

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

This is part of a letter written to a newspaper:

There are always stories about crime and corruption in the news. Meanwhile, our roads are filled with inconsiderate drivers and it seems as if, every time I go out in public, I come across people acting in thoughtless or rude ways. Are most people greedy and selfish? Or are these just the people that I notice, whereas the vast majority are as kind and helpful to others as possible?

What do you think? Write an **essay**, discussing your opinion. Support your views with reasons/examples. You should write about **180 words**.

Sample

There are many who, at the end of each day, come to the conclusion that most people in the world care only about themselves and are generally thoughtless and selfish when it comes to others. In my opinion, although greedy and inconsiderate people certainly exist, most of us are not like that at all.

Firstly, there are millions of people around the world doing all sorts of volunteer work to help those in need or to protect animals and the environment. This proves that people feel the need to give something back to society. Secondly, most people realise that everyday life is made much easier with a little politeness and friendliness.

However, there are many people who are stressed by day-to-day living, especially in the cities and, as a result, have become rude, aggressive and self-centred. They may not actually have selfish characters, but have become like that because they feel it's the only way they can survive.

To conclude, although I can't deny that many people are rude and self-centred, I believe that there are more people who choose to be generous and kind in a world that doesn't always make it easy to do so.

Questions

- 1 Which plan from your coursebook was used in this essay: the one on page 13 or the one on page 170? _____
- 2 Does the writer believe that most people are selfish or kind? _____
- 3 What proves that people feel the need to give something back to society, according to the writer? _____

- 4 What makes everyday life easier, according to the writer? _____
- 5 Why does the writer think that many people have become rude, aggressive and self-centred? _____

- 6 Make a list of the adjectives in the sample. Look up any you are not sure of the meaning of. _____

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

You have decided to enter a short story competition in an international magazine. The story must begin with the following words:

David smiled and said, "This is going to be an amazing day."

Write your story. You should write 120-180 words.

Sample

The Final

David smiled and said, "This is going to be an amazing day." He couldn't believe his luck. His favourite football team was playing in the final, and he was going to be in the stands!

That Saturday had begun just like every other. After breakfast, David had sat down to do his homework, and had remembered that his team was playing in the final later that morning. He and his father had been planning to watch it. His mother had been rather annoyed, though. On Saturdays, she usually watched a repeat of the wildlife documentary that she couldn't see during the week. When David looked up, his mother was standing at the door with a cheerful smile on her face and two tickets in her hand. "Anna and Tom have got the flu," she told him. "They can't go, so they've sent you their tickets!"

The atmosphere at the stadium was electric. David had never been to a final before and he was thrilled. It was an outstanding match and, best of all, his team won. His mother was happy, too. She got to watch her documentary after all! What an extraordinary day!

Questions

- 1 Where in the story are the words that were given in the topic?
- 2 Have the words been changed in any way?
- 3 Why is the past perfect tense used in the second paragraph?
- 4 Why do you think David's mother had a cheerful smile on her face? Can you think of two reasons?
- 5 Explain why David was able to go to the final.

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

You recently went on a day trip. Unfortunately, you were very disappointed with the trip, so you decide to write a letter of complaint to the company that organised it. Look at the advert for the trip below and the notes you have made.

Golden Tours
Mountain Retreat Day Trip

Spend a relaxing and fun day in the mountains with Golden Tours. The trip includes:

- travel by luxury air-conditioned coaches
- nature hike with our experienced, knowledgeable guide followed by a picnic lunch next to Lake Rothmere could answer hardly any of our questions
- plenty of time for souvenir shopping in the picturesque village of Uxford only had 1/2 an hour
- tour of Uxford Castle (entrance fee included)
- dinner at popular, local restaurant

awful, because ...
Mountain Retreat Day Trips leave daily at 9am, returning at 10pm.
Cost: £60 for adults, £40 for children
want refund

Sample

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my strong dissatisfaction with your company's 'Mountain Retreat Day Trip' that I went on last Saturday.

