

BAND BOOSTER FOR IELTS

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It Includes:

- * IDEAS
- * IDIOMS
- * 80 RULES OF GRAMMAR
- * 100 COMMON SYNONYMOUS
- * FINAL DAY DAY BEFORE EXAM

Who is this book for?

Many students have no ideas or opinions about IELTS writing topics. Even if your grammar is perfect, you will not get a high IELTS score if you do not know what to write. This book is for students who want to go into the writing exam feeling confident that they have excellent ideas, opinions and vocabulary for as many topics as possible.

How do you get an IELTS score of 7 or higher?

The key to a high score is not grammar, it is not your use of words like "moreover" or "in addition", and it is not your use of phrases like "this is a controversial issue nowadays".

To get a high score you need to use good 'topic language' (words and phrases that are related to the question topic). You need good ideas in order to answer the question well.

How should you prepare for IELTS Writing Task 2?

Spend more time preparing than testing.

When you test yourself, you find out what your level is, but you do not learn anything new. You will not improve if you only write test essays. Before writing an essay, study the topic and prepare your ideas, opinions and vocabulary.

Steal my ideas!

If you only use the vocabulary that you already know, you will not learn anything new, and you will not improve. Practise linking my topic ideas together to write 'perfect essays'. See the website for examples of how to do this.

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1. Advertising

Positives of Advertising

Advertising is a key part of modern business.

Companies need to tell customers about their products.

Advertisements inform us about the choices we have.

Advertising is a creative industry that employs many people.

Without advertising we would have less choice.

Without advertising there would be higher unemployment.

Advertising is a form of modern art.

People enjoy adverts.

Negatives of Advertising

Advertising manipulates people.

It aims to persuade people that buying a product will make them happier.

Advertisers focus on selling a brand image.

They use glamorous, successful people.

We now live in a consumer culture.

We are persuaded to follow the latest trends.

We are encouraged to associate certain brands with a higher status.

Advertisers often aim their marketing at children.

Children can easily be influenced by advertisements.

Children put pressure on parents to buy them things.

Opinions about Advertising

Advertising should be regulated.

Advertising aimed at children should be controlled or even banned.

Unhealthy foods should not be marketed in a way that attracts children.

Products that can be a risk to health should display warnings.

In some countries it is illegal to advertise cigarettes on television.

Warnings must be displayed on cigarette packets.

However, advertising is necessary in free market economies.

It creates demand for products.

Governments should only censor false information or products that are harmful.

2. Animal Rights

Arguments for Animal Testing

Animals are used in important scientific research.

It is necessary to do medical tests on new drugs.

Animal testing helps to advance medical and scientific knowledge.

Many important medical discoveries involved experimentation on animals.

Researchers aim to minimise the suffering that animals experience.

Testing for the cosmetics industry is now banned in many countries.

Arguments against Animal Testing

The benefits of research using animals do not justify the suffering caused.

There are alternative methods of research.

The lives of animals should be respected.

Humans have no moral right to do experiments on animals.

Arguments for Vegetarianism

Vegetarians do not eat foods that are produced by killing animals.

Many people choose a vegetarian diet for moral or health reasons.

A healthy diet is possible without eating meat.

It is unnecessary to kill animals for food.

A vegetarian diet may reduce the risk of diseases like cancer.

Many people question the treatment of animals in factory farms.

Arguments against Vegetarianism

Vegetarians do not eat a balanced diet.

In many cultures, meat is the main ingredient in traditional meals.

Meat-eaters argue that animals are below humans in the food chain.

It is completely natural for us to kill them for food.

Our aim should be to improve farming methods.

Farms should produce organic food.

Positives of Zoos

Zoos play an important role in wildlife conservation.

They can help to protect endangered species.

Zoos allow scientists to study animals and their behaviour.

Zoos are educational, interesting and fun.

Children, in particular, enjoy learning about animals.

Zoos provide job opportunities.

Negatives of Zoos

Zoo animals are kept in artificial environments.

They are kept in cages or have limited space.

Zoo animals rely on humans.

They lose the freedom to hunt for food.

The best way to save endangered species is by protecting natural habitats.

Some people believe that zoos are unethical.

Zoos exhibit animals with the aim of making money.

We have no right to use animals for entertainment and profit.

Reasons for Urbanisation

People move to cities in search of job opportunities.

Cities offer greater employment possibilities and a higher standard of living.

People migrate to cities from the countryside.

Traditional activities like farming need fewer workers nowadays.

Negatives of City Life

Life in cities has its drawbacks.

The cost of living is higher than in rural areas.

Some people do not manage to find work.

Housing is usually much more expensive.

Homelessness and poverty are common in cities.

There is a gap between the rich and poor.

Life in cities can be extremely stressful.

There are problems like traffic congestion and crime.

Cities lack a sense of community.

People do not even know their neighbours.

Cities are sometimes described as "concrete jungles".

Pedestrian Areas

Pedestrian zones in city centres can improve the local environment.

Banning cars encourages people to walk or cycle.

Many European cities have built bicycle lanes.

Dependence on cars is linked to health problems like obesity.

People who walk or cycle regularly are generally healthier.

Pedestrian areas are safer and more attractive for both residents and tourists.

4. Crime

Police and Crime Prevention

The job of the police is to catch criminals.

They must also prevent crime and make communities safer.

There should be an increase in the number of police officers on the streets.

Police officers should be seen as part of the community.

They should be involved with education and prevention.

The police should be in close contact with schools.

They should focus on young people who have dropped out of school.

These teenagers may become involved with gangs.

Punishments / Prisons

Fines are used as punishment for minor crimes.

If the crime is more serious, prison is the most common punishment.

Some criminals pose a threat to society.

They are put in prison to ensure the safety of other citizens.

Negatives of Prisons

Criminals are put together.

They make friends with other offenders.

Many prisoners re-offend when they are released.

A criminal record makes finding a job more difficult.

Rehabilitation

Another aim of prisons is rehabilitation.

Prisoners receive education or vocational training.

Prisoners should learn personal skills and specific job skills.

Punishment could make prisoners' behaviour worse.

Rehabilitation aims to make them better citizens.

Rehabilitated prisoners are less likely to re-offend.

Capital Punishment

Supporters say that capital punishment deters crime.

Fear of the death penalty stops people from committing offences.

The death penalty shows that crime is not tolerated.

It is a form of revenge.

The cost of imprisonment is avoided.

The offender cannot pose a threat to others.

Against Capital Punishment

Innocent people could be wrongly convicted and executed.

Crime rates are not necessarily reduced.

Many criminals do not think they will be caught.

Capital punishment is not a good deterrent.

Executing prisoners creates a violent culture and encourages revenge.

We have no right to take another human life.

Community Service

Community service is a way to reform offenders.

It could be a solution to prison overcrowding.

It avoids the cost of imprisonment.

It makes offenders useful in their local communities.

They are required to clean streets or talk to school groups.

Offenders repay their community.

They avoid the negative influence that prison can have.

Against Community Service

Community service is not a sufficient punishment.

Criminals should be locked up, away from their victims.

Crime in the Media

Crime is one of the main subjects of most news programmes.

The mass media focus on violent and sensational crimes.

This leads to fear of crime among the public.

Sensational stories attract more viewers or readers.

The media report crime stories in order to increase their audience.

5. Education

Benefits of Education

Education gives people knowledge and skills.

People with qualifications are more likely to find work.

They can earn a higher salary.

They can contribute positively to society.

Schools aim to teach young people moral values such as tolerance and sharing.

Schools prepare children to be members of a society.

Benefits of Studying Abroad

Foreign institutions may offer better courses.

Many students want to attend a prestigious university.

The best universities employ teachers who are experts in their fields.

Qualifications gained abroad can open the door to better job opportunities.

Living abroad can broaden students' horizons.

Overseas students are exposed to different cultures and customs.

They become more independent.

They are responsible for cooking, cleaning and paying bills.

They will learn a foreign language.

Drawbacks of Studying Abroad

Living and studying abroad can be difficult.

Students have problems with paperwork such as visa applications.

The language barrier can be a problem.

Students have to find accommodation and pay bills.

Studying in a foreign language is challenging.

Living alone in an unfamiliar culture can cause homesickness.

Technology in Education: Advantages

Technology is a powerful tool to engage students.

Technology can make lessons much more interesting.

Students can do research using online resources.

Students can study at their own pace.

Adults can take distance learning courses.

Students can study whenever and wherever they want.

Students also learn skills which are useful for their future jobs.

For example, they learn to write reports using a word processor.

Technology in Education: Disadvantages

People rely too much on computers.

Young learners do not become proficient in some basic skills.

They use word processors with spell-checkers.

Their handwriting and spelling may suffer.

People should be able to write a letter by hand.

Technology is no substitute for a real teacher.

Learners need a structured course.

An experienced teacher knows what materials to choose.

Computers are expensive to maintain and can be unreliable.

Technology in Education: Opinion

Institutions should supplement traditional teaching with the use of technology.

Technology is part of everyday life.

It can enhance a teacher's lessons.

Students can use online resources to help with homework.

Students must still learn to write by hand.

They should still use traditional sources of information such as books.

Education in Developing Countries: Problems

Children often have to work from an early age.

There are no schools in many areas.

Families do not have access to books or computers.

Literacy rates are often low.

People in developing countries need knowledge and skills.

Education is the key to improving the economy of these countries.

Education in Developing Countries: Solutions

Developed countries could help developing nations by providing money.

They could invest in schools and technology.

They could supply the funds to build schools and pay for teachers.

Children need to have access to free schooling.

Computer equipment could be donated.

The Internet can expose students to a world of knowledge and information.

Governments should make education compulsory for all children.

They should encourage parents to send their children to school.

Governments of developed and developing countries must work together.

Higher Education: Advantages (also see "Benefits of Education")

There are many benefits to going to university.

A degree can open the door to better employment prospects.

Economies are becoming increasingly knowledge-based.

Most jobs require specific knowledge and skills.

Skilled workers are needed for sectors such as information technology and engineering.

Repetitive manual jobs are now done by machines.

Many factories have moved to developing countries.

Higher Education: Disadvantages

A healthy economy needs a wide range of workers.

Some manual workers will always be needed.

A university degree is not necessary for many service professions.

Practical training is more important in some industries.

In the UK, for example, there is currently a shortage of plumbers.

Their services are therefore becoming more and more expensive.

Advantages of Home-Schooling

Some parents decide to educate their children at home.

Some families live in isolated areas with poor transport.

Other parents are not satisfied with local schools.

Parents can respond to what their children need and how they learn best.

One-to-one lessons allow much faster progress.

The child can work at his or her own pace.

Discipline problems are avoided by home-schooling.

Disadvantages of Home-Schooling

Most parents do not have the time to educate their children at home.

One parent would need to give up work.

School subjects are normally taught by up to ten different teachers.

Most parents do not have the necessary knowledge or resources.

Private tutors are expensive.

Children will miss out on the social experience that school offers.

At school, children learn how to get on with each other.

Home-schooled children may lack social skills.

Schools offer a better overall educational experience.

Bad Behaviour in Schools: Causes

Bad behaviour is due to a lack of structure and discipline.

There are too many children in some classes.

Large classes are difficult to manage.

Many disruptive students come from an unstable family background.

Other parents are too lenient and spoil their children.

Some children are used to getting whatever they want.

Schools can do very little if they are not supported by parents.

Bad Behaviour in Schools: Solutions

Schools need a clear code of conduct.

Schools need a clear set of rules about behaviour.

They need to create a positive working atmosphere.

Teachers must have the power to punish disruptive students.

Schools should remove difficult children from lessons.

Schools need to work closely with parents.

Discipline could be lacking at home.

Parents must support the school rules.

They should take responsibility for their children's behaviour.

Corporal Punishment: Opinion

Corporal Punishment is not a good idea.

Physical punishment is a way of controlling children using fear.

This does not promote trust between adults and children.

Children who are punished physically may become shy or resentful.

Corporal punishment creates an atmosphere of fear and anger.

Single Sex Education: Advantages

Some people believe that male and female students should go to separate schools.

This is often for religious or cultural reasons.

Discipline problems might be avoided by separating boys and girls.

Boys and girls may learn in different ways and have different needs.

Students at single-sex schools often get better exam grades.

Single-Sex Education: Disadvantages

Separating boys and girls is unnecessary.

It is unhealthy in terms of children's social development.

Many coeducational schools are extremely successful.

A mixed-sex environment is more representative of real life.

Coeducational schools provide children with better social skills for adult life.

Advantages of Streaming (grouping children according to ability)

Some schools separate students according to their academic ability.

Teachers can work at the right speed for their students.

Teachers can plan more suitable lessons.

High-level groups may progress faster.

Lower level groups can benefit from a slower pace.

Some teachers and parents support streaming for these reasons.

Disadvantages of Streaming

Grouping by ability may have a negative impact on students.

Children do not want to be seen as less intelligent than others.

Streaming could damage students' self esteem.

They may lose motivation.

Students from wealthier families tend to be better prepared.

Children from poorer families may receive less support from parents.

Mixed ability classes encourage everyone to achieve their potential.

Global Warming

Gases such as carbon dioxide trap heat from the sun.

This causes global temperatures to rise.

This process is known as the greenhouse effect.

Human activity is a major factor in the rise of the greenhouse gases.

Factories and vehicles produce emissions and exhaust fumes.

Many developing countries are becoming industrialised.

The number of cars on our streets is growing.

Cheap air travel is allowing more people to fly.

Effects of Global Warming

Global warming will have a significant impact on our planet.

Rising temperatures will cause melting of the polar ice caps.

Sea levels will rise.

We can expect more extreme weather conditions.

Flooding and droughts may become more common.

Impact of Humans on the Environment

The increasing world population is putting pressure on natural resources.

Fossil fuels like oil and gas are running out.

We are destroying wildlife habitats.

We have cut down enormous areas of rainforest.

This has led to the extinction of many species of animals and plants.

Solutions to Environment Problems

Governments could introduce laws to limit emissions from factories.

They should invest in renewable energy from solar, wind or water power.

They could impose "green taxes" on drivers and airline companies.

Government campaigns should promote recycling.

Natural areas and wild animals should be protected.

