



1st semester

Topic 14:

Opinion Essay



- ▶ **Opinion essay** is a formal piece of essay writing which presents the author's point of view on a particular subject supported by reasons and examples.
- ▶ The opposing viewpoint is also suggested, it goes with arguments that show that it is unconvincing.

► *A Successful Opinion Essay Consists of:*

- An **introduction** where the topic and the author's opinion are stated clearly.
- A **main body** where viewpoints supported by reasons are presented in several paragraphs. This section has also the opposing viewpoint which is proved to be unconvincing.
- A **conclusion** where the main points of the essay are summarized and the author's opinion is restated in other words.

► *Useful Tips for Writing an Opinion Essay:*

- Decide your opinion as for the topic discussed
- Make a list of viewpoints and reasons supporting your point of view
- Write well-developed paragraphs
- Use linking words and phrases to join the sentences and the paragraphs within the text
- Start each paragraph with a topic sentence

- ▶ *Apply the Following Techniques to Start and Finish Your Opinion Essays:*
 - ▶ Address to the reader directly
 - ▶ Start with a quotation
 - ▶ Start with a thought provoking or rhetorical question
 - ▶ Refer to some striking or unusual fact, idea or situation

► *Use the Following Expressions to Give Your Opinion:*

- As far as I am concerned, ...
- I am (not) convinced that ...
- In my opinion/view ...
- My opinion is that ...
- I (firmly) believe ...
- I (definitely) feel/think that ...
- I am inclined to believe that ...

► *Basic Do's in Writing Opinion Essays:*

- Write in a formal style
- Introduce the topic clearly
- State clear topic sentences
- Use generalizations
- Use quotations

► *Basic Don't's in Writing an Opinion Essay:*

- Don't use colloquial expressions
- Don't use short forms
- Don't use emotive vocabulary
- Don't use over-generalizations
- Don't use statistics without proper referencing
- Don't give personal examples

Language for introduction

- According to...
- It is often said that...
- It is often argued that...
- Nowadays, we are becoming aware of the fact that...
- These days, it seems that...
- Recently we have all become concerned that....
- There is no doubt that...

Example of introduction

According to the older generation, teenagers are lazy, they wear ridiculous clothes and they are appallingly rude to their equals and elders. However, are they really much worse than they used to be a hundred years ago? It seems to me quite the opposite of the truth.

The body of the essay

Step 1 Brainstorm the ideas

Positive adjectives and phrases to describe teenagers

- hard-working
- helpful
- constructive
- caring
- become successful
- have part-time jobs
- achieve great things
- study a lot

Negative adjectives and phrases to describe teenagers

- aggressive
- disobedient
- rebellious
- cruel
- take drugs and alcohol
- get involved in fights
- listen to awful music

Step 2 Think of 2-3 arguments to support your opinion

- ▶ Teenagers are purposeful and highly motivated

Most of them aim at entering universities and study hard in order to fulfill this task

- ▶ They achieve great things in sport

They are more ambitious than they used to be in the past.

- ▶ They do household chores to help their parents.

Their parents are busy following their career paths and have no energy for keeping their homes

Step 3 Phrases to introduce your personal opinion

- ▶ I believe that...
- ▶ Personally, I feel that...
- ▶ It seems to me that...
- ▶ I would argue that...
- ▶ I feel strongly that...
- ▶ I am convinced that...
- ▶ I am greatly in favour of...
- ▶ I'm completely opposed to...

Step 4 Linking words to introduce arguments.

- ▶ Firstly, secondly...
- ▶ Moreover...
- ▶ Furthermore...
- ▶ In addition...
- ▶ Besides...

Example of the second paragraph

Personally, I am convinced that teenagers are misjudged. To begin with, most of them are purposeful and highly-motivated. The great majority of the school-leavers today enter the universities. They also achieve great things in sport and seem to be more ambitious than they used to be in the past. Besides, lots of teens do household chores as their parents are busy following their career paths and have no energy to fulfill their duties.

Step 5 Opposite views and counterarguments

Opponents' arguments

- Teenagers are criticized for having bad habits like taking drugs and alcohol
- They are cruel, aggressive and disobedient

Counterarguments

- They are aware of the consequences of such bad habits and very few of them become addicted to drugs and alcohol
- Not all of them get involved in fights or break public rules of behaviour

Step 6 Transition between paragraphs

- ▶ However..
- ▶ Anyway..
- ▶ Nevertheless..
- ▶ Nonetheless..

Example of the third paragraph

However, teenagers are often criticized for having bad habits like taking drugs and alcohol. In my opinion most teenagers are aware of the consequences of such bad habits and very few of them get addicted to drugs and alcohol. Some people claim that teenagers are cruel, aggressive and disobedient. I feel strongly that it is not fair as not everyone gets involved in fights or tends to commit a crime.

Conclusion

Step 1 Think about the language

- ▶ To sum up,...
- ▶ In conclusion...
- ▶ To conclude...

Step 2 Rephrase your opinion

I believe that ...

teenagers are not as bad as they are thought of
nowadays, teenagers are worse than they used to be
teenagers are better now than they used to be

Example conclusion

To sum up, I believe that teenagers are not as bad as they are thought to be. The main reason for such unfair attitudes to teenagers is misunderstanding between adults and young people. Very often adults disapprove of their fashion, music, and habits. Of course, not all teenagers are ideal, but they are not worse than their parents.