

## FOR AND AGAINST ESSAYS

One type of argumentative essay is that which gives advantages and disadvantages (**For and Against**). It is a formal piece of writing in which a topic is considered from opposing points of view.

A good essay of this type should consist of:

- a) an **introductory paragraph** in which you state the topic. This means that you talk generally about the topic without giving your opinion;
- b) a **main body** in which the points for and the points against, along with your justification, appear in two separate paragraphs; and
- c) a **closing paragraph** in which you give either your opinion or a balanced consideration of the topic.

**Note:** In this type of essay writing, you must **not** include opinion words (I believe, I think, etc.) in the introduction or the main body. Opinion words can **only** be used in the final paragraph, where you may state your opinion on the topic.

### Points to consider

- Make a list of the points for and against a topic before you start writing.
- Write well-developed paragraphs in which the points you present are supported with justification, (i.e. reasons or examples). Make sure each paragraph has more than one sentence. *e.g. One advantage of using a word processor is that it saves time. It is much quicker to make corrections on one than it is to do them by hand.*
- Do not use informal style (e.g. short forms, colloquial language, etc.) or strong language (e.g. *I firmly believe*, etc.)
- Try to include a quotation relevant to the topic you are writing about. For example, if you are writing an essay on space exploration, a quotation you may include is: "*One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.*" (Neil Armstrong)
- Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence which summarises what the paragraph is about.

topic sentence

*However, there are disadvantages to owning a house.*

point & justification

*Firstly, it can be rather expensive and tiring to maintain. For example, repairs to the outside of the house can be costly, not to mention the time-consuming task of caring for a backyard or garden.*

### Introduction

#### Paragraph 1

*state topic (summary of the topic without giving your opinion)*

### Main Body

#### Paragraph 2

*arguments for \**

#### Paragraph 3

*arguments against \**

### Conclusion

#### Final Paragraph

*balanced consideration/opinion*

*\* If you feel that there are more arguments for than against a topic, give them before the final paragraph to lead the reader to this conclusion.*

12 **Paragraph 1:** Introduction - states topic (advantages and disadvantages of keeping pets)

**Paragraph 2:** Advantages (good companions, they offer security, they can help teach young children to care for living things)

**Paragraph 3:** Disadvantages (they are expensive, they need a lot of care, they tie you down)

**Paragraph 4:** Conclusion (buying a pet should be carefully planned but can be a rewarding experience)

- It begins with an introduction which poses a rhetorical question. It ends with a conclusion giving a balanced consideration on the topic.

#### • (Suggested answers)

1. To begin/start with, First of all, etc.
2. Furthermore, Moreover, etc.
3. On the other hand, etc.
4. also
5. What is more, Furthermore, In addition to this, Finally, Last but not least, etc.
6. To sum up, In conclusion, All things considered

- **Advantages:** pets offer companionship, they give you a sense of security, they help teach children to be responsible and to care for living things

- **Disadvantages:** pets are expensive, they require a lot of care and attention, they tie you down



## Linking Words/Phrases

**To introduce points:** one major advantage/disadvantage of, a further advantage, one point of view in favour of/against

**To list points:** in the first place, first of all, to start with, secondly, thirdly, finally, last but not least

**To add more points to the same topic:** what is more, furthermore, also, in addition to this/that, besides, apart from this/that, not to mention the fact that

**To make contrasting points:** on the other hand, however, in spite of, while, nevertheless, despite, even though, although, it can be argued that

**To introduce examples:** for example, for instance, like, especially, such as, in particular

**To conclude:** to sum up, all in all, all things considered, in conclusion, on the whole, taking everything into account, as was previously stated

- 12** Read the essay below and state the topic of each paragraph. How does it begin and end? Fill in the correct linking word or phrase. Finally, list the advantages and disadvantages mentioned.

*"The advantages and disadvantages of owning a pet."*



Many types of animals have gradually become domesticated and have been taken into our homes as pets. Pets are enjoyed by young and old alike, but are they really worth having or are there too many drawbacks?

1) ....., pets can be great companions for those who live alone, such as the elderly. What is more, having a dog around the house can give you a greater sense of security. 2) ....., young children usually love animals and giving them the opportunity to look after a pet teaches them to care for living

things and to be responsible.

3) ....., bringing a pet into your home is not a decision to be taken lightly. There are some expenses involved as animals need food, special cages, equipment and occasional veterinary treatment which can be costly. They 4) ....., need care and attention on a daily basis, which can be time-consuming. 5) ....., a pet ties you down to a certain extent. You cannot just get up and go away for the weekend or for a holiday without first taking your pet's needs into consideration. This is not always easy and can be expensive if you have to pay for professional care.

6) ....., buying a pet should be a carefully planned decision. If you are fully aware of your pet's needs and all the responsibilities involved in owning one, then having a pet can be a very rewarding experience.

You can end a "for and against" essay by a) giving a balanced consideration of the points on the topic or b) by giving your opinion, that is, for example, by expressing whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages or vice versa.

The advantages and disadvantages of...

- a) Living in the country
- b) Owning a mobile phone

Write an essay on one of these topics using 200-250 words