Individuals should also try to be greener.

We should take fewer flights abroad for holidays.

We should take public transport rather than driving.

We should choose products with less packaging.

We should recycle as much as possible.

Waste / Rubbish

The amount of waste we produce has increased.

This problem is a result of our consumer culture.

Products are not made to last.

If something breaks, we throw it away and buy a new one.

Advertisers encourage us to buy the newest fashions.

Packaging is an important part of selling.

Most foods are sold in non-biodegradable plastic packaging.

The amount of household waste is growing.

This waste ends up in landfill sites.

Litter

People do not think about the consequences of dropping rubbish.

They assume that somebody is paid to clean the streets.

Plastic packaging does not break down easily.

Most of the litter seen on streets is fast food packaging.

Recycling and Other Solutions

Companies should make goods that last longer.

They should not use so much packaging.

Governments should be stricter about waste produced by companies.

They should put legal limits on packaging.

Consumers should avoid buying over-packaged products.

We should recycle and reuse useful materials.

There are collection banks for glass, paper and plastic bottles.

Households can use several rubbish bins to separate waste.

Recycling saves energy and raw materials.

Nuclear Power: Positives

There are several benefits to building more nuclear power stations.

Fossil fuels like oil and gas are running out.

Nuclear power is a relatively sustainable energy source.

It can be used to produce electricity without wasting natural resources.

It could replace the use of natural resources like coal, oil or gas.

Nuclear power stations are cleaner than fossil fuel power stations.

They could help to reduce carbon emissions that cause global warming.

The risks of accidents are being reduced.

Nuclear Power: Negatives

Opponents of nuclear power worry about the safety of power stations.

The building of new nuclear power stations is unpopular.

Nobody wants to live near one.

Nuclear waste disposal is a significant problem.

There is currently no way to decontaminate radioactive material.

People worry that terrorists could steal radioactive materials.

It is safer to produce energy from solar, wind or water power.

Family Size

Families in many countries are not as large as they used to be.

We tend to live in small nuclear families rather than large extended families.

Parents tend to have fewer children.

Young children are no longer expected to work.

Nowadays both parents often work.

It costs so much to bring children up.

It is more difficult to raise a large family.

Working Parents (also see "Gender" topic)

Children and their parents seem to be less close nowadays.

Parents spend less time with their children.

Women traditionally stayed at home to cook, clean and look after children.

Nowadays both parents often work full time.

Children may be left alone, or with nannies or babysitters.

Busy parents have less contact with their children.

Many families no longer eat meals together.

Children spend more time with friends or surfing the Internet.

Negative Effects on Children

The lack of closeness in families can have a negative effect on children.

Many parents have no idea how their children spend their time.

Friends, television and the Internet become the main influences on children's behaviour.

Teenagers are influenced by peer pressure.

Some of them join gangs.

Juvenile delinquency is on the increase.

Parents should be more involved with their children's upbringing.

Young people need positive role models.

Divorce

In the past, divorce was unacceptable.

It was considered to be embarrassing for a family.

People stayed together for religious or family reasons.

Divorce is more socially acceptable nowadays.

It has become much more common.

Divorce can be extremely stressful.

Lone parents may face financial difficulties.

Many single parents have to rely on benefits paid by the state.

Divorce can have a negative effect on children.

Children from single-parent families are more likely to get lower grades or drop out of school.

The rise in divorce rates may be connected to some social problems.

Care for Old People

Caring for elderly people was traditionally the responsibility of families.

Adults had to look after their elderly parents.

A woman's job was to stay at home taking care of her family.

Nowadays, fewer elderly people are looked after by their relatives.

Residential homes provide care for large numbers of elderly people.

Some families are unable to look after elderly relatives.

Families tend to be smaller these days, and women often have full-time jobs.

Care homes provide a professional service for senior citizens.

Nurses are better trained than family members.

Care for Old People: Opinion

The best form of care for the elderly depends on the family situation.

It depends on whether family members have the time and resources.

We all have a responsibility towards the older people in our society.

Governments should invest money in facilities and training for care workers.

8. Gender (Males and Females)

Gender and Education

Men and women should have access to the same educational opportunities.

Males and females should be accepted onto courses according to their abilities.

It is wrong to discriminate against students because of their gender.

Gender should be irrelevant in education.

Students' achievements should depend on hard work and individual merit.

In the UK, there are similar numbers of male and female students in higher education.

Gender and Work

Men and women should have access to the same professional opportunities.

Both men and women should be able to pursue a career.

They should earn equal salaries.

They should be employed according to their abilities, qualifications and experience.

Traditionally, women have been restricted to certain roles.

They were often employed as secretaries or receptionists.

Nowadays, a range of occupations is available to both sexes.

Career success depends on individual merit.

Women's and Men's Role in the Family

Some people argue that a mother should not work.

She should stay at home and bring up her children.

The father should be the breadwinner of the family.

Others believe that both parents should share these responsibilities.

Working women can take maternity leave during and after pregnancy.

Many mothers continue to work after this period.

Many fathers and mothers share their parenting and domestic responsibilities.

They contribute equally to childcare, cooking and cleaning.

Some women may have better career prospects than their husbands.

Paternity leave and "househusbands" are becoming more common.

Traditional gender roles are gradually changing.

Families can divide roles and responsibilities in the most convenient way.

9. Genetic Engineering

Positives of Genetic Engineering

Genetic engineering is the practice of manipulating the genes of an organism.

It is used to produce crops that are more resistant to insects and diseases.

Some genetically modified crops grow more quickly.

Some drugs and vaccines are produced by genetic engineering.

It may become possible to change humans' genetic characteristics.

Scientists may use genetic engineering to cure diseases.

Inherited illnesses would no longer exist.

Genes could be changed before a baby is born.

It could also be possible to clone human organs.

We could all have replacement body parts.

Humans could live longer, healthier lives.

Negatives of Genetic Engineering

There are ethical concerns about human genetic engineering.

Parents might want to choose their children's characteristics.

This would be unnatural.

It would be unacceptable in most religions.

Soldiers could be cloned from the genes of the strongest people.

Clones might be used like robots to do certain jobs.

Clones might even be developed just for organ replacements.

Society and human evolution would change completely.

Currently, human genetic engineering is prohibited.

Genetically-Modified (GM) Foods: Advantages

Farmers can produce crops that grow bigger and faster.

Some GM crops are more resistant to disease or insects.

This could be important for food production in developing countries.

Faster growing cereals, fruit and vegetables will mean more profit.

GM foods can be modified to look perfect.

They may be more attractive to customers.

Genetically-Modified (GM) Foods: Disadvantages

There may be risks involved in the genetic engineering of foods.

GM crops might change whole ecosystems.

Food chains could be broken if crops are resistant to predators.

Organic foods are produced without chemicals or genetic modification.

Organic farming may be slower and more expensive.

However, the environment is not damaged by fertilisers or pesticides.

10. Global Issues

Problems in Developing Countries

Developing countries face a range of problems.

Standards of healthcare and education are low.

Life expectancy is usually lower than in developed countries.

There is a lack of infrastructure, employment and good quality housing.

Many people are forced to live in poverty.

Food, drinking water and basic medicines are in short supply.

How to Help Developing Countries

The best form of help for developing countries is development aid.

Richer nations can help by investing in long-term projects.

Governments and charities can help by building new houses and schools.

Globalisation may also help developing countries.

Multi-national companies are creating jobs in developing countries.

On the other hand, many people emigrate to find work in richer countries.

They often send money back home to their families.

This money helps to improve the standard of living in developing countries.

Immigration

Some people move to another country in search of a better life.

Many immigrants come from less developed countries.

Richer, industrialised countries may offer opportunities for employment.

Free healthcare and schooling are available in some developed countries.

Other people migrate to a foreign country to improve their academic qualifications.

Positives of Immigration and Multi-Cultural Societies

From an economic perspective, immigration can be extremely positive.

Many immigrants have skills that are needed in the country they move to.

Immigrants who find work contribute to the economy of their new country.

Many immigrants send money home to help family members.

Immigration also creates cultural diversity.

People of many different nationalities learn to live together.

This can help people to become more open-minded and tolerant.

Negatives of Immigration

Some people believe that immigrants take jobs that should go to local people.

Some immigrant workers work longer hours for less money.

Companies might pay lower salaries to immigrant workers.

Unemployment rates could rise if there are too many immigrants.

Opinions about Immigration

Immigration can help the economy of a country.

It can create multi-cultural societies.

However, immigration needs to be controlled.

In many countries, immigrants need visas or work permits.

Governments should stop companies from exploiting immigrant workers.

Foreign and local workers should have the right to equal pay and conditions.

Positives of Globalisation

Business is becoming increasingly international.

Multi-national companies do business across the world.

Companies like MacDonald's can be seen on high streets in most cities.

Goods are produced in one country and sold in many others.

A global economy means free trade between countries.

This can strengthen political relationships.

Globalisation can also create opportunities for employment.

It encourages investment in less developed countries.

It could reduce poverty in the developing world.

Negatives of Globalisation

Globalisation is not always beneficial to everyone.

Companies can move to countries where labour is cheap.

This creates redundancies, or job losses.

Employees cannot be confident that they have stable jobs.

Companies sometimes exploit their employees in developing countries.

Global trade creates more waste and pollution.

The Future of Globalisation

There should be global regulations for salaries and working conditions.

Governments should impose laws to protect the environment.

11. Government and Society

What governments can do

Governments provide public services like healthcare and education.

They support people who are living in poverty or unable to work.

Governments raise money by taxing working people.

They can spend money on resources and campaigns.

They can introduce new laws.

They can impose taxes.

They can raise people's awareness of issues (e.g. climate change/healthy eating).

They can influence people's habits and opinions.

They can create jobs.

They can regulate the activities of companies such as banks.

They can provide resources for schools.

They are also responsible for the security and well-being of their citizens.

They control armed forces and police forces.

Public Services

Governments pay the salaries of public sector workers like police officers and teachers.

The necessary money is raised by taxing people's income.

Free education and healthcare may be provided by the state.

Some governments control public transport systems and even TV channels.

In other countries, these services are provided by private companies.

Some people believe that competition between private companies is good.

It helps to improve quality while bringing prices down.

Other people think that essential services should be free.

Governments should pay for them.

Censorship: Opinion

Governments can censor what the public sees or reads in the media.

To a certain extent censorship is necessary.

We should use censorship to protect children from violent images.

Some computer games involve killing people or committing crimes.

The Internet also needs to be controlled.

Many websites show pornography and violence.

There should be age limits for websites and computer games.

Parents need to take responsibility for checking what their children watch.

It is impossible for governments to control everything we see.

Video Cameras in Public Places

The use of CCTV is becoming widespread.

Video cameras have been installed in many public places.

They are supposed to protect us and deter criminals.

Many people think that this surveillance violates our privacy.

The authorities could build databases with our pictures and identities.

We should not be treated like criminals.

Smart Cards: Positives

Governments will probably introduce a digital identification card system.

Smart cards will have benefits and drawbacks.

They could help to reduce crime.

They could hold personal information, such as DNA.

Digital bank cards could contain fingerprint information.

It would be very difficult for criminals to use a stolen card.

It would be easier for police to identify people and catch criminals.

Smart Cards: Negatives

Many people are worried about losing their privacy.

Governments could store all our personal and medical information.

This information could be used by insurance companies.

Employers could check our health records.

People with Disabilities

People with disabilities should be treated the same as everybody else.

They should have the same rights as other people.

They should have access to the same jobs as other citizens.

Discrimination against disabled people is illegal in many countries.

Ramps and lifts for wheelchairs should be installed in public buildings.

Support teachers can be employed to help children with learning difficulties.

12. Guns and Weapons

Why guns should be legal:

In some countries, people are allowed to own firearms.

Individuals have the right to protect themselves.

People can use guns in self defence.

This deters criminals.

Why gun ownership should be illegal:

There is a risk of accidents with guns.

The number of violent crimes increases when guns are available.

Criminals may be armed.

The police then need to use guns.

Suicide rates have been shown to rise when guns are available.

Guns create violent societies with high murder rates.

Why police should use guns:

Many criminals use weapons.

The threat of a gun can deter criminals.

Police officers can force a criminal to surrender.

It is easier to arrest someone and avoid physical violence.

The police may shoot violent criminals in self defence.

They can protect the public.

They can shoot an escaping criminal who poses a serious danger to the public.

Why police should not carry guns:

There is a risk of accidents and mistakes.

The police might shoot an unarmed criminal or an innocent person.

Accidents can happen in public places.

There are several alternatives to guns (e.g. tear gas, sprays and electric shock weapons).

Only special police units should use guns.

Arms Trade: Positives

The export of arms, or weapons, is an extremely controversial issue.

Governments of rich, industrialised countries sell arms to each other.

This industry creates jobs and wealth.

The trade of weapons may improve relationships between governments.

Arms Trade: Negatives

Weapons may be used in conflicts and wars.

The supply of arms could be responsible for deaths.

Governments are promoting war in order to make a profit.

Rich countries can influence the politics of other nations.

Nuclear Weapons

Nuclear weapons are capable of destroying whole cities.

A nuclear war between two countries would destroy both countries.

Nuclear weapons are used as a deterrent.

They prevent wars from starting.

Nuclear Weapons: Opinion

Nuclear weapons should be prohibited.

Governments should limit the production of nuclear weapons.

There is a danger of nuclear weapons being obtained by terrorists.

Nuclear weapons cannot be used against terrorist organisations.

Armed Forces: Positives

Armed forces provide security and protection.

They deter military attack by another country.

They can also be used to maintain peace within countries.

They can be used to give the police extra support.

Soldiers are also used to help in emergency situations, such as after a natural disaster.

Armed Forces: Negatives

Armies require a lot of funding from governments.

Too much money is spent on weapons and military technology.

This money could be spent on schools, hospitals and other public services.

13. Health

Diet

The human body requires a balanced diet.

An unhealthy diet can cause various health problems.

Obesity, diabetes and heart disease are on the increase.

Many people nowadays rely on fast food or pre-prepared meals.

These foods often contain too much fat, salt and sugar.

They are cheap to buy and very easy to prepare.

Many young people have grown up on a diet of convenience foods.

