

Test section – Writing Task 2

Coherence and Cohesion

Activities

1. Definitions
2. Answering the right question and planning your answer
3. Topic sentences
4. Cohesive devices

Aims

- to help students produce coherent essays following a logical structure
- to help students write appropriate topic sentences
- to increase awareness of a range of cohesive devices including referencing and substitution

Learning outcomes

- Students will have analysed the structure of a Task 2 question and planned a response.
- Students will have practised writing topic sentences.
- Students will have been familiarised with a range of cohesive devices.

Information about this section of IELTS

In Writing Task 2, test takers will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. They will be expected to write at least 250 words and are advised to spend 40 minutes on this task. The essay should be written in formal, academic English.

Time	60-75 minutes
Level	B1+
Class	Suitable for groups / large classes F2F / Online
Interaction	Pair or group work Individual work
Materials	Worksheets x4 attached

Activity 1: Definitions of Coherence and Cohesion

Material: Worksheet 1

Time: 5-10 minutes

Procedure:

- introduce focus of the lesson: Coherence and Cohesion (C & C).
- elicit what students already know about these terms and ask for possible definitions.
- draw attention to the definitions and ask students to match them to the visuals. (Worksheet 1)
- ask students what the significance of these terms is with reference to IELTS Task 2 essay writing.
- draw attention to the 5 key components of C & C, taken from the IELTS band descriptors.
- give time for students to discuss these together with a partner to describe to what extent these are features of their own writing. This is an opportunity to address any student questions about the language of the band descriptors.
- get class feedback.

Answers

Coherence (Visual 2): The river; like a river pilot, the writer guides the reader through the twists and turns of their essay.

Cohesion (Visual 1): The brick wall is held together by cement/mortar. In our writing, cohesive devices are the words and phrases that hold our ideas together and guide the reader to the intended meaning

Activity 2: Answering the right question and planning your answer

Material: Worksheet 2

Time: 20-25 minutes

Procedure:

- introduce the task.
- give students time to work alone to identify the parts of the question.
- encourage peer feedback before getting feedback as a class.
- draw attention to the brainstorming table / draw this on the board and elicit ideas for both sides.
- allow time for students to add further detail to the ideas and the arguments they can make.
- draw attention to the paragraph plan. You may wish to refer to the lesson plan '*Essay structure and writing an introduction*' prior to this lesson.
- get students to complete the table in pairs.
- get class feedback.

Answers

Topic: Children in employment.

One side: Reasons why children doing paid work is wrong.

Other side: Why it is valuable work experience, important for learning and taking responsibility.

Type of question: 2-sided argument. You MUST discuss both sides and MUST give your opinion.

Activity 3: Topic sentences

Material: Worksheet 3

Time: 15-20 minutes

Procedure:

- draw attention to the paragraph.
- give students time to read and identify the lack of a topic sentence.
- give students time to choose from the list of possible topic sentences.
- spend time going over the answer to clarify that the topic sentence operates like a heading and covers, in general, the topic(s) that the reader can expect to find in the paragraph.
- give students time to read the second paragraph, elicit that this is a sample main body paragraph from the Task 2 essay question they have been working with.
- allow time for students to write their own topic sentence before checking in pairs.
- get class feedback.

Answers

C – Although it mentions money and health benefits – the paragraph is not solely about either of those things therefore C is correct.

Possible topic sentence: *However, there are situations where employment can be highly beneficial for children's current and future lives.*

Activity 4: Cohesive devices

Material: Worksheet 4

Time: 15-20 minutes

Procedure:

- you may wish to carry out the analysis of the cohesive devices in the paragraphs on Worksheet 3 first.
- give students time to complete the table with cohesive devices.
- get class feedback.
- allow students to work in pairs to complete exercise 2 with appropriate cohesive devices.

- spend time going over answers accepting any logical answers, the following are provided as guidance.

Answers

contrasting	however, though, although, but, even though
providing examples	for example, such as, for instance
adding further information	and, furthermore, in addition, also
referencing	this, these, those, that

In dealing with a wider variety of people, including employers and colleagues **as well as** members of the public, a young person develops the ability and confidence to communicate effectively.

There is **also** a risk that if young children work in physically demanding jobs their bodies may not be strong enough and they may injure themselves.

In addition, a part-time job in a shop or restaurant can help children develop skills for dealing with many different types of people and for offering customer care.

Nuclear energy is clean energy. **However**, there are problems associated with its use.

Although nuclear energy is clean energy, there are problems associated with its use.

- draw attention to the gapped paragraph (Worksheet 4, exercise 3).
- elicit what the topic of the essay is, e.g. Advantages/disadvantages of learning English in an English-speaking country.
- tell students that this is the second main body paragraph, elicit the topic: advantages.
- elicit what the first main body paragraph was likely to contain: disadvantages.
- draw attention to exercise 4 and elicit the first cohesive device 'however'.
- allow students time to complete alone.
- go around and monitor.
- allow for a peer check before checking open class and drawing attention to the use of 'this' in the final sentence (exercise 5). Elicit that this is an example of 'referencing', in the paragraph, it refers back to 'survive' in the previous sentence.
- carry out the rest of exercise 5 as a class.

Answers

(exercise 4)

1. However, 2. Firstly, 3. Furthermore, 4. Which, 5. Also, 6. Consequently, 7. But, 8. In addition, 9. In order to, 10 This.