To begin with, according to your advertisement, your guides are knowledgeable and experienced; however, the one we had was unable to answer most of our questions. Furthermore, although in your advert you claim that we would have plenty of time for souvenir shopping, we only had half an hour. I was particularly upset about not having enough time to see the village. Finally, to make matters worse, the dinner at the local restaurant was absolutely awful! The food was not fresh, the tables were dirty and the waiter was one of the rudest people I have ever met.

As a result, I believe that I am entitled to a full refund. I hope this matter will receive your immediate attention.

Yours faithfully,
James Macintosh

Write your letter. Use all your notes and write 120-150 words.

Questions

- 1 What kind of letter is this?
- 2 Make a list of the words/phrases in the letter which have a negative meaning. Look up any words you don't know.
.....
.....
- 3 Has the writer of the letter covered all the notes in the topic?
- 4 What words/phrases has the writer of the letter used at the beginning of some sentences to link that sentence with what came before?
- 5 Give some examples of formal language used in the letter.
.....
.....
- 6 What does the writer of the letter ask for in the final paragraph?
- 7 Why does the writer end the letter 'Yours faithfully'?

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

You see the following notice in an English language magazine and decide to write an article.

Free-time Fun

We are looking for interesting articles about our readers' hobbies or free-time activities. In your article you should:

- describe the hobby/activity
- explain why you enjoy it
- say whether you would recommend it to other people your age

Write your article. You should write between 100 and 150 words.

Sample

My Chosen Pastime

How would you feel if you looked down and saw that you were about 150 metres in the air with nothing beneath you? That's what mountain climbing is like, especially as you get higher up your latest challenge.

I fell in love with climbing about four years ago. You get to see some really beautiful parts of the country and, when you complete a difficult climb, not only do you get a great feeling of achievement, but you are also rewarded with some amazing views. It's quite an expensive hobby because of the special equipment you need, and the money spent travelling to different destinations.

Although I adore my hobby, I understand that it's not for everyone. It can be hard work and, for people who are scared of heights, it must sound like a nightmare. If you're not sure, however, I strongly suggest giving it a go.

Questions

- 1 What pastime is the writer describing?
- 2 Which two statements in the article show us that the writer is very fond of his/her hobby?
- 3 Why is this hobby quite costly?
- 4 Who is the "you" referred to five times in the second paragraph?
- 5 What kind of people might consider mountain climbing a nightmare?
- 6 What does the writer do in the last sentence of the article?

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

You see this article in your local newspaper.

NEW CONTRACT FOR CHAPMAN

Superstar basketball player, Michael Chapman, has signed a new contract with his team. Chapman will be paid \$12 million a year for the next three years. On top of this, he is expected to make at least another \$10 million each year from advertising deals.

Despite this, Chapman is far from being the highest earner in the league. In fact, this year, several players were paid more than \$20 million by their teams. Is this right? Do sports stars deserve these salaries, or are they greatly overpaid?

Write a **letter to the editor** of the newspaper. Give your opinion and answer the questions raised at the end of the article. Give reasons to support your views. You should write about **180 words**.

Sample

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the article in Friday's paper about basketball player Michael Chapman. The article quoted some staggering figures: a \$12-million-a-year contract, plus \$10 million from advertising deals! I consider this outrageous.

To my mind, when so many are struggling to survive, an annual income of over \$20 million is shocking and unethical. Some people must be asking themselves whether these huge sums would not be better spent alleviating the suffering of the poor, the sick and the disadvantaged. It is true that superstars attract supporters and bring huge profits to their teams. Moreover, sports stars have only a few years in which to earn lots of money, as they soon become too 'old' to continue playing professionally. However, I believe that massive salaries are bad for the players themselves, as they lose sight of what real life is about.

In conclusion, although I realise that sports stars' earnings are the result of market forces, I still feel that they should somehow be reduced to a more acceptable level. Thank you for highlighting this issue.