Populations in developed countries are increasingly overweight.

Exercise

Regular exercise is essential in maintaining a healthy body.

Exercise burns calories and helps to build healthy bones and muscles.

Doctors advise exercising at least three times a week for 20 minutes.

Most people nowadays lead a sedentary lifestyle.

We tend to walk less and do desk jobs.

Most adults relax by watching television.

Children play video games rather than doing outdoor sports.

In the past, people were more active in their jobs and at home.

Governments' Role

Governments have a significant role to play in reducing obesity.

More and more people, including young children, are seriously overweight.

They are at risk of heart disease and diabetes.

This situation will increase the burden on hospitals and taxpayers.

Hospitals rely on the government for money and resources.

Governments should promote a healthy diet and regular exercise.

There should be more time for sport on school timetables.

Unhealthy junk food should be banned from school menus.

People need information about what foods contain.

Food packaging must show the food's nutritional content.

The British Government recommends eating five portions of fruit and vegetables per day.

State Health Systems: Advantages

Good healthcare should be available to everyone for free.

State healthcare is paid by the government using money from taxes.

Everyone has access to the same quality of care and treatment.

Private healthcare is unfair because only wealthy people can afford it.

The National Health Service in the UK provides free healthcare for every resident.

Private Healthcare: Advantages

State hospitals are often very large and difficult to run.

Private hospitals have shorter waiting lists for operations and appointments.

Patients can benefit from faster treatment.

Many people prefer to pay for a more personal service.

Patients have their own room and more comfortable facilities.

Alternative Medicine: Positives

People are increasingly using alternative medicines to treat illnesses.

For example, acupuncture can be used to treat backache.

Herbal medicines can be used to treat allergies or viruses.

Many patients report positive experiences with these treatments.

Some traditional cures have been used for hundreds of years.

Alternative Medicine: Negatives

Many alternative medicines have not been tested scientifically.

They may have no beneficial effects at all.

They may cause unknown side effects.

People should trust the opinions of qualified doctors.

An illness could get worse without treatment from a doctor.

Stress

Modern lifestyles are increasingly stressful.

People work long hours with strict deadlines.

Our busy lifestyles mean we have less time to relax.

Unemployment is a major cause of stress.

Children may be affected by their parents' relationship problems.

Tests and exams can also cause stress.

How to Reduce Stress

Stress can be reduced by taking regular exercise and eating a healthy diet.

It is also important to get sufficient sleep and make leisure time a priority.

People should work less overtime and take regular holidays.

Schools have started to employ psychologists.

They can offer emotional support to students.

They can help students to cope with exam stress.

14. Housing and Architecture

State / Council Housing

In some countries the government provides state or council housing.

This helps people who cannot afford to buy their own house.

It can be argued that state housing creates dependence on the government.

People should not rely on the government to look after them.

People have no incentive to earn money and buy their own home.

Council properties are often made with cheap, poor-quality materials.

Old Buildings

Historic buildings are part of a country's heritage.

They should be protected.

Old buildings are often considered to be works of art.

They give character to cities and attract tourists.

They show us how people lived in the past.

We identify countries by architectural symbols like the pyramids in Egypt.

Governments should spend money on looking after historic buildings.

They need regular repairs and maintenance.

New buildings should be designed to complement them.

Modern / Green Buildings

Modern buildings should be designed to be environmentally friendly.

They should use less energy and produce less waste.

Modern insulation can make houses more energy-efficient.

Solar and wind power can be used to generate electricity.

Rainwater and waste water can be recycled and used to flush toilets.

Modern glass buildings take advantage of natural light.

15. Language

English as an International Language

English is widely used around the world.

It is becoming a global second language.

It is the dominant language of technology, science and international business.

International business meetings are regularly held in English.

The most important textbooks and journals are published in English.

The ability to speak English is a necessary skill in the modern world.

Negatives of English as an International Language

If one language is dominant, other languages may disappear.

The dominant language brings its own culture.

American culture has become popular around the world.

Other cultures may be damaged.

As an alternative to English, a new global language could be invented.

It would have no nationality or culture attached to it.

This could help to promote international peace and understanding.

Esperanto is an example of a language that was invented with this aim.

Money and Society

Society has become increasingly materialistic.

People aspire to earn more money.

They want a bigger house or a better car.

We connect wealth and material possessions with happiness and success.

Brands like 'Armani' or 'Mercedes' are status symbols.

Advertising creates new desires and needs.

It persuades us to buy the latest styles.

Positives of Consumerism

Consumerism creates employment.

It helps to reduce poverty.

It encourages innovation and creativity in business.

We live in a global economy.

We have a better quality of life.

Negatives of Consumerism

Consumerist societies create more waste.

They use more natural resources.

They cause damage to the environment.

Consumerism creates a "throw-away" culture.

Advertisers tell us who we are and what we want.

Wealth does not lead to happiness.

Materialism causes greed and crime.

We should return to traditional values like sharing.

17. Personality

Happiness

Happiness means different things to different people.

It can be described as a feeling of pleasure or enjoyment.

People enjoy spending time with family and friends.

Hobbies, sports and games can be a source of fun and enjoyment.

Some people see money as a source of happiness.

Other people define happiness as something deeper.

In order to be truly happy it is necessary to live a good life.

We need to feel that we are doing something useful with our lives.

Some people get a sense of achievement from their work.

Others find happiness in bringing up their children.

Religion or a sense of purpose can also be a source of happiness.

Success

People define success in different ways.

Some people get a sense of achievement from raising a family.

For others, success is defined by wealth or status.

We often think of rich and famous people as being successful in life.

Millionaires like Bill Gates are considered to be successful.

They have risen to the top in their chosen professions.

For some, being successful means achieving personal or professional goals.

They see success as the result of hard work.

Success in any field requires long-term planning and effort.

Nature or Nurture

Some people believe that our personalities are determined mainly by genetics.

We inherit our abilities and talents from our parents.

Others think that our education and upbringing are more important.

We develop according to the influences around us.

Our personalities and achievements depend more on nurture than nature.

Many people argue that we control our own destinies.

We can shape our own personalities.

By working hard we can achieve any goal that we put our minds to.

Many successful people are "self-made".

We are not limited by our genetic characteristics or upbringing.

18. Sport and Leisure

Arguments against Professional / Competitive Sport

Sport has become a business.

Professional sport encourages people to compete for money.

Many sports stars are only concerned about money and fame.

Some athletes take drugs in order to win at any cost.

Competitors are often selfish and rude.

They are not good role models for children.

All sports should be amateur.

Sports should be leisure activities rather than jobs.

People should do sporting activities for enjoyment and health reasons.

Taking part is more important than winning.

Arguments for Professional Sport

Professional sports are the same as any other business.

Many people are employed in the sports industry.

People should be able to use their talents to earn a salary.

Sports stars entertain millions of people.

Money is necessary to improve facilities and train athletes.

The level of professional sport is much higher than that of amateur sport.

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Arguments for Competitive Sport

Competition is a natural instinct in humans.

In daily life we compete to get jobs or the highest grades.

Sports are a safe form of competition.

Competition is healthy because it pushes us to give our best.

Competitors and fans can release energy and aggression.

Supporters of teams feel a sense of belonging to a community.

Opinion: professional sport salaries are too high

Sports professionals earn too much money.

They do not provide a vital service.

Football players, for example, earn enormous salaries by simply kicking a ball.

We could all live happily without professional football.

Life would be difficult without doctors, engineers and other vital professionals.

Society does not seem to value these professions as highly as professional sport.

Sports salaries should be compatible with the wages most people earn.

Opinion: professional sport salaries are fair

It is fair that the best professionals earn a lot of money.

Sport is a multi-million-pound industry.

There is a large audience of sports fans.

Sports on television attract many viewers.

Sports stars have dedicated hours of practice to developing their fitness and skills.

Only the most talented among them will reach the top.

A sports career may only last 10 years.

Sports fans are willing to pay to support their teams.

Sport and Politics

Some people think that sport and politics should remain separate.

Governments are involved in the hosting of sporting events such as the Olympics.

These events attract investment and create jobs.

The Olympic Games are an advertisement for the host nation.

They attract huge numbers of visitors and sports fans.

Wealthy countries tend to hold these events.

Developing countries should be given the chance to become hosts.

19. Television, Internet, Phones

Positives of Television

Watching television is a good way to relax.

It is many people's favourite way to wind down after a hard day at work.

Television programmes can be entertaining and enjoyable.

Viewers have access to a huge variety of entertainment channels.

Television brings the best comedians, musicians and actors into our homes.

Programmes can also be informative and educational.

News coverage makes the public aware of events around the world.

Documentaries can make learning more interesting.

Negatives of Television

Television is having a negative impact on society.

Some people link violence on television with crime rates in the real world.

Children copy the behaviour they see on the screen.

Children are less healthy because they spend less time playing.

Advertisers direct their marketing at children.

Most programmes do not require much thought.

Watching TV is a waste of time.

Opinions about Television

Television has many benefits.

However, it can be addictive.

Children should play outside rather than sit in front of a screen all day.

Behaviour shown on TV can influence people.

Parents should choose carefully what their children watch.

Children should not be exposed to violence, swearing or sexual images.

Advertising during children's programmes should be strictly controlled.

TV companies should make more positive, educational programmes.

Positives of the Internet

There are many advantages to using the Internet.

It gives us instant access to information on almost any subject.

Shops and other services are now available online.

People can buy goods and services from the comfort of their homes.

The Internet is starting to replace other forms of entertainment.

It has revolutionised communication.

We can keep in touch by e-mail or instant messenger services.

Video messaging is becoming common for business meetings.

Negatives of the Internet

Many websites contain offensive content.

Some sites show violent or sexual images.

Parents find it difficult to control what their children see online.

They do not always know who their children are chatting to.

With so many websites it is difficult to search for good information.

Criminals increasingly use the Internet to steal people's money.

Internet Compared to Newspapers and Books

Newspapers and books are now published online as well as in print.

We can read the news in any language from any country in the world.

It costs nothing to publish or access information on the Internet.

The Internet allows anybody to publish their own writing.

Newspaper articles and books are written by professionals.

Professionals produce better quality writing than amateurs.

People still buy newspapers and books because they are portable.

People do not like reading from a screen.

Positives of Mobile Phones

The mobile phone is the most popular gadget in today's world.

Mobile phones have revolutionised the way we communicate.

We can stay in touch with family, friends and colleagues wherever we are.

Users can send text messages, surf the Internet, take photos and listen to music.

Mobiles have also become fashion accessories.

Negatives of Mobile Phones

Mobile phones can be a problem in some public places.

Ringing phones cause disturbances in cinemas and school lessons.

Some people are not aware that others can hear their conversations.

Mobile phones may also interfere with electronic equipment.

Their waves could cause damage to our brains.

Mobile phones can also be a dangerous distraction.

Using a phone while driving reduces the driver's concentration.

Mobile phones are a popular target for thieves.

Opinion about Mobile Phones

The benefits of mobile phones outweigh the drawbacks.

We need to use these phones with care.

Positives of Tourism

Tourism is a popular leisure activity.

People go on holiday to relax and have fun.

Tourists can experience different cultures.

They can sunbathe on beaches or go sight-seeing.

Travelling abroad opens our minds.

We can learn to speak other languages.

The tourist trade is vital for some economies.

It creates employment in services like accommodation, transport and entertainment.

Some areas rely on tourism for their income.

Tourists spend money.

Tourism attracts investment from multi-national companies.

It helps to improve the standard of living.

Low-cost airlines are making it cheaper to travel abroad.

Negative Effects of Tourism

Tourism can have a negative effect on the natural environment.

The building of facilities and infrastructure can destroy the habitat of wild animals.

Beautiful beaches are spoilt by the building of hotels.

Tourism creates pollution and waste.

It puts pressure on local resources.

Local traditions and cultures may be endangered.

A rise in the cost of living affects local people.

The price of goods, services and housing may increase significantly.

The Future of Tourism

Governments should introduce laws to protect natural environments and local cultures.

Tourism should have a low impact on wildlife.

Renewable resources like solar or water power should be used.

Waste should be recycled.

Local businesses such as farms should be supported.

21. Traditional vs. Modern

Losing Traditional Skills

Because of industrialisation and global trade, many traditions have disappeared.

Global advertising encourages everyone to buy the same products.

Most products are now made in factories.

Machinery has replaced skilled human labour.

Factory work is boring and leaves people feeling unfulfilled.

Goods are produced very quickly and in large numbers.

Products are cheaper, which means that more people can buy them.

Examples

Clothes are mass produced in standard sizes.

People wear similar clothes, rather than traditional costumes.

Jeans and T-shirts are now worn throughout the world.

Historic buildings took skilled craftsmen years to build.

Modern concrete, steel and glass buildings are built in only weeks or months.

There are fewer people who can create hand-made goods.

Traditional Customs

Traditional customs are still important during weddings and religious festivals.

People wear traditional costumes and eat special foods.

It is important to maintain our different cultural identities.

We should celebrate festivals, teach traditional skills and protect historic places.

Traffic Problems

Traffic congestion is caused by commuters travelling to work.

Most people live in the suburbs outside city centres.

Commuters tend to travel at the same time of day.

They tend to travel alone.

Cars and road space are not used efficiently.

This causes traffic jams during the rush hour.

Traffic Solutions

In order to reduce traffic we should change our working habits.

The Internet can now be used to connect people.

More people could work from home.

Meetings can be held as video conferences.

Workers could be given flexible timetables.

Another solution would be to tax drivers.

Workers should share their cars and travel together.

In London, for example, there is a congestion charge.

This helps to raise money for better public transport.

Public transport needs to be reliable and efficient.

Positives of Public Transport

We need to reduce our dependence on cars.

Parking a car can be extremely difficult in big cities.

Well-designed transport systems are comfortable and convenient.

Modern public transport can be fast and cheap.

Public transport can help to reduce pollution in cities.

Investment in buses and trains will ease traffic congestion.

Buses can be given special lanes to avoid traffic.

Negatives of Public Transport

Public transport is often slow and unreliable.

Metro systems and trains are often dirty and crowded.

People feel like "sardines in a can".

Cars are much more comfortable.

