

Units 3 & 4 Writing worksheet

Writing an opinion essay

GOAL: write an opinion essay for an art and culture magazine.

Include: reasons and expressions for ordering essays and giving opinions; references to time, place and result.

1 Read the essay title. To what extent do you agree with it?

Some people believe that everyone should be able to visit museums for free. Discuss your opinion on having free museums in Cyprus.

2 Read the opinion essay. Does the author agree with the essay title? Make notes of reasons the author gives.

It is believed by some people that museums should be free for everyone. I agree with this statement. In this essay, I will discuss both sides of the argument and give reasons to support my opinion.

Firstly, museums are places where history and culture come alive. However, since museums can be expensive, some people think it is better to look at photos of museum artefacts online. This is not the same as seeing the real thing, so making museums free helps people to understand history and culture better. Secondly, more people would visit museums if entry was free. This means everyone, not only well-off people, would be able to learn about culture and history.

On the other hand, some people argue that museums need money to operate. They say that if people do not pay to enter, the government will have to provide more money. This may be true, but my view is that museums could have special limited times for free entry. For example, families could enter for free after school in the afternoon. At these times, museums could ask people to make a donation to enter rather than pay for a ticket.

In conclusion, it is clear to me that allowing people free entry to museums is a good thing because it gives everyone the opportunity to learn about history and culture. Even if free entry is only introduced at certain times, it would benefit society and allow people to learn more about history and culture.

Writing skill analysing the essay title

Before you start writing, you should analyse the essay title. This helps you to understand what you are expected to write about and to plan how and what you are going to write. Taking the time to analyse the title can make the difference between a good and a bad essay.

Follow these steps:

- 1 Read the essay title. Then read the essay title again!
- 2 Look for the **instruction word** that tells you what to do.
- 3 Look for topic words that tell you what you have to write about.
- 4 Look for restricting words that make the topic more focused.

Look at the example:

Discuss your opinion on having free museums in Cyprus.

3 Read the essay titles. Identify the *instruction*, *topic* and *restricting words* and complete the table.

Many people think that studying art at a young age is a waste of time. Discuss your view on young children studying art in primary schools in your country, giving reasons.

Some people believe that museums need to be entertaining as well as educational. Discuss your opinion on whether museums should entertain as well as educate young people.

Instruction words	Topic words	Restricting words

Writing mechanics giving reasons

We can use connectors such as *because* and *since* to join two sentences to give a reason in order to support an opinion. The connector goes before the reason. For example:

*Museums should be free **because** this gives everyone the opportunity to learn about history.*

***Since** some museums are expensive, people are more likely to look at photos online.*

4 Match the beginnings of the sentences (1–5) with the endings (a–e).

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 I think he is one of the best artists in the world | — |
| 2 As fewer people are going to the theatre, | — |
| 3 As a result of her hard work, | — |
| 4 Because they had creative writing lessons, | — |
| 5 Since art is not seen as an important school subject, | — |

a the museum was able to open the exhibition on time.

b they did very well in the short story competition.

c they will have to charge more for tickets.

d not many people spend time drawing and painting.

e because his paintings are so unusual and beautiful.

Writing mechanics talking about time, place and result

When we write an essay, we can join sentences so that our ideas flow better and the essay is more enjoyable to read. We can use different words to join sentences, according to whether we are talking about time, place or results.

Time

*Children could go **when** they finish school or at weekends.*

*People bought tickets for the concert **as soon as** they went on sale.*

The order of ideas can be changed.

***As soon as** the tickets went on sale, people bought them.*

Place

*Museums are places **where** art and history come alive.*

*This is the studio **in which** he painted his most famous pictures.*

Result

*More people would visit. **Therefore**, museums could get more donations.*

*More people would visit. **As a result**, museums could get more donations.*

5 Choose the correct option.

- 1 Museums are places *in which / when* ancient artefacts can be displayed.
- 2 *As soon as / Therefore* people had to pay, the number of visitors went down.
- 3 Galleries are expensive to run, *so / as soon as* they have to charge people to visit.
- 4 The concert hall held a fund-raising event. *As a result, / So* they raised 16,000 euros.
- 5 That was the gallery *where / which* the artist Elena Carras had her first exhibition.
- 6 *Until / When* visitors start paying to visit the museum, it will have to rely on donations.

6 Read the opinion essay title. Underline the instruction, topic and restricting words.

Some people say we should not spend much time or money on preserving art from the past. Instead, we should concentrate on creating modern art. Discuss your opinion on preserving traditional art and developing modern art in Cyprus.

7 Complete the plan for the opinion essay title in Exercise 6.

Introduction

What is the essay about?

.....

What is my opinion?

.....

Body paragraph 1

What reasons support my opinion?

.....

.....

Body paragraph 2

What contrasting opinions are there? What is my response to these?

.....

.....

Conclusion

How can I summarise my opinion and reasons?

.....

8 Look at the *Key language* box. Which expressions does the writer use in the text in Exercise 2?

Key language expressions for ordering essays and giving opinions

Introduction

It is believed by ...

Some people think that ...

Many people believe that ...

I (strongly) agree ...

I do not agree ...

I (generally) think that ...

In my opinion, ...

In my view ...

I believe that ...

Supporting your opinion

Firstly, ...

Secondly, ...

Another important point is that ...

For example, ...

For instance, ...

This means ...

Contrasting opinions

On the other hand ...

However, ...

Although ...

This may be true, but my view is that ...

Conclusion

In conclusion, ...

To summarise, ...

It is clear (to me) that ...

It can be seen that ...

9 Write an opinion essay for an art and culture magazine. Use your plan, connectors to join ideas and give reasons, and expressions from the *Key language* box. Write 120–150 words.

10 Read your partner's work and tick (✓) the checklist.

Has your partner ...

- ☐ ... followed the essay instructions correctly?
- ☐ ... given reasons and contrasting opinions?
- ☐ ... written about time, place and/or result?
- ☐ ... used key language for opinion essays?