



ESSAYS

pp24–25 (Unit 2) and 46–47 (Unit 4)

EXAMPLE QUESTION Your class has listened to a radio discussion about the value of homework.

You have made the notes below.

To what extent is homework beneficial for students?

- it practises what has been taught
- it teaches time management
- it shows evidence of progress

Some opinions expressed in the discussion:

'Independent study helps students to remember.'

'Homework can mean less time for other activities.'

'Teachers can see how much students have learnt.'

Write an essay about the value of homework, referring to two of the bullet points. 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.

	MODEL TEXT	
Use a formal style: passives rather than I and you. Do not use contractions.	The benefits of homework have been debated by students and teachers for years. For many people, homework is seen as advantageous because it encourages students to think independently outside the classroom. However , others believe that it causes stress and can have a negative effect on learning. As homework is an integral part of most students' lives, it is an issue that requires serious consideration.	Give counter-arguments using adverbs like <i>However</i> , <i>Despite this</i> , <i>Nevertheless</i> , <i>On the other hand</i> , ...
Use formal vocabulary and fewer phrasal verbs. Avoid slang and idioms.	The main purpose of homework is to enable students to retain knowledge that has been taught in class. Research has proved that practice is required in any subject in order to achieve excellence and for this reason , homework can improve students' performance in tests and exams. Whereas at school students may spend time interacting with peers , at home they can work at their own pace, without distractions. This means that they are better able to concentrate and learn. A further benefit of homework is that it may allow students to research a subject using other resources, such as the library or Internet, which can develop their understanding of a topic and increase critical thinking skills.	To give reasons, use <i>For this reason</i> , <i>so</i> , <i>therefore</i> , <i>which means that</i> , <i>consequently</i> . To explain results, use <i>because</i> , <i>since</i> , <i>as</i> , ...
Include complex sentences (two or more clauses).	On the other hand, some people say that students are often involved in extra-curricular activities after school so they do not have sufficient time for homework. They argue that hobbies and sports are equally important to well-being. Furthermore, they suggest that there is increasing pressure on young people to participate in the community through voluntary work, and so many demands can be stressful. While this may be true, time management is an important skill. Learning how to be responsible and organised so that it is possible to combine both work and other activities is not only useful while studying, but can also help to prepare students for adult life.	Make contrasts using conjunctions like <i>although</i> , <i>even though</i> , <i>while</i> , <i>whereas</i> , <i>despite the fact that</i> , ...
To give a conclusion, use <i>All in all</i> , <i>To sum up</i> , <i>In conclusion</i> , <i>To conclude</i> , ...	To sum up , homework can be beneficial in reinforcing what has been studied in class and improving academic performance. Despite the fact that it may be time-consuming, it can also enable students to develop valuable life skills such as time management. In order to encourage a positive attitude towards homework, a reasonable amount should be set so that young people can continue to live balanced lives. It should also include interesting tasks that motivate them to learn.	

Suggested paragraph plan

Paragraph 1: Introduction – outline the topic using general statements.

Paragraph 2: Develop argument for proposition 1.

Paragraph 3: Develop argument for proposition 2.

Paragraph 4: Conclusion – restate the most important point(s) and give your opinion.