Yours faithfully,
Dan Saunders

Questions

- 1 Which two adjectives does the writer use in paragraph 1 to describe Chapman's \$12-million-a-year contract? Check the meaning of these adjectives in your dictionary. _____
- 2 How could this money be better used, according to some people? _____
- 3 What reasons for the high earnings does the writer give in paragraphs 2 and 3? _____
- 4 Find four phrases that the writer uses to introduce his opinion. _____
- 5 Who is the writer thanking at the end of the letter? _____

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

Your English teacher has asked you to write a composition discussing the following statement:

Every individual has the responsibility to do whatever he or she can to help protect the environment.

You should include:

- your opinion
- reasons and examples to support your opinion

Write your **composition**. You should write **150-200 words**.

Sample

Although our world's environmental problems are getting much worse, there is little agreement as to who should deal with them. It is my opinion that everyone has some responsibility for helping to protect the environment.

Firstly, everyone suffers as a result of environmental problems whether they caused them or not. Secondly, some major polluters are unlikely to change their ways. Thirdly, if we each analyse our own way of life, we may realise how much we each harm the environment. I therefore believe that individuals have a responsibility to do more for the environment.

On the other hand, some governments and business organisations have certainly harmed the environment and therefore have a lot of responsibility for the state of the planet. However, responsible individuals can choose the leaders they want or the goods that they want to buy. Also, ordinary people can do a lot to educate polluters.

In conclusion, I believe that individuals are responsible for their own actions and for choosing how much they want to try to influence other people or even governments and other organisations. Individuals can and should have a positive effect on their family, school, neighbourhood, town, country or planet.

Questions

- 1 Does the writer agree or disagree with the statement?
- 2 Look at the plan on page 63 of your coursebook. Does this sample follow the plan?
- 3 Look at the third point in paragraph 2. How might you be harming the environment?
- 4 What phrase does the writer use to introduce a different aspect or idea halfway through the composition?
- 5 What do you think ordinary people can do to 'educate polluters'?

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

Your friend Amelia is thinking about buying a computer so that she will have internet access at home. She has written to you asking for advice. You recently read a newspaper article about teenagers' internet use. [See Writing Appendix, p.172.] Write a letter to Amelia including the following information:

- *what the advantages of having internet access are*
- *what the dangers and drawbacks are*
- *what she should do to stay safe online*

Use the information in the article to help you write your letter. You should write 90-120 words.

Sample

Dear Amelia,

It was great to hear from you. I think it's brilliant that you're getting a computer. Yesterday, I read an article about internet safety, so I thought I'd write to you about some of the things it said.

From what I read, the main advantage is that it's easier to do research for schoolwork. Another thing is that you'll be able to download music and films.

However, you do need to be careful. People you meet online might be lying about who they are. Also, you should always use passwords that are difficult to guess.

On the whole, as long as you're careful, you'll be able to enjoy all the benefits of having internet access. I'm looking forward to getting your first email!

Love,
Sergei

Questions

- 1 Is the language Sergei uses formal or not? Give examples. _____

- 2 What advantages of having internet access does Sergei mention? _____

- 3 What other advantages can you think of? _____

- 4 Why do you think Sergei writes "you do need to be careful" instead of "you need to be careful"? _____

- 5 What change in Amelia's lifestyle is suggested by Sergei's last sentence? _____

- 6 Sergei finishes his letter "Love, Sergei". How else might he end it? _____

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

You see this article in a national newspaper.

Increased Funding for School Art Lessons

In a joint statement, the education minister and culture minister announced that, from next year, schools will receive more funding for art lessons.

All high school students will have at least three hours of art lessons each week. In these lessons, students will learn how to draw, paint, and so on. Older students will also have art appreciation lessons and learn some art history.

According to the statement, the extra money will be used to employ more specialised art teachers and to improve school facilities. The ministers also stressed that students must receive a balanced education, and that art is a vital part of this.

Critics of the scheme, however, have claimed that there are better things that schools could spend the money on, and schools should focus more on other subjects.

