opinion – domestic travel should initially take precedence over international travel.

To begin with, people's knowledge of their own countries and culture has grown increasingly sketchy. This is largely because foreign brands, television shows and cultural objects flood local markets. For example, The Asian Cultural Society found that Japanese teenagers knew more about American television series than 19th Century Japanese woodcuts. It should therefore be clear that citizens need to know much more about their own countries, and that visits to local cultural centres should occur before visits to remote countries.

Secondly, people reap high economic benefits if they are well-travelled in their country of birth. This is because local travel, in particular, opens up business opportunities. For example, the Korean Society for Entrepreneurship found that 40% of successful start-up companies were run by individuals who had travelled extensively in Korea and sniffed out small openings in developmentally neglected areas. Seen in this light, local travel can also be of vital economic significance

To conclude, although few would argue outright against foreign travel, there are certainly reasons why domestic travel is initially preferable. In the future, as some of the hype surrounding foreign travel dies down, these reasons will no doubt appear more attractive and conspicuous.

5. Essay Type : Discuss the problems and possible solutions OR discuss the causes and what problems it causes?

Essay 9 : ***Today, the quality of life in large cities is decreasing. Discuss the causes and solutions.***

The global phenomenon of urbanisation from the beginning of industrialisation to the present day has brought opportunity and prosperity, albeit at a cost in the quality of life. With an increasing city population, the complexity of the challenges also increases. The causes and solutions for this are outlined below.

The causes for the decrease in the quality of life are paradoxically the prosperity endowed on such metropolitan centres. Their growth is largely due to the increase of opportunities on offer, which in turn increases their attractiveness; essentially they are trapped in a positive self-reinforcing cycle. However, this eventually leads to a decrease in the quality of life as the city can experience overcrowding, exorbitant property prices, and increased vulnerability to terrorist attacks. For example, the density of London makes it a more efficient place to attack, when compared to a smaller city, such as Bradford. Therefore, due to continuous growth and prosperity, urban citizens, especially the less well off, often experience a lower standard of living.

Considering the solutions, greater investment in public transport would ease traffic congestion, as would bike lanes. In theory this would reduce air pollution and possibly improve the wellbeing of the population if they did adopt a more active lifestyle and cycle to work. To counter violent terrorist attacks, cities could embark on CCTV installations, so as to closely monitor for threats. For example, it is said, the CCTV in London has foiled many potential attacks, and therefore greatly increased the security of its citizens.

To conclude, a wealthy city attracts large population inflows, which then cause pressure on existing infrastructure and security. Various solutions exist to mitigate such drawbacks, but nevertheless a definite solution has yet to be found.

Essay 10 : ***Traditional schooling is out of date, boring and stifles a child's natural talents, various professionals have pushed for an education revolution. Are there alternatives in the education system? Is traditional education doing more harm than good?***

The conventional rote method of learning is often considered to be so dull as to discourage full development of young people's innate abilities. This essay agrees with the view that the current pedagogy is outdated, and will consider an alternative to traditional education.

While ordinarily, children are expected to retain pre approved information dictated by a teacher, a self-directed approach can be more beneficial. Holding all children to the same standard will necessarily have a divisive result, with some children believing themselves to be intellectually superior, and others feeling inadequate, perhaps for life. In systems in which achievement is relative, such as in Finland for example, young people graduate from education each feeling as if they have completed their own

unique path, and knowing deeply and without prejudice their own capabilities, reducing or even eliminating the feelings of inequality that conventional education creates.

Furthermore, under the current system, students who lack aptitude in core subjects such as mathematics and the sciences are seen as having less intrinsic value to society. These children spend their lives believing that they are inadequate, but many may have valuable talents that were never explored. It is in this way that conventional education does the most harm, by ignoring niche abilities in favour of skills with more mass appeal. Comparing traditional education with the Finnish system of self-direction, we can see that the former is certainly causing harm to a significant number of pupils.

To conclude, changes are urgently required in education systems around the world. We should focus more on a child's interests and innate abilities in order to maintain their engagement, and allow them to direct their own learning to achieve the best outcomes.

Bonus Essay!

Obesity is a serious problem in many countries, especially in rich countries. Discuss ways to solve the problem. Provide specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

With the advent of urbanisation and the rise in popularity of fast food, there have been accompanying issues with rising obesity rates – especially in developed countries like England and the USA. After providing a careful analysis of why obesity has risen so sharply in these countries, I shall suggest a number of ways in which the obesity epidemic can be ameliorated.

To begin with, it should be unsurprising that fast food is incredibly popular in wealthy countries (like England and the USA). Due to the high levels of development in these countries, consumers possess more money and can therefore consume vast amounts of fast food without seriously diminishing their income. For example, the American Dietary Association found that (compared to the average Indian household), the average American household has a six times larger budget for food per month. Consequently, it is to be expected that obesity rates are much higher in countries with larger amounts of wealth.

However, despite the severity of the obesity problem, there are a number of ways in which developed countries could battle it more effectively. Firstly, developed governments could put far more pressure on fast food outlets to provide healthy alternatives to hamburgers, french fries and soft drinks.



Secondly, public exercise initiatives could be advertised and promoted far more vigorously. Lastly, modules that inform teenagers about healthy dietary requirements could be taught at schools.

In conclusion, although obesity is a serious issue in the developed world, if the above steps are taken, the situation will surely improve in the coming years

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