

MEGABOOK OF IDEAS

WRITING TASK-2

Who is this book for?

This is a suitable book for **busy students** and **busy teachers** of IELTS. 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 just grammar, it is not your use of words like 'moreover' or 'in addition', and it is not your use of phrases like 'this is controversial issue nowadays ...'. To get a high score, you need to use good **'topic language'** i.e. 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?

There is an enormous amount of advice in this book. Here is a summary of what I suggest:

- **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.

- **Copy my ideas**

If you only use the vocabulary that you already know, you will not learn anything new, and you will not improve. Practice linking my topic ideas together to write perfect essays.

How to use these ideas

One way is to practice writing paragraphs using the e-book ideas:

Some ideas from the e-book about the benefits of mobile phones:

- The mobile phone is the most popular gadget in today's world.
- 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.
- Mobile phones have revolutionized the way we communicate.

By linking these ideas and adding a few things, we can write a paragraph:

The mobile phone has become the most popular gadget in today's world. The reason for this is that it is portable and versatile. Mobile phones are now carried at all times by most people, allowing us to stay in touch with family, friends and colleagues wherever we are. Furthermore, they now have many more functions than a standard telephone; mobile phone users can send text messages, surf the Internet, take photos and listen to music, as well as making calls. Mobiles have become fashion accessories, and they have revolutionized the way we communicate.

(93 words)

From ideas to paragraph

It's always recommended planning ideas for their main body paragraphs before starting to write. Let's look at how to put some ideas together to make a paragraph. Here's the question:

*The main reason people go to work is to earn money.
To what extent do you agree or disagree?*

Ideas for one main paragraph:

- Agree that money is the main reason people work
- People look at salary first, they rarely take a salary cut
- Need to live, pay bills, food etc.
- Look after our families, save for the future
- Otherwise, most people would probably choose not to work

Full paragraph using the ideas above:

I agree that the majority of people work in order to earn money. Before taking any other factors into account, it is normal to first consider the salary that a particular post offers, and it is rare to hear of a person who happily takes a cut in pay when beginning a new job. We all need money to pay for our basic necessities, such as accommodation, bills and food. Many adults also have families who depend on the wages they earn, and at the same time they are conscious of the need to save for the future. If we no longer needed money, I doubt most of us would choose to continue in our jobs.

(116 words)

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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 and services
- 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 trend
- 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 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 / medical breakthroughs
- Many important medical discoveries involved experimentation on animals
- Researchers aim to minimize the suffering that animals experience
- Testing for the cosmetics industry is now banned in many countries
- Some medical or scientific experiments simply cannot be done on humans

Arguments against Animal Testing

- The benefits of research using animals do not justify the suffering caused
- It is cruel if it is just done to publish papers
- There are alternative methods of research
- Computer simulation can be used in most cases
- 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 animal for food
- A vegetarian diet may reduce the risk of disease 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 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 behavior
- 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
- They best way to save endangered species is by protecting natural habitats
- Some people believe that zoos are unethical
- Zoos exhibits animals with the aim of making money
- We have no right to use animals for entertainment and profit.

3. Cities

Reasons for Urbanization

- 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 on cities
- There is a gap between rich and poor
- Life in cities can be extremely stressful
- There are problems like traffic congestion or traffic jams and crime
- Cities lack a sense of community
- People do not even know their neighbor(s)
- Cities are sometimes described as “concrete jungles”.

Pedestrian Areas

- Pedestrian zones in city centre 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' behavior 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 programs.
- 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 qualification 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

Drawback 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 place
- 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 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 machine
- 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

Advantage 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 Behavior in Schools: Causes

- Bad behavior is due to a lack of structure and discipline
- There are too many children in some classes
- Large classes are difficult to manage
- May 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 Behavior in Schools: Solutions

- Schools need a clear code of conduct
- Schools need a clear set of rules about behavior
- 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 behavior

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
- Student 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.

6. Environment

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 industrialized
- 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 temperature 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

Impacts 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 airlines 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 that 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 to buy the newest fashions
- Packaging is an important part of selling
- Most foods are sold in non-biodegradable plastics 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 street
- 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 build more nuclear power stations
- Fossil fuel like oil and gas are running out
- Nuclear power is a 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.



