***Student’s name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Course:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

**HOW TO WRITE AN OPINION ESSAY**

An opinion essay exists to prove your main point – your **thesis**. This should be clearly stated in your opening paragraph. Don’t leave the reader to guess what your position is on the issue – make a clear stand!

Next, develop your argument in the body of your essay. Each paragraph should contain a single, clear idea that support your point of view. You can use examples and illustration, cause-and-effect reasoning, comparison/contrast or other methods of development to support your argument.

**SECTION I. Planning and organization**

1. Think about the introduction (first paragraph). This should state what the situation is.

2. Decide whether you agree or disagree with the title.

3. Think of at least two or three reasons to support your opinion, including examples of why you think the alternative point of view is wrong.

4. Think of how to express your conclusion (a summary of your opinion)

5. Use a formal style: no contractions or colloquial expressions.

6. Write a draft, first. It should have four or five paragraphs: introduction, reasons and conclusion

7. Check your composition for grammar, punctuation or spelling mistakes.

***Example on how paragraphs are divided when writing an opinion composition should be divided:***

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| **PARAGRAPH 1**  ·         Introduce the topic and give your opinion. Say whether you agree or disagree with the statement. |
| **PARAGRAPH 2**  ·         Give a reason to support your opinion. |
| **PARAGRAPH 3**  ·         Give a second reason to support your opinion. |
| **PARAGRAPH 4**  ·         Summarize your ideas and repeat your opinion using different words. |

***DO’S AND DON’TS***

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| **Basic don’ts in writing an opinion** |
| Don’t use colloquial expressions. |
| Don’t use short forms. |
| Don’t use emotive vocabulary. |
| Don’t give personal examples. |

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| ***Basic dos in writing an opinion*** |
| Introduce each paragraph with a topic sentence, outlining the main ideas. |
| Do not write about advantages or disadvantages or points for or against. |
| Write in formal style. |

**SECTION II . VOCABULARY**

Below are some phrases that you can use to help express opinions and write your composition.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *EXPRESSING OPINIONS* | |
| In my opinion, …. | In my view,… |
| Personally, I think/ I believe (that)… | From my point of view, …. |
| I strongly believe that…. | As far I am concerned, … |
| It is clear (to me) that… | I am sure/ convinced that … |
| I (completely) agree/disagree with … | As I see it, … |
| It seems to me that… | To my mind…. |

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| *EXPRESSING CONTRAST (LINKERS OF CONTRAST)* | |
| Although | Although I was feeling depressed, I went to the party. |
| Despite | Despite the rain, I went to the party.  Despite feeling depressed, I went to the party. |
| In spite of | In spite of the rain, I went to the party.  In spite of feeling depressed, I went to the party. |
| Even if | I will go to the party, even if I feel depressed. |
| Whereas | Adults can make their own decisions, whereas teenagers have to do what other people tell them. |
| However | Mike is a very good singer. However, he can’t play any instruments. |
| On the one hand … On the other hand, | On the one hand, they are extremely rich. But on the other hand, they have lots of debts. |

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| *ADDING IDEAS* |
| What is more,… |
| Moreover/ furthermore/ in addition (to) |
| Apart from (that)… |
| Firstly,… |
| First of all,… |
| Secondly,.. |
| Thirdly,… |
| Lastly,… |
| Finally,… |

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| *CONCLUDING THE ESSAY* |
| To sum up,… |
| To conclude,… |
| In conclusion,… |
| It is clear that,… |
| All in all,… |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *EXPRESSING FACTS* | |
| It is widely known that… |
| It is a well-known fact that … |
| Research has shown that… |
| There are definitely… |
| It is a fact that… |
| It is clear/ true that… |
| For example/ for instance,... |

***SECTION III. EXAMPLES***

***EXERCISE I.***

***a)*** *Read the following composition and fill in the blanks with a word or expression from the list:*

furthermore recently as a result in conclusion on the other hand

***“Genetic engineering brings with it more dangers than benefits and should be banned worldwide”. Discuss.***

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1) , advances in science have demonstrated to us that things that once seemed possible only in science fiction could become a reality. The cloning of a sheep brought the possibility of using genetic engineering to create new organs, or even whole human beings, one step closer.

Some people consider this to be a dangerous development, and believe that all that research should be banned. Interfering with nature in this way could bring with it dangers that none of us can imagine. We have no idea how an artificially-created person might behave, or indeed how he or she might suffer.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (2), we may find ourselves in a position which we do not like, but which we are unable to reverse.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (3), many people would say that it is not for human beings to decide what other human beings should be like. It is not only people with deep religious beliefs who feel that it is wrong, for example, for parents to choose whether their baby will be a boy or a girl, or have blue eyes or musical talent.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (4), the latest research in genetics has also opened the possibility of new treatment for many diseases which up to now have been incurable. If it were possible to prevent a baby from developing a hereditary disease by modifying its genes, should we stop 2 the scientists? If doctors could replace a diseased organ with a new one grown from cells, should it not be allowed?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (5), I would say that genetic engineering has the potential to be both a huge benefit and a terrible curse for humankind. To make sure that we benefit from it, it will be necessary to control it very strictly. The real challenge will be to find ways of monitoring the research that is conducted in laboratories all over the world and to make sure that it is only used for the good of everyone.

***Text adapted from OXFORD STUDENT´S DICTIONARY***

**b)** *In the box below you will find some more linking words and expressions you can use to substitute for the ones used in the composition above.*

*Can you match the words with the blanks?*

Moreover consequently therefore nevertheless however to sum up

in addition finally nowadays

***EXERCISE II.***

Here you will find another example of opinion composition. Read it carefully and complete with the words in the box.

although to sum up such as secondly like personally besides

think so firstly just

***“Top sports people earn too much money nowadays”.***

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In most countries today top sports people, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1) footballers, tennis players and basketball players, get enormous salaries. In a week they often earn more than ordinary people in a year. Is this really too much? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (2) I do not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (3). \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (4), the active life of a professional sports person is relatively short – they often retire when they are in their mid-thirties. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (5), many of them do not even play that long, as they often get injured, which means they have to retire early. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (6), \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (7) their salaries are very high they are not much higher than those of other successful people in the entertainment industry \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (8) pop singers, actors or TV personalities, whose professional careers can last for fifty years. Sport today is watched by millions of people, so it should be considered entertainment \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (9) like the cinema or TV. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (10), I think that top sports people´s high salaries are not unfair if you compare them with people doing similar jobs.

**TASK.**

**Write an opinion essay by following the criteria previously stated. Choose one of the next topics of your preference to do this task. Write it in about 160 words.**

* Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Children should be required to help with household tasks as soon as they are able to do so. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.
* Some people believe that a college or university education should be available to all students. Others believe that higher education should be available only to good students. Discuss these views. Which view do you agree with? Explain why.
* When students move to a new school, they sometimes face problems. How can schools help these students with their problems? Use specific reasons and examples to explain your answer.
* Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People are never satisfied with what they have; they always want something more or something different. Use specific reasons to support your answer.

***Information adapted and taken from:***

*Escuela oficial de idiomas Oviedo* [*http://www.eoioviedo.org/*](http://www.eoioviedo.org/)

*The Murphy Centre* [*http://www.murphycentre.ca/*](http://www.murphycentre.ca/)