Road Safety

Driving while tired or drunk is extremely dangerous.

Mobile phones can be a dangerous distraction for drivers.

They draw the driver's attention away from the road.

The use of phones while driving has been banned in many countries.

Punishments are becoming stricter.

Television campaigns are used to remind people to drive safely.

Speed cameras have become more common.

Speed bumps are another form of traffic calming.

Many streets are designed with the aim of slowing traffic down.

23. Water

Importance of Clean Water

Water is an essential natural resource.

Humans need access to clean, safe drinking water in order to live.

Poor water quality is a major cause of disease and death in some countries.

Water usually needs to be treated before we can drink it.

Developing countries often lack the means to treat and supply water to citizens.

Developed countries tend to have much better sanitation.

Citizens have access to clean tap water.

Drinking water is not contaminated by sewage or waste water.

The supply of clean water would improve public health in many developing countries.

Water Supply

Urban life would be impossible without water supply systems.

These systems are massive engineering projects.

Many professionals are involved in their planning, construction and maintenance.

The supply and distribution of water are major concerns.

Water is becoming scarce in some countries.

Areas that suffer droughts often need to import water.

As populations grow, there is more pressure on water supplies.

This could lead to a water crisis.

Water and Politics

The supply of water is also an important political issue.

Huge amounts of water are needed for agriculture and industry.

The irrigation of crops accounts for a large proportion of water use.

A water crisis could lead to political conflicts or even wars.

Argument: water should be free

Some people believe that water should be free for everyone.

Governments should supply water to all homes at no cost.

Private companies should not be allowed to profit from this natural resource.

Money from taxes can be used to pay for water supply systems.

Argument: water should not be free

If water is free, people take it for granted.

They do not think about how much water they waste.

They leave taps running while washing or brushing their teeth.

If we have to pay for water, we will use it more responsibly.

Water supply systems are extremely expensive.

Investment is needed to maintain and improve them.

Private companies may provide a better service than governments.

If they provide an efficient service, they will make more money.

They will repair leaks to avoid losing money.

Bottled Water: Opinions

Some people carry bottles of water wherever they go.

For example, they take bottles of water to work or to the gym.

They believe that bottled water is healthier than tap water.

They also argue that it tastes better.

However, other people believe that we should consume less bottled water.

Plastic water bottles add to litter and waste problems.

Companies should not be able to make a profit from water.

It is unethical to make money by selling packaged water.

There is no difference in quality between bottled and tap water.

24. Work

The benefits of staying in the same job for life:

Employees have a stable career with one employer.

They have a good pension and health insurance.

Their salaries gradually increase.

They may be promoted within the organisation.

They demonstrate loyalty.

Experienced staff can be trusted with more responsibility.

They become part of a team.

There is a clearly defined path for development.

The benefits of not staying in the same job:

People often change jobs in order to further their career.

Another company may offer a promotion or a higher salary.

People who change jobs can gain experience.

They can learn different skills.

Changing jobs is interesting and challenging.

People can retrain in a different occupation.

In a fast-changing world workers need to be flexible.

People need to develop a range of experience and skills.

Self-employment

Nowadays, it is easy to set up a company.

The Internet provides a global marketplace.

Self-employment offers greater freedom than working for a company.

However, there are risks to starting a new business.

Self-employed people may face financial difficulties.

Many businesses fail to make a profit.

There is less stability in self-employment.

There are no benefits like pensions, sick pay and holiday pay.

Self-employment involves hard work, long hours and total responsibility.

Unemployment

Unemployment is a big problem for individuals, communities and society.

Some people are unable to find a job.

They may not have the sufficient level of education or qualifications.

They may find themselves homeless.

Unemployment causes frustration and stress.

Jobless people may become involved in crime as a means to get money.

The unemployed need careers advice.

Governments need to provide vocational courses and retraining.

Unemployment Benefits: Positives

Some governments pay unemployment benefits in order to help jobless people.

Unemployed people need financial support until they find a new job.

By claiming benefits they can continue to pay for their homes.

The benefits system helps to reduce poverty, homelessness and crime.

Unemployment Benefits: Negatives

Some people claim benefits rather than working.

They become dependent on the government.

They are not motivated to find a job.

The benefits system is a burden on taxpayers.

All citizens should work to earn a living and support themselves.

Receiving benefits affects people's self esteem.

Work / Life Balance

It is important to achieve a balance between work time and leisure or family time.

Too much work can result in stress and poor health.

"Workaholics" may neglect their families and friends.

People need to take regular holidays.

Companies should not expect employees to work overtime.

Nowadays, many people work part-time or have flexible working hours.

Technology allows people to work from home.

Many companies provide childcare facilities.

A good work/life balance can raise job satisfaction.

Happy, healthy workers are more productive.

Technology and Work

Internet, fax and mobile phone technologies have revolutionised working life.

Workers can communicate via e-mail, online networks and video conferencing.

Technology can connect workers in different countries.

It gives people more freedom.

It can also save time and money.

Some people believe that offices could disappear in the future.

Virtual online offices may replace them.

Child Labour

In some countries, children are exploited.

They do repetitive jobs for very low pay.

Children are often used in agriculture and factory work.

The employment of children is prohibited in other countries.

Many people think that children should be free to enjoy their childhood.

Governments should make education a priority.

They should build new schools.

They should supply the resources to educate children.

Children need to be given the knowledge and skills for adult life.

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CHECK OUT OTHER BOOKS

LETTER A

At all costs = at any costs: to do everything you can to achieve something regardless of the difficulty, and expense involved.

His dream is to become a great lawyer at all costs.

They were determined to win the game at any cost.

As easy as pie: very easy.

The test is as easy as pie.

Searching for beautiful flower images online is as easy as pie nowadays.

After so many years as an English teacher, doing taxes is as easy as pie for me.

A drop in the ocean: a very small amount compared to what is required or needed.

The amount of money that he gave me last night is just a drop in the ocean compared to what I needed.

I feel what I am doing is just a drop in the ocean.

Actions speak louder than words: used for expressing that what you do something is more important than just talking about it.

He usually talks about the importance of charity but never does anything. Actions speak louder than words

Because actions speak louder than words, do not talk much, just act.

A hot potato: a controversial topic, issue or situation.

Money policy is fast becoming a hot potato.

The issues of abortion and tax have become real hot potatoes in my country these days.

Against the clock: to do something quickly to finish it before a particular time.

She is working against the clock to finish her essay by today.

We have to work against the clock to meet the deadline (to finish the project on time).

A rip-off: something that is unreasonably expensive.

We shouldn't have spent so much. That's a rip-off.

\$60 for a cup of coffee is a complete rip-off.

At first: in the beginning.

Don't judge anyone or anything at first sight.

Try again if you fail at first.

Around the corner: coming very soon.

Tom is quite nervous because his exam is just around the corner.

Spring is just around the corner.

A mile a minute: very quickly.

He walks a mile a minute and is very difficult to keep up with.

She is talking a mile a minute.

A man of his word: someone who does what he promises to do.

He is obviously a man of his word. You can trust him.

Tom is a man of his word. He always does what he says he is going to.

A ladies man: a man that loves spending time and flirting with women.

He is known as a ladies man.

Tom has the reputation for being quite a ladies' man.

Ace a test: to do very well in a test/ to get a very high score on a test.

You need to study hard to ace a test.

She had actually aced a test in math, a subject that had never come easily for her.

A bad egg: someone who is bad and untrustworthy.

That guy is a bad egg. Don't trust him.

Be careful of her. She is a bad egg.

LETTER B

Bump into somebody: meet somebody by chance.

I bumped into her at the mall.

I bumped into him at the pub a couple of days ago.

Be out of your depth: expressing that you are in a situation that is too difficult or dangerous to deal with.

She is used to teaching English writing but she was out of my depth when she had to teach English listening.

Behind the times: *expressing that something is not modern, old-fashioned, obsolete or out of date.*

If you don't want to fall behind the times, read the newspaper every day.

If you think the world is flat, you are behind the times.

The marketing plan for their products is a little behind the times.

To be up in arms about something: expressing that you are very angry or upset about something.

The local residents have been up in arms about the tax increase.

Be sick and tired of something: to be very frustrated, annoyed, bored with or very unhappy about something.

He is sick and tired of listening to clients' complaints.

I'm sick and tired of working the same tasks every day.

Bend over backwards: to do everything you can to help or to please someone.

Sarah bent over backwards to make her new husband feel at home.

Tom bent over backwards to please his girlfriend.

To be under the weather: do not feel well; feel sick.

Tom was feeling a bit under the weather today, so he chose to take the day off.

I'm feeling a bit under the weather. I think I've caught a cold.

Blew me away: when something blows you away, it impresses you very much or makes you very excited.

He just totally blew me away with his singing.

It blew me away when I heard that my little brother is going to get married.

That song really blew me away.

Back to the drawing board: to start doing something again.

I'll go back to the drawing board if my proposal is not accepted.

Our experiment was a failure, so we need to be back to the drawing board.

Burn the midnight oil: to stay up late, to work late at night.

Tom is going to take his exams next week, so he's burning the midnight oil.

Sarah had to burn the midnight oil to complete her essay.

Bare your heart: to reveal your secret thoughts and feelings to someone.

She decided to bare her heart through text messages to her closest friends.

Tom is too shy to bare his heart to his girlfriend.

To buy into something: to accept something.

Tom's never bought into this idea that his girlfriend has to be thin to be attractive.

Her boss didn't buy into her reason for being late at work.

To be bouncing off the walls: to be so busy.

It's like that you're bouncing off the walls.

The workers seem to be bouncing off the walls.

Be bummed out: to be sad, depressed.

She was bummed out when she heard bad news that her mom was ill.

Tom didn't get the promotion and he felt really bummed out.

To be dolled up: to get all dressed up to look attractive.

Lucy was dolled up in jewels for the party last night.

She spent an hour getting dolled up for the celebration.

To be out of this world: to be extraordinary or impressive.

Views from the hotel room are out of the world.

We are in a place that is out of the world.

To be dressed to kill: to be dressed beautifully (wearing very smart or fashionable clothes)

His wife was dressed to kill at the party last night.

Lucy is always dressed to kill on every Saturday night.

To break the news: to disclose important information to someone.

I don't want to break the news to him.

I think that we should not break the news at the moment.

You should try to break the news to her gently.

(To) butt in: to interrupt; to interfere a conversation or activity without being invited.

Stop butting in on my personal life!

Tom doesn't want Mary to butt in his personal life.

(To) blow it: to fail to take advantage of a chance or an opportunity.

You blew it, Tom!

He blew it. He lost the customer.

Big shot: an important or powerful person.

My brother is a big shot in advertising.

Her boyfriend is a big shot in the film industry.

Behind the times: *old-fashioned*; *out of date*.

His car is a bit behind the times.

If you don't want to fall behind the times, you should read the newspaper every day.

Be an item: if two people are an item, they are dating and have a romantic relationship.

Tom and Mary are an item.

Jack and Cindy are an item. They finally made it official.

Blew one's top: lose one's temper (very angry or irritate).

Tom's father blew his top when he found out that Tom had damaged his car.

Mary blew her top when she heard that her boyfriend had gone out with another girl.

Bring home the bacon: to earn money by working to support the family.

Women are supposed to raise the children and men will bring home the bacon.

Tom and his wife both bring home the bacon.

LETTER C

Cut it out!: stop it; stop doing that.

That music is really annoying. Cut it out!

Would you two cut it out and keep quiet? I'm trying to sleep.

Call it a day: to stop working, to end a job.

Mike, let's call it a day. It's really late.

Time to call it a day, guys. See you tomorrow!

Chill out: to relax; to calm down.

Chill out! We'll get there on time!

Come on! Let's sit down and chill out!

I think you need to chill out a little bit by watching a movie.

Cut corners: to save money (to do something in the cheapest way).

The government cut corners and put everyone in danger when they built the school with bad materials.

Remember that we want only the best, no cutting corners on this job.

We have to learn how to cut corners when we have five children to bring up.

Chicken out: to become too frightened/scared to do something.

Tom wanted to go skydiving, but he chickened out at the last minute.

She chickened out when she saw how deep the water was.

He was going to do a parachute jump, but he chickened out at the last second.

To cut class = to play hooky = to ditch class: to deliberately not go to a class when you should be there.

This is the second time this week Tom has cut class.

If you play hooky again, the teacher will be very angry.

Couch potato: somebody who is lazy and inactive.

He is a great couch potato; he can watch TV 24 hours a day.

Since Mary lost her job, she has become a couch potato.

Cold fish: an unfriendly person.

Her father is a real cold fish. I've never seen him laugh.

Sarah is a cold fish. She rarely talks to her colleagues.

To catch someone red-handed: to capture someone in the act.

He was caught red-handed using drugs.

The thieves were caught red-handed attempting to break into a house.

Count on: to depend on someone to do what you want.

She is very busy, don't count on her assistance.

You cannot count on him because he's too irresponsible.

(to) cut it out: to stop (doing) something.

I'm trying to sleep, cut it out, please!

The kids were playing games and I told them to cut it out.

Crack of dawn: (a time) very early in the morning.

My mom got up at the crack of dawn.

You should go to bed early since we have to leave at the crack of dawn tomorrow.

Crocodile tears: tears or crying that are not sincere.

She showed her crocodile tears when her stepmother died.

Don't shed crocodile tears over her death.

Her crocodile tears fool nobody.

Cost an arm and a leg: to be very expensive.

The movie is interesting, but the tickets cost an arm and a leg.

The car cost him an arm and a leg.

Catch one's breath: to rest for a moment after exercise to restore normal breathing.

He stopped running and tried to catch his breath.

She stopped and placed her hand on his arm to catch her breath.

Come down with: to become ill with a particular illness.

She has come down with the flu.

He had come down with a cold.

contact us for more material:

Can't stand (someone or something): to hate or dislike someone or something very much.

She can't stand to hear her parents arguing.

I can't stand traffic jam in rush hour.

LETTER D

Drop someone a line: to send a note or a short letter to someone.

I'll drop Peter a line to say thanks for his help.

I promise I will drop you a line as soon as I arrive home safely.

Don't judge a book by its cover: you shouldn't judge someone or something only from their appearance.

