

# Advanced Writing Part 1: Formal Essay

## WRITING, PART 1

You have attended a presentation at your college entitled 'Online shopping and the end of the high street shop'. The presenter included some comments she received during interviews with consumers. You have made the notes below.

Areas that the presenter focused on:

- convenience
- cost
- enjoyment

Some comments made by consumers:

'Online shopping means avoiding parking fees and crowds.'

'Goods are more reasonably priced on the Internet.'

'I love shopping and trying things on.'

Write an essay for your tutor discussing two of the areas in your notes. You should explain which area you think most influences how people shop and provide reasons to support your opinion. You may if you wish, refer to the consumers' comments, but you should use your own words as far as possible.

## Version 1

Read version 1 and answer the questions:

1. Which of the three areas (convenience, cost & enjoyment) does the writer focus on?
2. Which one do they decide has the biggest impact on where people choose to shop?
3. Give the essay a score out of 5 for:
  - a. Content (have they answered the question?)
  - b. Range of language
  - c. Appropriate style (formal/informal)
4. Look at the sections in bold, how could you express the same ideas in a more impressive/formal way?

**We're always hearing in the news** about how **more and more people are buying things on the internet**. It's **a big problem** that fewer people are going shopping in physical shops **nowadays**. But, **what makes people decide where to shop?**

**First, let's look at convenience. It's true that** shopping online is **much easier than** shopping in physical shops. You can **buy stuff on your computer** and you can **sit on your sofa**, you **don't need to leave your house**. **Also**, the stuff **gets sent to your house**. When you go to the physical shop you have to take it home yourself.

**Now I'll talk about cost. Some people think that** cost is **the most important thing** people think about when they decide where to shop. **For example**, when the sales are on people buy things in shops they **don't normally go to**. **But** some people don't care about the price. **It doesn't matter if it's expensive or not**.

**In conclusion, looking at the facts, I think that** cost **is the most important thing** for most people because if you **don't have enough money**, you **can't buy it**.

## Version 2

*Find and underline the ways that the same ideas are expressed in this version.*

Hardly a week goes by without another news report about the recent dramatic increase in online shopping. The decline of the high street shop is undoubtedly a major issue in this day and age. However, which aspect of shopping has the biggest influence on where people shop?

The first area to take into account is convenience. It is undoubtedly the case that shopping online is much more convenient than shopping on the high street. Not only can you make a purchase with the click of a button, but also you can do it from the comfort of your sofa without setting foot outside your door. In addition, the goods are delivered directly to your door whereas when you shop in physical shops you have to carry it home yourself.

Another aspect to consider is cost. There are those who argue that cost has the biggest impact on where people decide to shop. This is illustrated by the fact that during the sales many people buy things in shops they would not normally enter. Nevertheless, for some people the cost is not an issue, they buy what they want to buy no matter the price.

In light of the above, weighing up all the evidence, it is probably true to say that cost does indeed have the biggest influence on where people decide to shop due to the fact that most of the time, if you cannot afford something then you will not be able to buy it.

(247 words)

## Homework Task

Your class has had a class debate on the most important factors when it comes to deciding on a holiday destination.

Factors when deciding where to go on holiday:

- Weather
- Price
- Cultural activities

Some opinions expressed in the debate:

- "If it's not a sunny place, then I'm not going. Why would I visit a cold, rainy city?"
- "I want my money to go further. For the price of a weekend in Paris, I could spend 2 weeks in Morocco."
- "I can't stand just lying on a beach, I need to get out and learn something about the places I'm visiting."

Write an essay for your tutor, discussing **two** of the factors in your notes. You should explain **which factor is the most important for most people, giving reasons** to support your argument.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed in the debate but you **should use your own words** as far as possible. Write your essay in **220-260 words** in an **appropriate style**.

## Language for introductions

- In this day and age...
- ... is a hotly-debated topic that often divides opinion.
- ... is a growing issue in today's society
- We live in an age when many of us are...
- Over the past ten years or so the media have frequently carried reports of .....
- Recent research indicates that ...
- Hardly does a week go by without another report of ..... appearing in the media.

## Language for topic sentences

### Second Paragraph

- .... clearly/undoubtedly has an impact on...
- It is common knowledge that... plays a crucial role in...
- It is undoubtedly the case that...
- There is little doubt that...
- ... is widely believed to contribute to...
- It is generally considered that...
- Recent research suggests that...
- Studies have shown that... has an impact/influence on...
- Few people would contest/dispute the fact that...

### Third Paragraph

- Another factor to consider is...
- On the other hand/In contrast...
- It is often claimed that...
- All the evidence suggests that...

## Language for supporting ideas

- For example,
- For instance,
- An obvious example of this is...
- A clear example of this is...
- This is illustrated by...
- As a case in point...

## Language for conclusions:

- In light of the above, / Taking all this into consideration/account,...
- ... is the most effective way to... due to the fact that...
- In light of the above, / Taking all this into consideration/account,...
- Despite the fact that... undoubtedly plays a role in... I firmly believe that... is more effective due to the fact that...
- (What is most crucial is...)

## Useful Grammar

Have you included...?

- An inversion (not only/no sooner/seldom)
  - Hardly does a week go by without another report of ..... appearing in the media.
  - Not only does... but also....
- An inverted conditional
  - 1st: **Should** the government make participation in sport obligatory, obesity levels **will** undoubtedly fall.
  - 2nd: **Were** the government to make participation in sport obligatory, obesity levels **would** undoubtedly fall.
  - 3rd: **Had** the government **acted** sooner, obesity **would not have become** such a pressing issue.
- A participle clause (That being the case.../Having said that...)
  - Because of that: I love Valencia. **That being the case**, I will stay here all my life.
  - Contrast: I love Valencia. **Having said that**, it can get too hot in the summer.
- A double comparative (The more/less... the more/less)
  - **The more** children read, **the higher** their level of English in school.
  - **The less time** spent playing computer games, **the better**.
- A cleft sentence
  - Conclusion: Of the two aforementioned points, what is most crucial is that local government aims to reduce crime in the city centre.
- Impressive linkers
  - (Nevertheless/despite/due to/consequently)
- Adverbs
  - Surprisingly, obviously, importantly, principally, undeniably, clearly etc