7. Family

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 influence on children's behavior
- 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 number of elderly people
- Nursing homes can provide professional medical care
- Some families are unable to look after elderly relatives
- Families tend to be smaller these days, and women often have full-time jobs
- Cares 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 resources
- We all have a responsibility towards the older people in our society
- Governments should invest money in facilities and training for care workers or social service workers

8. Gender

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
- Student's 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 Roles 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 human's 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 part
- 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 fertilizers 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 in these countries is usually lower than 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
- Globalization may also help developing countries
- Multi-national companies can create 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 other countries in search of a better life
- Many immigrants come from less developed countries
- Richer, industrialized 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 permit
- Governments should stop companies from exploiting immigrant workers
- Foreign and local workers should have the right to equal pay and conditions

Positives of Globalization

- Business of 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
- Globalization can also create opportunities for employment
- It encourages investment in less developed countries
- It could reduce poverty in the developing world

Negatives of Globalization

- Globalization 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 Globalization

- 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/more job opportunities
- 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 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 computers 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
- Discriminations against disabled people is illegal in many countries
- Ramps and lifts for wheelchairs should be installed in public buildings
- Support teacher 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-defense
- 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 the 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 the 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

Arm Trade: Positives

- The export of arms, or weapons, is an extremely controversial issue
- Governments of rich, industrialized 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 organizations

Armed Forces: Positives

- Armed forces provide security and protection
- They deter military attack by another country
- They can also be sued to maintain peace within countries
- They can be sued 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

Government's 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 sports 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 government should recommend eating five portions of fruit and vegetables per day

State Health System: 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 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 effect 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 or 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 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 or Green Buildings

- Modern buildings should be designed to be environmentally friendly
- They should use less energy and produce less waste
- Modern insulation i.e. water, sound and heat covering 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

Negative 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

16. Money

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 the goal that we put our minds to
- Many successful people are self-made
- We are not limited by our genetic characteristic or upbringing

18. Sport and Leisure

Arguments against Professional or 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

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 professional 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 many only last 10 years
- Sports fans are willing to pay to support their teams

Sports 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 favorite way to wind down after a hard day at work
- Television programs 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
- TV programs 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 behavior they see on the screen
- Children are less healthy because they spend less time playing
- Advertisers direct their marketing at children
- Most programs 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
- Behavior 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 programs should be strictly controlled
- TV companies should make more positive, educational programs

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 revolutionized communication
- We can keep in touch by email 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 Newspaper 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 amateur
- People still buy newspapers and books because they are portable
- People do not like reading from a screen

Positives of Mobile/Cellular Phones

- The mobile phone is the most popular gadget in today's world
- Mobile phones have revolutionized 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

- Mobiles phones can be a problem in some public places
- Ringing phones cause disturbance 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

Opinions about Mobile Phones

- The benefits of mobile phones outweigh the drawbacks
- We need to use these phones with care

20. Tourism

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 and broadens our horizon
- 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 traditional 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

- Government 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 industrialization 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 labor
- 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-shirt 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 ethnic foods
- It is important to maintain our different cultural identities
- We should celebrate festivals, teach traditional skills and protect historic places

22. Transport

Traffic Problems

- Traffic congestion is caused by commuters travelling to work
- Most people live in the suburbs outside city center
- 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 as necessary 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 proportions 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 organization
- 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 more 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 wider 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 the 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 career 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 major life expenses
- 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 tax payers
- All citizens should work to make 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 expect employees to work overtime
- Nowadays, many people work part-time or have flexible working hours
- Technology allows people to work from home, telecommuting is possible
- Many companies provide childcare facilities
- Striking a balance between a good life and a good work can raise job satisfaction
- Happy, healthy workers are more productive

Technology and Work

- The internet, fax and mobile phone technologies have revolutionized working life
- Workers can communicate via email, online networks and video conferencing
- Technology can connect workers in different countries from around the world
- It gives people more freedom
- It can also save time, energy and money
- Some people believe that offices could disappear in the future
- Virtual online offices may replace them

Child Labor

- In some countries, children are exploited
- They do boring and 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 necessary resources to educate children
- Children need to be given the knowledge and skills for adult life



MEGABOOK OF IDEAS

by **Banglay IELTS**