

FOR AND AGAINST ESSAYS (PROS&CONS)

A "for and against" essay is a formal piece of writing in which a topic is considered from opposing points of view. You should present both sides in a fair way by discussing them objectively and in equal detail. A good essay of this type should consist of:

- a) an introductory paragraph in which you clearly state the topic to be discussed, without giving your opinion;
- b) a main body in which the points for and against along with your justifications, examples or reasons are presented in separate paragraphs; and
- c) a closing paragraph in which you state your opinion or give a balanced consideration of the topic.

Note: Opinion words (I think, I believe, In my opinion, etc.) can only be used in the closing paragraph where you give your opinion on the topic.

STRUCTURE

Introduction

Paragraph 1

State topic (summary of the topic without giving your opinion)

Main Body

Paragraph 2

Arguments for & justifications, examples, and/ or reasons

Paragraph 3

Arguments against & justification, examples, and/or reasons

Conclusion

Final Paragraph

Balanced consideration/ your opinion directly or indirectly

Points to consider:

1. Before you start writing your essay you should make a list of the points for and against.
2. Each paragraph should start with a topic sentence which summarises the topic of the paragraph.

e.g. In addition, many people feel reading is a relaxing and worthwhile activity.

3. Do not use informal style (*e.g. short forms, colloquial language, etc.*) or strong language to express your opinion (*e.g. I know..., etc.*). Express your opinion in a non-emotional way (*e.g. It seems that, I therefore feel, etc.*).
4. Well-known quotations relevant to the topic you are writing about will make your composition more interesting. For example, if you are writing an essay on education, a quotation you may include is: "*Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance.*" (Will Durant)

Note: Although these are "balanced" arguments, if you feel that either the for or against side is stronger and should be supported, this side should be presented in paragraph 3, thus leading the reader to your conclusion.

5. Useful expressions and linking words/phrases:

• To introduce examples:

For example, for instance, such as, like, in particular, particularly, especially, This is (clearly) illustrated/shown by the fact that... One/A clear/striking/ typical example of (this)... The fact that.... shows/illustrates that...

• To emphasise a point:

clearly, obviously, it is obvious, naturally, of course, needless to say, indeed...

- **To express reality:**

In fact, the fact (of the matter) is, actually, in practice, it is a fact that, in effect...

- **To make general statements:**

As a (general) rule, generally, in general, on the whole, by and large, in most cases...

- **To make partially correct statements:**

To a certain extent/degree, to some extent/degree, in a way/sense, this is partly true (but), to a limited extent, there is some truth in (this), in some cases, up to a point...

- **To explain/clarify a point:**

In other words, that is to say, this/which means that

- **To express cause:** *owing to, due to (the fact that), on account of, on the grounds that, given that, because, as, since...*

- **To express effect:** *therefore, thus, as a result/consequence, consequently, so, for this reason, if... were to happen, ... the effect/result would be...*

- **To express intention:** *to, so as to, in order to, so that, with the intention of (+ing)...*

Useful expressions and linking words/phrases: Conclusion expressing balanced considerations/opinion indirectly.

In conclusion,

On balance,

All things considered,

Taking everything into account/consideration,

To conclude,

To sum up,

All in all,

Finally/Lastly,

..... *it can be said/claimed that ...*

..... *it seems/appears that...*

..... *it would seem that...*

..... *it is likely/unlikely/possible/foreseeable that ...*

..... *it is clear/obvious that...*

..... *there is no/little doubt that ...*

..... *it is true to say that ...*

..... *although it must be said that ...*

..... *it may be concluded/said that ...*