That woman may look very slow and awkward, but don't judge a book by its cover. She is a very intelligent woman in her circle.

I know I look serious in my picture, hope you don't judge a book by its cover.

Down in the dumps: feeling very unhappy, depressed, sad.

Tom has been feeling down in the dumps ever since he lost his job.

Peter seems to be down in the dumps since he broke up with his girlfriend last week.

Day in, day out: done repeatedly every day over a long period of time.

Eating the same food day in, day out is very boring.

I really hate doing the same boring tasks day in, day out.

Down to earth: someone who is practical, realistic and friendly.

He is a down-to-earth and friendly person.

I like his down-to-earth and hardworking spirit.

Down the road: in the future.

It can be achieved down the road.

This deal will be beneficial down the road.

Down in the dumps: to feel unhappy or really depressed.

Tom was down in the dumps after he lost his job.

Lucy has been down in the dumps since she failed her driving test.

My sister has been down in the dumps since her dog died.

Down the drain: to be completely lost, destroyed or wasted.

All our effort went down the drain.

A lot of money went down the drain by misuse of funds.

Down and out: have no money, a job, or a shelter.

Tom was completely down and out after he lost his job.

After her house burned down, Lucy was completely down and out.

Dime a dozen: very common and not very valuable.

Teachers like her are a dime a dozen.

His ideas are dime a dozen.

Drive someone crazy: to make him or her upset or annoyed.

Tom quit his job because his boss drove him crazy every time he went to work.

The constant noise drove me crazy.

To drive someone nuts: to make someone very crazy or annoyed.

The fact that he's over at her house everyday drives her nuts.

He quit his job since his boss drove him nuts every time he went to work.

(to) drive someone crazy: to make someone upset or annoyed very much.

It drives Tom crazy that I tell people I am actually younger than he is.

His untidiness drives his mom crazy.

(to) do one's best: to try your best (to try as hard as possible).

Although he was tired, he did his best.

She did her best to win the game.

LETTER E

Explore all avenues: to try everything in order to find a solution and avoid trouble.

It is a difficult thing to do; therefore, we must explore all avenues if we really want it done.

Every time one turns around: very often, too often.

He asks me for some money every time I turn around.

My mom shouts at me every time I turn around.

Eager beaver: a very hardworking and enthusiastic person.

My boss is an eager beaver.

Her father is a real eager beaver. He usually works 12 hours a day.

Eyes are bigger than one's stomach: to take more food than you can possibly eat.

I'm afraid that your eyes are bigger than your stomach. You can't eat all this.

To eat like a bird: to eat very little.

Jane eats like a bird, no wonder she can keep herself so slim.

Don't make too much for lunch because she eats like a bird.

LETTER F

Figure something out: find a way to solve a problem.

I think Peter is smart enough to figure out what to do.

I'm surprised when Lucy figured it out quickly.

Fill in for someone: to temporarily do another person's work or task.

Mary's colleague filled in for her while she was sick.

The French teacher was sick and Mr. Mike filled in for her.

Find one's feet: to become confident or comfortable in a new situation.

It took him a week to find his feet in his job.

It was difficult when I moved to a new city, but I eventually found my feet.

To face up to = to confront: to accept and deal with a difficult situation in a direct way.

He faces up to two years in prison and a \$50,000 fine.

Finally, the married couple faced up to their money problems.

To fish for a compliment: to try and get a compliment from someone.

We don't like the way Mary is always fishing for a compliment.

Mary wondered if she must take the bait whenever Tom fished for a compliment.

For good: forever, permanently.

He intends to remain married to her for good.

I want to be with you for good.

Fair and square: very fair.

He won the election fair and square.

I won the game fair and square.

Fool around: to behave in a silly way for fun.

Don't fool around with matches.

You shouldn't fool around with dangerous chemicals.

First things first: let's focus on dealing with the most important things before other things.

I'm starving, so first things first, let's have something to eat.

First things first, let's see that movie.

To foot the bill: *to pay the bill; to pay for something.*

You paid for lunch last week. Let me foot the bill for dinner tonight.

She ordered drinks and then left him to foot the bill!

Face the facts: accept that something is true (usually negative).

I think he needs to face the facts.

Let's face the facts!

It's time for her to face the facts and move on.

Family man: a man that likes to spend time at home with his family.

Tom is described as being a family man.

He is a good leader and a good family man both.

Fly the coop/nest: a child moves away from his parents' home and lives elsewhere.

Mary flew the nest when she turned 19 years old.

Tom flew the coop when he got a full-time job in the city.

Find your feet: to become familiar and confident with a new place, situation, etc.

It took a while to find his feet when he started a new job.

Lucy is still new in her job; give her some time to find her feet.

Fly off the handle: to lose one's temper suddenly; become extremely angry unexpectedly.

You shouldn't fly off the handle about such little thing.

The teacher flies off the handle every time Tom is late.

Freak out: to become very angry or lose control of yourself because of somebody or something.

I freaked out when I saw her with another man.

Snakes really freaked me out.

To face the music: be confronted with the unpleasant consequences of something you have done wrong.

After drinking alcohol all night, the next morning he had to face the music.

He's been caught cheating. He must face the music.

Fresh as a daisy: someone who is full of energy, completely fresh and attractive.

Her smile is as fresh as a daisy.

His girlfriend looks as fresh as a daisy!

Full of beans: a person who is lively, and full of energy.

He's always full of beans in the morning.

My son is usually full of beans at the bedtime.

Feel up to: to feel like doing or being able to do something.

I don't feel up to working today.

After the accident, he didn't feel up to driving.

For a song: if you buy something for a song, you buy it at a very cheap price.

He bought the car for a song at an auction.

I bought the painting for a song two years ago.

For the time being: at the present; at the moment.

For the time being, I am studying Japanese.

For the time being, you can leave your suitcase here.

From now on: from this moment and forever into the future.

From now on, employees can wear casual clothes to work every Thursday.

From now on, I promise to be on time.

LETTER G

Give someone a hand: to give someone help or assistance.

Could you give me a hand with these bags? I can't make it to the sixth floor on my own!

I gave him a hand packing up his clothes and stuff.

Hey buddy, could you give me a hand? I want to move this desk.

Get the picture: *to understand something or a situation.*

It's all right, I get the picture. Don't say anymore.

He can't possibly get the picture.

It took me 30 seconds to get the picture.

To go off the deep end: to unexpectedly become panic or very angry (to lose your temper).

Tom went off the deep end when he lost his job.

When Mike found that his car door had been scratched, he really went off the deep end.

The woman went off the deep end when she saw her picture in the paper.

To get a hold of yourself: to get control of your thoughts and emotions.

She gets a hold of herself and thinks about meeting her father.

Tom gets a hold of himself and goes back into the bedroom with a smile.

To give someone a fair shake: to give someone a fair chance.

I hate him. He never gives me a fair shake.

I think you should give her a fair shake.

I believe that the judge will give this man a fair shake at his trial.

To go easy on someone: to be lenient with someone (to treat someone in a gentle way).

Go easy on him simply because he didn't know the rules.

I know she made a mistake, but go easy on her.

To get a kick out of: to enjoy.

He really gets a real kick out of owning his own car.



I really love books. I get a kick out of reading.

To go under the knife: to undergo surgery (a medical operation).

Her father is going to go under the knife because he has a bad heart.

Lucy went under the knife for her nose yesterday.

To get on someone's nerves: to annoy someone.

His loud voice is really getting on my nerves.

That car alarm is extremely getting on my nerves.

The dog does not stop barking which is really getting on my nerves.

Go banana: be wild, lose control; to become very angry.

His mom went banana on him since he was not participating in family lunch.

Got it all planned out: ready.

Sounds like he's got it all planned out.

Have you got it all planned out?

Get off the ground: start in a successful way.

The movie is very interesting, it's highly likely to get off the ground.

Don't worry, our project will get off the ground.

(to) go into: to enter a particular type of job.

My brother wants to go into teaching.

Her son's planning to go into journalism.

He's decided to go into law.

Go ahead: to start or continue to do something without hesitation.

Go ahead and eat before the food gets no longer hot.

Go ahead and make yourselves at home.

Go ahead and tell her that I'm coming.

(to) give someone a ring: to call someone on the telephone.

He gave her a ring for her birthday.

She gave me a ring at midnight.

Give the green light: to grant permission.



My parents gave me the green light to go on the camping trip.

I never give my children the green light to gambling.

Go back to the drawing board: to start again on a new plan.

We have to go back to the drawing board on this project.

His boss forced him to go back to the drawing board on the marketing campaign.

Get tied up: to become very busy with something; get stuck in.

She got tied up at work.

Sorry, I'm late. I got tied up in traffic.

Get hitched/tie the knot: to get married.

Bill and Sarah will get hitched next month.

After 3 years of dating each other, Tom and Mary have finally decided to tie the knot next July.

Go down in flames: to fail completely.

Many students went down in flames in the final exam.

After the scandal with the nanny, his career went down in flames.

Go the extra mile: doing more than what is expected in order to achieve something.

Mr. Mike went the extra mile to resolve my problem.

He went the extra mile, taking me to the post office.

Golden opportunity: a very good opportunity or a chance to do something.

He missed a golden opportunity to join the military academy.

That was a golden opportunity to invest and export into new markets.

Green with envy: to be jealous/ to be envious (to feel very unhappy because you don't have something that someone else has)

Tom was green with envy when he saw that I got a new car for my birthday.

My expensive house makes him green with envy.

Get cold feet: become very nervous and afraid to do something that you had planned to do.

She gets cold feet before marriage.



He always gets cold feet when he delivers a speech in front of a lot of people.

He got cold feet before his wedding.

Get in touch with somebody: to contact somebody by talking or writing.

He plans to get in touch with his friends when he returns home.

I'll get in touch with tom by telephone tomorrow.

Get mixed up: become confused about something.

He got mixed up with the dates and went on the wrong day.

Get rid of something: to throw away something.

I decided to get rid of this old furniture.

We need to get rid of that ugly old couch as rapidly as possible.



LETTER H

Hit the nail on the head: to say something that is precisely correct or completely true.

At last, he's hit the nail on the head!

She hit the nail on the head when she used idioms in the IELTS speaking test.

To have a mad crush on someone: to have a great romantic interest in someone.

Tom used to have a little crush on Lucy.

He had a crush on her when they were in high school.

To have a weakness for something: to have a passion for something.

My son has a weakness for chocolate.

He has a weakness for young beautiful girls.

The little girl has a weakness for cookies.

My little brother has a weakness for ice creams.

Hit the books: to study very hard.

I have to go home and hit the books because I have a big test tomorrow.

It's time to hit the books.

Happy camper: someone who is really happy about something.

Lucy was a happy camper when she was allowed to leave work early.

Peter was a happy camper when he passed the driving test.

(to) have a good time: to enjoy yourself.

We had a good time during the trip last week.

We had a good time together at the party yesterday.

(to have) mixed feelings: to feel both positive and negative about someone or something.

Sarah had mixed feelings about meeting her ex-boyfriend again.

Tom had mixed feelings about getting married to someone.

My friend had mixed feelings about giving up his job.

To have a sweet tooth: to enjoy eating sweet food.



I have a sweet tooth, so I will definitely have dessert!

Mary eats candy all the time. She must have a sweet tooth.

Head over heels in love: madly in love (love someone very much).

She's fallen head over heels in love with her boss.

Tom soon found himself head over heels in love with Mary.

Has a heart of gold: friendly, sincere, generous.

My aunt is a woman with a heart of gold.

Peter is so nice. He must have a heart of gold.

Head the team: in charge of, lead a group.

She's going to head the team in accounting.

He is going to head the team in the new advertising campaign.

Have an eye for (something): the ability to do something well.

She has an eye for color.

He has an eye for antique furniture.

Mary has an eye for art.

Have/get/feel butterflies in my stomach: to feel very nervous or anxious about something.

He always gets butterflies in his stomach before a test.

Mary always gets butterflies in her stomach before her big speech.

Have the hots for: to like someone; to be attracted (sexually or romantically) to (someone).

I think Tom has the hots for Mary.

She has the hots for him but she can't tell him. She's so shy.

Have a crush on someone: to have a strong affection for someone.

Sarah has a crush on Peter and she would like him to notice her.

Tom has a crush on his English teacher at school. She is so cute and great.

Hit the hay = hit the sack: to go to bed.

I'm pretty tired. I think it's time for me to hit the hay.

I'm going to hit the sack early since I've got to get up early tomorrow.



Hard nut to crack: a person or thing that is difficult to understand, or deal with.

Tom sure is a hard nut to crack. I can't figure him out.

This problem is getting me down. It's a hard nut to crack.

LETTER I

In deep water: to be in trouble or in a difficult or dangerous situation.

Having lost his passport, tom is now in deep water.

You'll be in deep water unless you pass that exam.

In the black: making a profit (earn more money than you spent).

He has worked very hard to move his account in the black.

I've managed to stay in the black for over six months.

In the red: to owe money to the bank.

His bank account is in the red again.

My bank account is \$500 in the red.

In a pickle: in a difficult or unpleasant situation.

Because Tom has so much credit card debt, he's really in a pickle.

Perhaps, he'll get himself in a pickle.

In no time: instantly.

I'll be home in no time.

I'll be leaving home for work in no time.

He'll be back in no time.

In a bit: in a short moment.

Pause the movie, I'll be back in a bit.

I'll see you in a bit.

In a flash: very quickly, in no time.

The boat sank in a flash.

I'll be back in a flash.

He told me that he'll be here in a flash.

In deep shit: in big trouble.

We are in deep shit.

The thieves were in deep shit when they were caught breaking into a house.

(to be) in a bad mood: to feel unhappy, depressed, annoyed or angry.

Mom is in a bad mood. Stay away from her.

They were in a bad mood when they lost the game.

After his girlfriend broke up with him, Peter was in a bad mood for two weeks.

(to be) in good spirits: to feel happy and cheerful (in a good mood).

I hope you're in good spirits.

We are in good spirits after winning the competition today.

(to be) in charge of: to have responsibility for (something).

I believe that Tom can be in charge of this project.

He's in charge of the marketing department.

In a flash: very quickly; immediately.