(exercise 5)

They – Palm Islands

It – Palm Deira

Follow-up activities

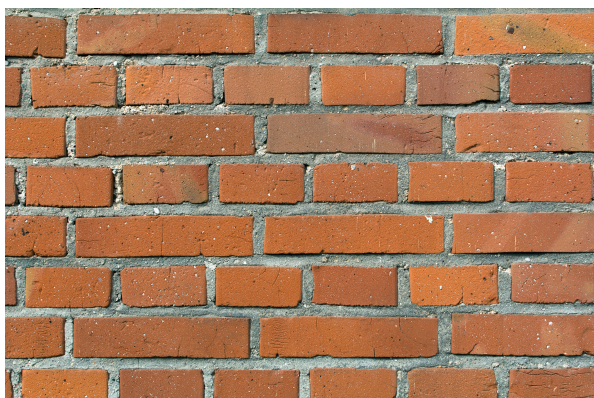
Encourage students to complete the writing at home, using the paragraph plan that they have created in class. Encourage the use of topic sentences and cohesive devices.

Writing Task 2

Worksheet 1

1 Which of the pictures below best matches...

- a. **coherence:** How fluent your writing is, how you as a writer guide the reader through your response.
- b. **cohesion:** How well your writing is connected, how you use words and phrases to connect ideas, sentences and paragraphs.



Images from creative commons



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2 Which of the following key components of Coherence and Cohesion do you already use in your writing?

1. Logical organisation
2. Clear progression
3. Paragraphing
4. Use of cohesive devices
5. Referencing and substitution

Writing Task 2

Worksheet 2

Answering the right question and planning your response

In many countries children are engaged in some kind of paid work. Some people regard this as completely wrong, while others consider it as valuable work experience, important for learning and taking responsibility.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

1 Look at the task above and identify:

The topic: _____

One side of the argument: _____

Other side of the argument: _____

Type of question: _____

2 Complete the table below:

When is it completely wrong for children to do paid work?	When/how is it valuable work experience or important for learning and taking responsibility?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children's age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> part-time/Saturday job to earn "pocket money" – learn how to deal with people and do different things

3 Complete the paragraph plan for your essay. Consider what information you will include in each paragraph. Is there a thread running through your essay? How can you guide the reader?

Introduction	
Paragraph 1	
Paragraph 2	
Conclusion	

Check against the question. Have you addressed all parts of the task?

Writing Task 2

Worksheet 3

Topic sentences

- 1 *Read the paragraph below, taken from a different essay question. What is missing?*

Firstly, you can get away from the stress of your everyday life and enjoy the wonderful scenery around you and breathe in the fresh air. In addition to this, it is also much cheaper than staying in a bed and breakfast where the prices of the room and food might be very high. Not everyone can afford this. Finally, getting away from the distractions of technology, such as telephones and televisions, means that you have more time to enjoy nature, relax and just talk to people.

- 2 *Choose the topic sentence which best fits the paragraph:*

- A Camping saves money for several reasons.**
- B There are several reasons why camping is good for your health.**
- C Camping is popular for several reasons.**

- 3 *Now write your OWN topic sentence for the following paragraph:*

.....
.....
..... By undertaking part-time jobs, such as a Saturday job in a shop, young people have the chance to learn new skills and abilities in a practical way. For example, in dealing with a wider variety of people, including employers and colleagues, as well as members of the public, a young person develops the ability and confidence to communicate effectively. Dog-walking and baby-sitting are also common jobs for young teens. These types of jobs require a degree of responsibility in caring for

another living thing and can nurture a sense of maturity. In addition, any sort of paid work helps children learn to manage time and income. These skills are essential for young people's futures and complement their education.

Writing Task 2

Worksheet 4

Cohesive Devices

- 1 Complete the table below with any cohesive devices that you already use. You can use the previous paragraph to help you find some examples.

contrasting	
providing examples	
adding further information	
referencing	

- 2 Use the words above to complete the following sentences.

Adding information:

In dealing with a wider variety of people, including employers and colleaguesmembers of the public, a young person develops the ability and confidence to communicate effectively.

There is a risk that if young children work in physically demanding jobs their bodies may not be strong enough they may injure themselves

.....a part-time job in a shop or restaurant can help children develop skills for dealing with many different types of people and for offering customer care.

Contrasting or contradicting:

Nuclear energy is clean energy., there are problems associated with its use.
 nuclear energy is clean energy, there are problems associated with its use.

3 Read the paragraph below.

What do you think the task was?

What is this paragraph about? How do you know?

4 Complete the paragraph using the cohesive devices in the box below.

also	but	consequently	firstly	furthermore	however	which
		this	in order to	in addition		

(1), there are obvious advantages to learning English in an English-speaking country. (2), there are opportunities to practise listening to and speaking in English every day. (3), students can experience the culture first-hand, (4) is a huge advantage when trying to understand a language. (5), if students are taking language lessons at a school, the teachers will be native speakers. (6), not only will students' speaking and listening skills improve, (7) they will also be able to improve their pronunciation and develop their grammar and vocabulary. (8), being in an English-speaking environment forces us to use the language (9)survive. (10) basic need will force even the shyest student to speak English.

5 What example of referencing can you see in the paragraph above?

Look at the examples below. What do the words in **bold** refer to?

The Palm Islands are the largest artificial islands in the world and are being constructed in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). **They** are being developed as tourist, leisure, and residential resorts and will increase the coastline of the country by 120 kilometres.

The Palm Deira is planned as the largest of the three islands, with a length of 14km and width of 8.5km, an area larger than the city of Paris. Engineers estimate that **it** will require a billion cubic metres of rock and sand.

Writing the essay

You have already

1 analysed the question

2 brainstormed possible ideas

3 planned which ideas to write about and the structure of your paragraphs.

Now use the topic sentences and cohesive devices covered today to help you write your essay.

In many countries children are engaged in some kind of paid work. Some people regard this as completely wrong, while others consider it as valuable work experience, important for learning and taking responsibility.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.