The boat sank in a flash.

The accident happened in a flash.

In a heartbeat: instantly; immediately.

If I had the chance to study abroad, I'd go in a heartbeat.

Mary accepted the new job as a receptionist in a heartbeat.

In seventh heaven: to be very happy.

Tom is in seventh heaven since he's just been promoted.

Peter and Lucy have been in seventh heaven because they've just got married.

In the nick of time: just before it's too late/ at the last possible moment.

We got to the airport just in the nick of time.

I arrived at the train station in the nick of time.

She finished her English essay just in the nick of time.

It's raining cats and dogs: it's raining a lot/ it is raining heavily.

It's windy and is raining cats and dogs.

It was raining cats and dogs, so all flights were delayed.

It's as easy as pie = it's a piece of cake: to be very easy, (not complicated).

I don't think it's as easy as pie to get band 8.5 in the IELTS speaking test.

It's a piece of cake to drive this car.

LETTER J

Jump for joy: be really happy/excited about something.

He jumped for joy when he heard the news.

Mary jumped for joy when I told her the news.

Jump the gun: start (doing) something too early.

Tom jumped the gun when he told his friends about the surprise party next week.

Tom jumped the gun and didn't give Mary a chance to explain that it wasn't her.



LETTER K

Keep one's chin up: to be brave and cheerful even though you are in a difficult situation.

When you get bad news, you try to keep your chin up.

Be positive and keep your chin up. Don't quit, my friend.

To keep someone posted: to keep someone informed.

Keep me posted on what happened.

I'll keep you posted about my new job.

Keep in mind: remember that.

Keep in mind to turn off the TV before you go to bed.

Keep in mind to complete your homework by today.

Know the ropes: have the skills and experience for a particular job.

Mary will make fewer mistakes once she gets to know the ropes.

Tom knows the ropes much better than his friend does.

Lucy didn't know the ropes because she was new.

(to) keep one's chin up: to stay cheerful, hopeful and positive.

Although Mary has failed several times, she still keeps her chin up.

While everyone around Tom is downhearted, he still keeps his chin up.



LETTER L

Let's face it: talking about the fact/truth that needs to be accepted even though you might not want it to happen.

Let's face it, it's impossible.

Let's face it. He will not be able to achieve 8.0 Ielts if he does not study hard.

Leave no stone unturned: to do everything you can to solve a problem or achieve something.

Tom left no stone unturned in his search to find his stolen car.

Mary left no stone unturned in her search for her daughter.

The police left no stone unturned to look for the murderer.

Lend an ear: to listen to someone's problems in a sympathy way.

He lent a sympathetic ear while I told him my problems.

I lent him an ear when he needed advice on a personal situation.

To lose one's cool: to lose one's temper; to become angry.

She completely lost her cool when the waiter dropped her food.

My friend lost his cool with the client; as a result, he got fired from his job.

She lost her cool when she discovered her son had spilled coffee on her new dress.

(to) look on the bright side: to think about the good/positive parts of a situation.

She tries to look on the bright side although her cat is very sick right now.

Don't let things get you down. Stay positive and look on the bright side.

(to) lend (someone) a hand: to help someone.

We should lend Lucy a hand when she is in trouble.

I would lend Tom a hand if I were in your place.

Mike asked me to lend him a hand.

(to) lose one's touch: to no longer have the ability to do something skillfully.

He has lost his touch since he had an infection years back.

Her mom used to be an outstanding doctor, but she has lost her touch due to



her illness.

(to) live with it: to accept an unpleasant thing or situation.

Whatever happens, we'll live with it.

I'm going to live with it since I can't change the situation.

(to) let someone go: to fire; dismiss an employee (to end someone's job).

After being discovered that he stole some files, his boss let him go.

(to) level with someone: to be sincere and honest with someone about something.

Tom decided to level with his girlfriend and tell her how he felt.

She decided to level with him about the accident.

(to) lose one's head: to lose control and become so upset quickly.

His mom lost her head and started yelling at him.

Lucy lost her head and said some things she regrets.

She lost her head over that man.

Lose track of time: to forgot about the time.

He was at work and he lost track of time!

When Tom is playing video games, he nearly always loses track of time.

Like father, like son: expressing that a man or boy behaves in the same way as his father.

Tom decided to study law and become a lawyer - like father, like son.

Let the cat out of the bag: to accidentally reveal a secret, usually without intending to.

He wanted his father's present to be a secret, but his brother let the cat out of the bag.

I tried to keep the party a surprise for my parents but my wife let the cat out of the bag.

Look like a million dollars: luxurious, gorgeous and beautiful.

Sarah looks like a million dollars in that new dress!

His house looks like a million dollars.

Little by little: gradually.



His French is improving little by little.

Little by little, she'll be super-fluent in Japanese!

Dilpreet Singh Mangat

LETTER M

Miss the boat: to miss a chance or opportunity to do something by not taking action quickly enough.

You'll miss the boat if you don't apply for this job now.

If you don't want to miss the boat, you should buy your shares in the company now.

To moonlight: to work a second job.

I think I have to moonlight to earn enough to feed my family.

He has to moonlight because he doesn't make enough money for rent.

(to) make up one's mind: to make a decision.

He can't make up his mind at all.

There are many business courses. I couldn't make up my mind which course to follow.

Tom made up his mind to marry Lucy.

Mary has made up her mind to study harder.

Make ends meet: to earn enough money to buy the things you need without getting into debt.

Elderly people can make ends meet on their pensions.

Many students have a difficult time trying to make ends meet.

(to) make a bundle: to make a great deal of money.

My father made a bundle on the stock market.

Mr. Johnson made a bundle in real estate and retired at age 45.

Made of money: very rich.

Do you think he is made of money?

My uncle has a very big house. He certainly is made of money.

(to) make a splash: to become very popular.

Denim really made a splash in the '70s.

Those new jeans really made a splash. A vast majority of young people are wearing them.



(to) make a pig of oneself: to eat too much.

Tom made a pig of himself at dinner.

Mary made a pig of herself at the buffet table last night.

(to) make time for: to arrange your schedule for doing something or being with someone.

My father is a busy doctor, but he always makes time for us.

You need to make time for regular exercise.

(to) make a fortune: to make a lot of money.

Her father has made a fortune through hard work.

The young man made a fortune in the stock market.

Make someone blue = bump someone out: to make someone sad or sick.

It made him blue to have to stay home with his wife all day.

He made his girlfriend blue yesterday.

Mean business: to be very, very serious.

I thought he was joking at first, but then I saw that he really meant business.

Just looking at him, I knew he meant business.



LETTER N

Needless to say = it goes without saying that: obviously.

Needless to say, she didn't believe him.

Needless to say, he was so excited about the journey.

It goes without saying that they are very happy about the new baby.

It goes without saying that he will be paid for the extra hours he works.

(to) not have a clue: to know or understand nothing about something.

Tom doesn't have a clue about what he should say to Mary.

I don't have a clue about Japanese.

I don't have a clue about how to fix a car.

(to) not sleep a wink: to stay awake (not sleep at all).

Peter didn't sleep a wink last night because he was worried about his exam.

We didn't sleep a wink last night due to that noise.

(to be) nuts about = to be crazy about: to like something very much.

She is nuts about him, but he doesn't like her.

I nuts about this new cat.



LETTER O

Once in a while: not regularly; from time to time.

I saw him in the bar every once in a while.

I only see her husband every once in a while at home.

Over the moon: to be very pleased or happy about something.

Mary was over the moon about becoming a mother.

Tom was over the moon about his new car

Lucy was over the moon about getting a new job.

On cloud nine: extremely happy.

Lucy was on cloud nine after finally getting a job that she liked.

They were on cloud nine after winning the competition.

Out of the blue: without warning; unexpectedly or suddenly.

My old high school friend called me out of the blue last night.

He arrived out of the blue while I was having dinner.

On the level: telling the truth.

The dealer said she's giving us the best price in town. Do you think she's on the level?

On the verge of: very close to.

His company is on the verge of bankruptcy.

Tom was on the verge of tears when he heard that news.

These wild animals are on the verge of extinction.

If our team win the game tomorrow, we are on the verge of winning the championship.

Out of the woods: out of danger.

Fortunately, we are out of the woods.

Although her father feels a little better, he's not out of the woods yet.

Out of work: unemployed.

He has been out of work for three months.



Thousands of people are out of work these days.

(to be) on edge: nervous; irritable usually because you are worried about someone or something.

He felt on edge, upset, and increasingly worried.

She felt so on edge before the interview.

One's (own) flesh and blood: your family's members or relatives.

You have to be nice to your siblings. They are your own flesh and blood.

The young man is my own flesh and blood.

Out of the question: impossible.

I'm afraid a promotion is out of the question now.

It is out of the question to digest his theory.

(to be) out of practice: no longer good at doing something because you have not been doing it regularly.

If you don't play guitar regularly, you can soon get out of practice.

She is out of practice at dancing. It's likely that she won't dance well tonight.

On the mark: correct.

In my opinion, all the things that he said were right on the mark.

His speech was on the mark.

Once in a blue moon: very rarely/very seldom/almost never.

My son lives in Canada and he only comes to see us once in a blue moon.

My family used to live in Tokyo, but now we only go there once in a blue moon.

Out on the town: to enjoy yourself by going out, particularly in the evening.

Let's go out on the town and relax ourselves.

He has gone out on the town with his friends to celebrate his birthday.

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LETTER P

Put yourself in somebody's shoes: to imagine that you are in somebody's situation or circumstances in order to understand his/her feelings, opinion, or point of view.

I can see why you would feel that way when I put myself in your shoes.

If you put yourself in his shoes, I'm sure you don't like her.

I really appreciate his effort when I tried to put myself in his shoes.

Put all your eggs in one basket: put all your money into one thing.

Never put all your eggs in one basket, for example, don't invest all your money in one company.

She put all her eggs in one basket by investing all her money in stocks.

To pull yourself together: to get control of your emotions.

She's finding it hard to pull herself together after the accident.

It took him a while to pull himself together.

To pull one's leg: to be kidding.

It wasn't very fun to pull my leg like that.

If you pull her leg like that again, she'll never speak to you again.

To pop the question: to propose marriage (ask someone to marry you).

Mary said yes without a further thought when Tom popped the question.

Peter popped the question after dating Lucy for two years.

Tom went down on his knees and popped the question to his girlfriend last night.

To pull through: to get through an illness or a difficult situation.

The doctor is sure that she will pull through.

I'm afraid that the old man won't pull through.

To pop in: to arrive without notice.

My neighbor popped in for a visit last night.

My mother popped in at seven o'clock to see if I was at home.

(to) put up with: to endure someone or something without complaint.



I can't put up with her children any longer.

This machine is very awful. I can't put up with it any longer.

He is very impolite, and I can' put up with him.

(to) pay (someone) a compliment: to give someone a compliment (saying something nice about him/her).

He paid his girlfriend a compliment on her new haircut.

The professor paid her a compliment about her well-written thesis.

Pain in the neck: an annoying thing or person.

Those little kids are a real pain in the neck.

The barking dog is such a pain in the neck.

Paint the town red: to go out and have a great time.

We're planning to paint the town red tonight.

We painted the town red last night for my dad's 60th birthday.

To pass with flying colours: to achieve, or accomplish something very successfully.

He is studying hard and he will pass Ielts with flying colours.

He passed his exams with flying colours.

She passed her job interview with flying colours.

Pretty as a picture: very pretty/beautiful.

Mary looked pretty as a picture in her new dress.

The young woman is as pretty as a picture.

Mary was pretty as a picture after she got her hair and makeup done.

Pig out: to eat a large amount of food in a short amount of time.

He totally pigged out at the party last night.

The food was free at the buffet, so he pigged out.

We pigged out on chicken and roast beef at lunchtime.

Pay through the nose: to pay too much for something.

I usually have to pay through the nose for parking a car if I bring it into the city.



He paid through the nose to get the car fixed.

Poke around: look around a place, typically in search of something (you can poke around on the internet, you can poke around on the streets, etc. To look for/search for something).

Just poke around the internet, you'll find a lot of dating websites.

He poked around in his desk to see if the wallet was there.



LETTER R

Run of the mill: average, ordinary; commonplace; mediocre.

As far as I am concerned, she gave a fairly run-of-the-mill speech.

That restaurant has nothing special. The service and the food are just run of the mill.

To rub someone the wrong way: to irritate or annoy someone; to get on someone's nerves.

The way he smiles really rubs her the wrong way.

His girlfriend rubs him the wrong way.

(to) round up: to gather people or things together.

A group of 5 possible suspects were rounded up for questioning.

The herd of cattle are rounded up by the Cowboys.

(to) rant and rave: to talk loudly and complain angrily about something.

Please stop ranting and raving and listen to me for 1 minute.

She was ranting and raving about the price of food in the restaurant.

Rat race: an activity or job, or situation that makes people too busy to relax or enjoy themselves.

Tom decided to get out of the rat race and move to the countryside.

Working here like a rat race.

She wants to get away from the rat race.

Raining cats and dogs: pouring rain, raining heavily.

It's windy and is raining cats and dogs.

During the monsoon season, it rained cats and dogs.

It's raining cats and dogs outside.

To ring a bell: to sound familiar.

I think I heard this song somewhere. It definitely rings a bell.

His name rings a bell but I can't remember him.

Run out of steam: to completely lose energy, motivation, or enthusiasm.

Peter started to run out of steam after running for 15 km.



Lucy found she had run out of steam after climbing seven flights of stairs. I'm running out of steam after spending five hours working on this essay.

LETTER S

Sleep on it: to think more about something before making a decision.

I can't decide what to do now. Could I sleep on it and let you know soon today?

I decided to sleep on it and give you a call tomorrow.

Sit on the fence: to remain neutral, to delay making a decision.

We can't sit on the fence any longer, we need to make up our mind early.

Tom is sitting on the fence, he does not know whether to say yes or no to the offer.

Soul mate: someone with whom you have a special relationship with because you share the same feelings, attitudes, and beliefs.

Tom has been my soul mate for a long time.

She is my wife, my best friend, and my soul mate.

Set in your ways: not want to change your habits.

People tend to become set in their ways when they get older.

Mary was too set in her ways to make any real changes.

My grandfather is quite traditional and set in his ways.

Spring for: pay for something.

Tom offered to spring for the dinner last night.

Let me spring for lunch today.

(to) set eyes on: to see (someone or something), usually for the first time.

He told me that he loved his girlfriend the minute he set eyes on her.

My daughter has not set eyes on her new school yet.

(to) stab someone in the back: to betray someone who trusts you.

She almost died when her boyfriend stabbed her in the back.

He felt depressed when his son had stabbed him in the back.

(to be) stressed out: under severe strain; worried and nervous; very anxious.

He has been really stressed out because of work.

She is so stressed out about her job that she can't sleep at night.



(to) shake in one's shoes: to be afraid of something.

When he was face-to-face with the police, he was shaking in his shoes.

The old woman was shaking in her shoes for the first time of flying.

The little boy was shaking with fear.

Social butterfly: someone who knows a lot of people or friendly with everyone.

My sister is a social butterfly.

He doesn't really go out partying, but he is definitely a social butterfly.

Smell something fishy: to have a feeling of doubt or suspicion about someone or something.

I smell something fishy about this real estate deal.

I smell something fishy. I think that woman is not good.

Sick as a dog: very sick, extremely ill.

After last night's meal, she was sick as a dog.

Ever since John came here, he has been sick as a dog.

(as) sly as a fox: someone who is clever, cunning, wily, and tricky.

Many people don't like him because he is sly as a fox.

My boss is as sly as a fox.

Sleep like a baby: to sleep very well; to sleep deeply.

After a long, hard day at work, I slept like a baby last night.

He was very tired, so he went to bed, and slept like a baby.

Start from scratch: to do something again from the beginning.

Everything is completely ruined, so we should start from scratch.

Whenever my sister bakes a cake, she starts from scratch.

To show one's true colors: to reveal someone's real personality.

Katherine seemed nice at first, but she showed her true colors during the party.

When he tried to use a stolen credit card, he showed his true colors.

He finally showed his true colors in court.



I always regarded her as a friend, but she showed her true colors in the current emergency.

To start from square one: to start from the very beginning.

I have to start the game from square one.

Let's start from square one basics.



LETTER T

The in thing: to be very fashionable.

It's the in-thing to do at the moment.

The new iPhone is really the in thing at the moment.

This season, bald hairstyle is the in thing.

To talk someone into something: to convince or persuade someone to do something.

I think I can talk him into helping you.

I could probably talk her into driving you to school tomorrow.

She's managed to talk her husband into buying a new car.

To take it easy: to rest or relax.

Take it easy, man! Don't work so hard.

After her surgery, Sarah took it easy for a week.

Tie the knot: to get married.

Bill and Sarah will tie the knot next month.

After 3 years of dating each other, Tom and Mary have finally decided to tie the knot next July.

(to) talk over: to discuss.

We are talking over the problem.

We spent hours talking over the details of our new project.

(to) tell off: to scold/speak angrily to someone for doing something wrong.

She told her son off for lying to her.

Mary told her boyfriend off after he missed their date.

The cat that ate the canary: to look very happy/ very pleased.

He was smiling like the cat that ate the canary.

You look like the cat that ate the canary.

Throw in the towel: to quit; to give up.

You're almost finished! Don't throw in the towel!



Never throw in the towel.

Throw a fit: to become very angry.

Tom's mother threw a fit when she saw a mess that he'd made in his bedroom.

John threw a fit when he heard his car was stolen.

(like) two peas in a pod: very similar, especially in appearance.

Peter and his brother are like two peas in a pod.

The twins are like two peas in a pod.

LETTER U

Under one's breath: quietly; in a very quiet voice.

I heard his swear under his breath.

The timid girl was muttering under her breath.

(to be) up in the air: to be uncertain.

Everything is up in the air at the moment because he didn't get the job.

Because the management has failed to finalize the budget, the future of the project is up in the air.

To be under the weather: do not feel well; feel sick.

Tom was feeling a bit under the weather today, so he chose to take the day off.

I'm feeling a bit under the weather. I think I've caught a cold.

LETTER W

Watch out: be cautious; to be careful.

Watch out! There is a snake coming.

Watch out for that woman.

Watch out! the floor's quite slippery.

(to) work like a dog: to work very hard.

Mary works like a dog. She deserves the promotion.

Tom works like a dog to save money to buy a new house.

(to) work one's tail off: to work very hard.

He's lost one hundred dollars and works his tail off.

They work their tail off every single day for their kids!

to wine and dine: to entertain someone with food and drink, usually at a fancy restaurant.

He has not had a chance to wine and dine with her yet.

The company wined and dined the prospective clients.

(to) wrap up: to finish (doing) something.

It's 6 pm. Let's wrap up this meeting so we can go home early tonight.

We'll have time to see a movie if you wrap up your homework by 9 pm.

80 IELTS Writing Grammar Rules

These grammar tips are particularly crucial to improve your use of English for the IELTS exam, since the examiners will be evaluating the quality of your English in the Speaking and Writing parts of the test. Once you read and internalize the advice in this mini-guide, you will be better equipped to succeed at an advanced level of English. Let's get started!

1. The word "people" is ALWAYS plural.

People are always talking about him (NOT People is...)

The people in the room were starting to get nervous. (NOT: The people in the room was...)

2. After would rather, use an infinitive (without to) or a past tense, not a present tense.

I'd rather stay at home this evening. (NOT I'd rather to stay at home...)

I would rather you paid me in cash. (NOT I would rather you pay me in cash.)

3. Use an -ing form after be/get used to.

I'm used to driving in London now, but it was hard at the beginning. (NOT I'm used to drive...) I'll never get used to living in this place.

4. How long are you here for? Is a question about the future.

'How long are you here for?' 'Till Easter.' (NOT 'Since Christmas.')

5. Don't use could to talk about something that you succeeded in doing.

I managed to run 10 km yesterday in under an hour. (NOT I could run 10 km yesterday...)
How many eggs were you able to get? (NOT ...could you get?)

6. Indirect questions usually have the same construction as statements.

I asked where her parents were. (NOT USUALLY I asked where were her parents.)
The policeman wanted to know where I lived. (NOT ...where did I live?)

7. To say that something is not necessary, use needn't or don't have to, not mustn't.

You needn't pay now; tomorrow will be OK. (NOT You mustn't pay now; tomorrow will be OK.) I don't have to wear a tie at work. (NOT I mustn't wear a tie at work.)

8. Everything is a singular word.

Everything was broken. (NOT Everything were broken.)

Is everything ready?

9. Use because or so, but not both together.

Because the train was late I missed the meeting. OR The train was late, so I missed the meeting. (BUT NOT Because the train was late, so I missed the meeting.)

10. We say something to a person.

She never says 'Hello' to me. (NOT She never says me 'Hello'.)

Andrew has said nothing to Peter. (NOT Andrew has said Peter nothing.)

11. Tell normally needs a personal object.

He told us that he was going home. (NOT He told that he was going home.)

I've told you everything I know.

12. Don't use *every* to talk about two people or things.

You can park on each side of the street. (NOT ...on every side of the street.)

He was holding a glass in each hand.

13. Far is unusual in affirmative sentences, except in a very formal style.

We live a long way from here. (NOT USUALLY We live far from here, as it can sound too formal unless you say "We live quite far from here")
It's a long way to Manchester.

14. We don't usually use before to mean 'in front of'.

You can park in front of the station. (NOT ... before the station.)

There's a big tree just in front of our house.

15. After look, we use at with an object.

Look at the moon! (NOT Look the moon!) What are you looking at?

16. We use when, not as or while, to talk about ages and periods of life.

When I was 14 I first got interested in archaeology. (NOT As/While I was 14...)

We lived in London when I was a child. (NOT ... as/while I was a child.)

17. After as long as, use a present tense to refer to the future.

I'll remember this holiday as long as I live. (NOT ... as long as I will live.)

You can have my bike as long as you bring it back tomorrow.

18. We say as usual, not as usually.

Let's meet tomorrow at 10.00, as usual. Vanessa late as usual.

19. As well as (with a similar meaning to 'not only... but also') is normally followed by an -ing form.

As well as breaking his leg, he hurt his arm. (NOT As well as he broke his leg...)
He works full time as well as bringing up three children.

20. Expressions like in three hours' time refer to the future.

We'll need the report in two weeks' time. (BUT NOT He wrote the report in four hours' time.)
I'll see you again in a month's time.

21. We don't normally use to after arrive.

What time do we arrive in London? (NOT ... arrive to London?)

The train arrived at our station half an hour late.

22. Because is a conjunction; because of is a preposition.

We cancelled the match because it rained. (NOT ... because of it rained.)

We cancelled the match because of the rain. (NOT ... because the rain.)

23. After the verb lack, no preposition is necessary.

The soup lacks salt. (NOT ... lacks of salt.) It's a good novel, but it lacks structure.

24. Before (meaning 'before that') follows an expression of time.

Last summer, I decided to go and visit the town that I had left eight years before. (NOT ... before eight years.)

I had already met her once, about three years before.

25. News is singular and uncountable

All the news is bad. (NOT All the news are bad.)

I have some news for you (NOT I have a news for you)

26. You borrow something from somebody.

I borrowed the money from my brother. (NOT I borrowed my brother the money.)
Can we borrow some sugar from you?

27. We prefer closed, not shut, before a noun.

When I talk to you, I feel as if I'm standing in front of a closed door. (NOT ... a shut door.)
He's got a closed mind. You can't tell him anything.

28. We say come from (present) to give our town, country etc. of origin.

James comes from Liverpool. (NOT James came from Liverpool.)

Where do you come from?

29. Comparatives are made with more or -er, but never both.

The weather is getting colder. (NOT ... more colder.) Please try to be more polite. (NOT ... more politer.)

30. We never use on the contrary to give another side of a question.

It's hard work. On the other hand, it's interesting. (NOT on the contrary, it's interesting.)
She's very bad-tempered. On the other hand, she's generous.

31. In affirmative sentences we generally use a long time, not long, except in a very formal style.

We waited a long time, but she didn't come. (NOT We waited long, but ...)

It will be a long time before we invite her again.

32. Use superlatives to compare people and things with the groups that they belong to.

Sandra is the tallest of the five girls. (NOT Sandra is the taller of the five girls.)

I think I'm the oldest person in the class.

33. We often use in after dressed to describe the clothes

She was dressed in yellow from head to foot. She looked like a daffodil.

The bride was dressed in white silk.

34. We don't use it ... + infinitive with allow.

Smoking is not allowed. (NOT It is not allowed to smoke.)

We weren't allowed to use calculators in the exam. (NOT It wasn't allowed to use ...)

35. Whose means 'who is' or 'who has'; whose is a possessive.

Who's that? (NOT Whose that?)
Who's taken my keys? (NOT Whose taken my keys?)
Whose coat is that? (NOT Who's coat is that?)

36. We don't usually use other with uncountable nouns.

Can I have more rice? (NOT ... other rice?)
Perhaps we should use different oil. (NOT ... other oil.)

37. We use either, not any, to talk about two people or things.

I can write with either hand. (NOT ... with any hand.)

'Do you prefer Monday or Tuesday?' 'Either day will do.'

38. Don't put articles and possessives together before nouns.

She's a friend of mine. OR She's my friend. (BUT

NOT She's a my friend.)
Peter's lost his keys. (NOT ... the his keys.)

39. We say that somebody is good, bad, clever etc. at something.

My sister is very good at Science. (NOT ... good in Science.)

I'm very bad at languages.

40. Don't leave out a/an in negative expressions.

Don't got out without a coat. (NOT ... without coat.) It's difficult to get there if you haven't got a bike. (NOT ... if you haven't got bike.)

41. We use any, not every, to say 'one or another'.

'Which newspaper would you like?' 'It doesn't matter. Any one.' (NOT ... every one.) 'When would you like to come to dinner?' 'Any day is OK.'

42. Advice is uncountable.

Can you give me some advice? (NOT ... an advice?) My father gave me three pieces of advice. (NOT ... three advices.)

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43. We don't use some if we know the exact number.

You've got beautiful fingers. (NOT ... some beautiful fingers.)

A mountain bike needs to have strong wheels. (NOT ... some strong wheels.)

44. We don't use articles in some common expressions with home, school and bed.

Why isn't Angela at school today? (NOT ... at the school today?)

I want to spend a day in bed.

45. When which? what? or who? are subjects, we make questions without do.

Which costs more - the blue one or the grey one? (NOT Which does cost more ...?)

What happened to your bike? (NOT What did happen to your bike?)

Who phoned? (NOT Who did phone?)

46. We don't use articles after the amount/number of.

I was surprised by the amount of money that was collected. (NOT ... the amount of the money ...)
The number of unemployed rose sharply last month.

(NOT The number of the unemployed...)

47. We use because, not as or since, if the reason is the most important part of the sentence.

Why am I leaving? I'm leaving because I'm fed up. (NOT I'm leaving as/since I'm fed up.)
They're laughing because they think your hat's funny.

48. Travel is normally uncountable.

I like travel.

We went on a trip/journey to the Antarctic last spring. (NOT We went on a travel ...)

49. Can has no infinitive. We use be able to instead.

I'd like to be able to sing. (NOT ... to can sing.) When will you be able to meet us?

50. The difference between a and an depends on pronunciation, not spelling.

She's a US citizen. (NOT She's an US citizen.) Would you like to be an MP? (NOT ... a MP?)

51. Weather is uncountable.

We had terrible weather last week. (NOT ... a terrible

weather ...)

I hope we get good weather at the weekend.

52. Words like President, King, Doctor in titles have no article.

President Obama visited the Pope. (NOT The President Obama ...)

I'd like to see Dr Jones. (NOT ... the Dr Jones.)

53. We usually use over, not across, to mean 'on/to the other side of something high'.

Why are you climbing over that wall? (NOT ... across that wall?)

I threw his keys over the fence, where he couldn't get them.

54. Actually means 'really' or 'in fact', not 'now'.

She said she was 18, but actually she was 15. In 1700 the population of London was higher than it is now. (NOT ... than it actually is.)

55. Asleep and afraid are not normally used before nouns.

He had the innocent expression of a sleeping baby. (NOT ... of an asleep baby.)

In the house, we found a frightened child hiding in

the kitchen. (NOT ... an afraid child.)

56. We don't usually put an adverb and its complement together before a noun.

We're looking for people who are skilled in design. (NOT ... skilled in design people.)

He has a difficult accent to understand. (NOT ... a difficult to understand accent.)

57. Eventually means 'finally', not 'from time to time', 'possibly' or 'perhaps'.

It took a long time, but eventually he finished his studies.

I'm not sure what I'll do next year. Perhaps I'll go to university if I can get a place. (NOT Eventually I'll go to university ...)

58. We don't usually use too before adjective + noun.

The problem was too difficult. (BUT NOT It was a too difficult problem.)

I put down the bag because it was too heavy. (BUT NOT I put down the too heavy bag.)

59. We usually put descriptive adjectives before classifying adjectives.

An old political idea (NOT A political old idea)
The latest educational reform (NOT The educational latest reform)

60. Nouns referring to nationality are often different from the corresponding adjectives.

Graham is a typical Welshman. (NOT ... a typical Welsh.)

He's married to a Spaniard. (NOT ... a Spanish.)

61. Adjectives that express opinions usually come before other descriptive adjectives.

a lovely cool drink (NOT a cool lovely drink) their wonderful old house (NOT their old wonderful house)

62. Pronoun objects come before adverb particles.

Can you switch it on, please? (NOT ...switch on it...)

I'm going to throw them all out. (NOT ... throw out them all.)

63. Adverbs can't usually be used instead of adjectives.

She danced happily into the room. (NOT She danced happy ...)

I'm terribly sorry. (NOT I'm terrible sorry.)

64. After all doesn't mean 'finally'. It means 'all things considered' or 'in spite of what was expected'.

It took a long time, but finally we found our dream house. (NOT ... but after all we found our dream house.)

She can make her own bed. After all, she's not a baby any more.

I expected to fail the exam, but I passed after all.

65. Ago comes after an expression of time.

Ann phoned two hours ago. (NOT ... ago two hours.) I should have finished this work six weeks ago.

66. We don't normally use all without a noun to mean 'everybody'.

Everybody was quiet. (NOT All were quiet.)
I've written to everybody. (NOT I've written to all.)

67. In exclamations with how, the adjective or adverb comes immediately after how.

How cold it is! (NOT How it is cold!)
How well she sings! (NOT How she sings well!)

68. We don't use every with uncountable nouns.

I like all music. (NOT I like every music.)
I can do every kind of work. (NOT ... every work.)

69. After either, we use a singular noun.

I can come on Wednesday or Thursday - either day is OK. (NOT ... either days ...)
She can write with either hand.

70. We usually ask, 'What color ...?' without a preposition.

What color is your new bike? (NOT Of what color ...?)

What color is her hair this week?

71. We don't usually drop nouns after adjectives.

Poor little boy! (NOT Poor little!)
The most important thing is to be happy. (NOT The most important is to be happy.)

72. All day doesn't mean the same as every day.

I worked all day yesterday, from 8.00 till bedtime. I worked every day except Sunday last week. (NOT ... all day except Sunday ...)

Dilpreet Singh Mangat

73. Don't drop a/an after what in exclamations.

What a rude man! (NOT What rude man!)
What an awful film! (NOT What awful film!)

74. Experience and experiment don't mean the same.

We did an experiment in the chemistry lesson to see if you could get chlorine gas from salt. (NOT We did an experience ...)

I'm experimenting with a new perfume.

I had a lot of interesting experiences during my year in Africa. (NOT I had a lot of interesting experiments ...)

Have you ever experienced the feeling that you were going mad? (NOT Have you ever experimented the feeling ...?)

75. We don't usually use reflexive pronouns after feel.

I feel really energetic today. (NOT I feel myself really ...)

Andrew often feels depressed. (NOT ... feels himself depressed.)

76. We use half without of in expressions of measurement and amount.

They live about half a mile from here. (NOT ... half of a mile ...)

I only need half a pint.

77. We use hear, not listen to, to say that something 'comes to our ears'.

Suddenly I heard a strange noise. (NOT Suddenly I listened to a strange noise.)
Did you hear that?

78. After help, we can use object + infinitive (with or without to).

Can you help me (to) find my ring? (NOT ... help me finding my ring?)
Let me help you (to) wash up.

79. We usually say hope ...not, rather than do not hope.

I hope it doesn't rain tomorrow. (NOT I don't hope it rains tomorrow.)

'Is Peter coming this evening?' 'I hope not.'

80. We say that you crash into something.

Granny crashed into a tree yesterday. (NOT Granny

crashed against a tree yesterday.)
The plane crashed into a mountain.

100 Important Synonyms

THE LIST OF WORDS AND PHRASES
USED IN THE IELTS READING/LISTENING EXAM
THAT HAVE THE SIMILAR MEANING! Collected by Ajharul Islam

SYNONYMS/A

- · annual = yearly = per year
- · a rise = an increase = a growth.
- · a decrease = a fall = a drop = a decline = a reduction
- already = not new
- · a pair of = two
- · allow = enable
- avoid = keep safe from
- · all = every
- · a great deal of = a lot of
- according to = depending on
- · areas = parts
- · affect = impact
- · anticipate = foreshadow
- · aid = help
- · audience = viewer
- · abnormal = unusual
- · actor = performer
- · attack = assault
- · appearance = physiognomy
- · amusing = funny = humorous
- · aspects of life = existence
- · alone = solely
- · anxiety = fear
- · assist their learning = improve their learning efficiency
- · a considerable amount = a great deal = a lot
- · a strong connection = a very close relationship
- · assistant = apprentice
- · autumn (British English) = fall (American English)
- · abandoned = derelict
- · a prevailing wind = against the wind
- · average = normal
- · animals = livestock
- · accidentally = only by chance
- agencies = jurisdictions
- · a (wide) variety of = a range of

- · accept = tolerate
- · actively notice = pay attention to
- · a sense of duty = moral obligation
- · ancient creatures = fossils
- · a global team = an international working party
- · at risk = vulnerable
- · auditory problems = hearing loss
- · achievement = success
- · a psychological illness = a mental disorder
- · affect = influence
- · aggressive behavior = frustration and anger
- · average-sized = medium-sized
- · agree on = concur on
- · alter = change
- · a century = 100 years
- · associated with = relationship
- · achievement = attainment
- · admit = acknowledge
- · attempt = effort
- · affect the environment= ruin the environment.
- · a sharp decrease = a crash = a sudden serious fall in the price or value of something
- · allow = grant permission
- aggressive = assertive = pushy
- · aid = help = assist
- · at the same time = at a time
- · a few = a handful of
- · achievable = realistic
- · associated with = closely related to
- · a similar way to = like
- · ambitious = aspiring
- · antagonize = provoke = embitter
- · after = following = next
- · afraid = frightened = scared
- · always = forever
- · apparent = obvious = evident
- · accompanied by = together with
- · ability = skill = aptitude
- · accurate = correct = right
- · awful = dreadful
- · awkward = clumsy = uncoordinated
- approve = accept = ratify = endorse
- · arrive = reach = come
- · above = overhead

- · allow = permit
- · achieve = accomplish = attain
- · artificial = fake = synthetic = false
- · amazing = fantastic = astonishing = extraordinary = incredible = fabulous = wonderful
- · angry = mad = furious
- · active = energetic = animated = lively
- · adequate = sufficient = enough = ample
- · ask = question = inquire
- · adjourn = postpone = recess
- · active = energetic
- · answer = reply = respond
- · ask = question = request = inquire = query = examine.
- · adult = grown-up
- · average = ordinary = fair
- · attraction = spectacular
- · advocate = support = recommend
- · arrogant = haughty
- · after = behind
- · awful = dreadful = terrible = bad = unpleasant

Final day - A day before exam

First step: to identify the question type

How many question marks are there?

If 0 = Discuss format – on the one hand; on the other hand

If 1 = Agree/disagree - To begin with, other than this,

If 2 = Mixed - Which of these are asked (choose two)- Problems or consequences/ Solutions/ Causes/ Opinion

Second step: make notes by brainstorming your ideas. Try to develop by mentioning WHAT, WHY, HOW. Third step: Write your essay by using one of the formats.

Content	Agree/disagree	Discuss	Mixed
Question marks	1	0	2
Introduction	2 GENERAL STATEMENT + Subsequently, PARAPHRASING + OPINION STATEMENT (any 1 out of these ones) Agree – There can be no doubt in this owing to the fact thatREASON 1. Also, REASON 2 Disagree - There can be no doubt that this is not a viable option because REASON1. Also, REASON 2 Choose one -One can be convinced by the fact thatyour choicebecause REASON1. Also, REASON 2	2 GENERAL STATEMENT + Subsequently, some people think SIDE 1 because REASON. However, others think SIDE 2 as REASON. (add this line with any side you agree with - ,and this does make a lot of sense)	2 GENERAL STATEMENTS. Subsequently, PARAPHRASING. QUES 1 IDEAS. QUES 2 IDEAS. (Any 2 of them can be used for Q1 and Q2 ideas) PROBLEM – This has led to myriad concerns such as 1 and 2. SOLUTION – Drastic measures such as 1 and 2 need to be taken. CAUSES – There are myriad causes of this phenomenon /trend /issue /occurrence such as 1 and 2. Opinion – Personally, YOUR VIEWPOINT because 1 and 2 (you can also make only 1 here)
Body Paragraph 1	To begin with, TOPIC SENTENCE. In other words, SUPPORTING STATEMENTS. For example, EXAMPLE. Therefore, CLOSING SENTENCE	On the one hand, TOPIC SENTENCE. In other words, 3 SUPPORTING STATEMENTS. For example, EXAMPLE. Therefore /Personally, CLOSING SENTENCE. Write personally - if you agree with this paragraph	Choose one of the connectors from here. Problem - one major concern foris Solution - An effective measure tois Causes - One leading cause foris Opinion - One of the significant reasons for/whyis Connector + TOPIC SENTENCE. In other words, 2-3 SUPPORTING STATEMENTS. Other than this, 2nd point. For example, EXAMPLE. Therefore, CLOSING SENTENCE.
Body Paragraph 2	Other than this, TOPIC SENTENCE. To elaborate, 3 SUPPORTING STATEMENTS. For instance, EXAMPLE. Admittedly, CLOSING SENTENCE	On the other hand, TOPIC SENTENCE. To elaborate, 3 SUPPORTING STATEMENTS. For instance, EXAMPLE. Therefore /Personally, CLOSING SENTENCE. Write personally - if you agree with this paragraph	Choose one of the connectors from here. Problem - one major concern for is Solution - An effective measure tois Causes - One leading cause foris Opinion - One of the significant reasons for/whyis Connector + TOPIC SENTENCE. To elaborate, 2-3 SUPPORTING STATEMENTS. Apart from this, 2nd point. For instance, EXAMPLE. Admittedly, CLOSING SENTENCE.
Conclusion	The obvious conclusion to be drawn is that 2 LINES SUMMARY OF 1ST BODY PARAGRAPH. Apart from this, 2 LINES SUMMARY OF 2ND BODY PARAGRAPH. A thought to end using conditional.	The obvious conclusion to be drawn is that many individuals think SIDE 1 REASON (1 sentence). At the same time, others think SIDE 2 REASON(1 sentence). Considering both sides, it can be seen that+YOUR VIEWPOINT(2 sentences). A thought to end usingconditional	The obvious conclusion to be drawn is that 2 lines summary of 1st body paragraph. 2 lines summary of 2nd body paragraph. A thought to end using conditional.

Fourth step: Add these words and sentence structure to make your essay more appealing

■ Not only but also – This not only helps but also
■ In order to allay (reduce) the effect, one can
■ Even though/Although technology is available, some places are void of the same.
■ Since the beginning of era,
■ Some people are more inclined towards the positive side whereas others go with the
negative one.
■ First conditional – Real/Possible - if + simple present , wiii
If people start taking care of the environment, we will have a better
environment.
■ Second conditional – Unreal/impossible - If + simple past, would
If people stopped being selfish, we would have a better environment.
■ It can be seen that
As we all know
 One can't be oblivious to the fact that
■ There is no denying the fact that
■ It has been seen that
■ As per some individuals,
■ A lot of people think

Lexical Resources

■ Utterly impossible – This can be utterly impossible
■ Deeply concerned -People should be deeply concerned about
■ Radically different – This can be radically different than others.
al al
■ Myriad – a lot of - There are myriad reasons for the same.
■ Particularly salient –important - It is as particularly salient as anything else in this world.
 Oblivious – unaware – People are oblivious of its effects.
20
■ Perfectly viable option – feasible, possible - that's a perfectly viable option to control it.

Last step -

REVISION CHECKLIST

Make sure you take out five minutes to revise frequent minor errors that increase the error count and make a major difference.

Avoid present continuous – Make sure you remove -ing form. Most of the statements are facts.
 For facts, use simple present

2. Commas

Never put a comma after 'that'.

Put a comma after connectors such as -f to begin with, other than this, On the one hand, in other words, apart from this,

Add a comma before conjunctions such as For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So (FANBOYS) if you use these words to connect two independent sentences, use a comma.

3. Subject-verb agreement

Singular subject such as it, this, a child, an individual, a company, a country, - Verb+s/es. Plural subject such as they, those, these, children, individuals, companies, countries, - Verb

4. Articles

A/An – for singular things you are mentioning for the first time.

The – For singular/plural things you are mentioning the second time. Also, for things that are one of its kind – internet, world, environment.

If still not sure, out - any, few, some before subjects.

- 5. Make sure first sentence of every paragraph can't have a pronoun such, this, that, these, those, its, it.
- **6. Introduction and conclusion** must have 5-lines style. 2 General statements. 1 paraphrasing. 2 statements describing 2 body paragraph content.
- 7. Examples A BIG NO TO I, you, me, my, mine, research/survey, universities, 5%, 10% Remove such examples. They are not mandatory. Don't write if it is a poor example

8. Add a connector

1st line of body paragraph - to begin with, other than this, On the one hand,

2nd line - In other words, to elaborate

Last line - admittedly, therefore, personally,

Thanks

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