What do you think of the ministers' plan? Write an **essay**, discussing your opinion. Give reasons/examples to support your views. You should write about **180 words**.

Sample

The recent announcement made by the ministers of education and culture stating that schools will receive more funding for art lessons has met with both support and opposition. Personally, I believe that this is an excellent step towards improving the quality of education in our schools.

There are many reasons why the studying of art should be encouraged in schools. To begin with, although we may not realise it, art is all around us every day of our lives. Understanding art helps us to understand the world we live in. Furthermore, there is no doubt that art is an important way for us to express ourselves and, therefore, help us feel happier and healthier.

Nevertheless, there are lots of other things that schools could spend this money on. The latest technology might help students improve their computer skills, while more sports equipment could help them keep fit.

All things considered, I think that teaching art will provide students with a more balanced education, as well as a better understanding of the society we live in.

Questions

- Which of the two plans from the Writing Appendix (p173 in your coursebook) was used in this sample essay? _____
- What are the topic sentences for paragraphs 2 and 3? _____

- Is the writer in favour of or against the ministers' plans? _____
- What two reasons does the writer give in paragraph 2 to support his/her view? _____

- What other things could the money be spent on, according to the writer? _____

- What other phrases could the writer use instead of "All things considered" to introduce the last paragraph? _____

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

This is part of a leaflet about an English course you are thinking about doing this summer.

Learn English in the UK at Lowland College

- We run 4-, 6- and 8- week intensive courses in the English countryside.
- Our experienced tutors teach courses for learners at all levels of English.
- Courses fill up quickly, so apply today!

To apply: Write to our admissions tutor, Ms Swann. Say which course you are interested in, what your level of English is, and why you want to do the course.

Write your letter of application. You should write 120-180 words.

Sample

Dear Ms Swann,

I am writing to apply for a place on one of the English courses offered at Lowland College. I am interested in doing a four-week intensive course this summer, preferably in July.

I am a sixteen-year-old student and I have been studying English for six years. I am at CEF Level B2. I believe that my English is quite good because I study hard, and I get good marks. Although I haven't taken any formal examinations yet, I would like to in the future.

I have never been to England, and I would very much like to study there for a month. I am eager to learn more about British culture, and I believe that visiting England will help me to improve my English language skills. I realise how important the language will be to me in the future, both professionally and socially.

Thank you for considering my application. You can contact me by phone or email. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,
Karl Braun

Questions

- 1 Does this letter follow the plan you completed on page 93 of your coursebook?
- 2 Why does Karl want to study in England? (Give two reasons.)
- 3 How does Karl expect Ms Swann to reply to his letter?
- 4 Why does Karl say 'I look forward to hearing from you' rather than 'I'm looking forward ...'?
- 5 Why doesn't Karl close his letter with 'Yours faithfully,'?

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

A group of students from another country is thinking about visiting your area. The group leader knows you, and has asked you to write a report for the group, including the following information

- *the best place for them to stay, and why*
- *the most interesting things to do in the area*
- *the best time of year to come*

Write your **report**. You should write **120-180 words**.

Sample

To: William Smith
From: George Carpenter
Subject: Visit to Newtown
Date: 25th February

As requested, this report provides information for students who are planning to visit Newtown.

Accommodation

Newtown has a wide variety of hotels, bed and breakfasts and holiday cottages. As your group will be quite large, the Star Hotel near the bus station would probably be the best option. It is not expensive, and will be able to accommodate the whole group.

Activities

Newtown is surrounded by beautiful countryside. The impressive Longbridge Caves are certainly worth a visit. Excavations in the surrounding area have revealed settlements dating from Neolithic times. (Interesting finds can be seen in the Newtown Museum.) I suggest that your group also visit Appleby Forest, where a herd of wild ponies unique to this area roams free. Within Newtown itself, there are several buildings of architectural and historical interest worth visiting.

Best Time for Trip

As Newtown is visited by hundreds of tourists in the summer season, it is recommended that you visit some time in May.

Conclusion

I believe that, if these recommendations are followed, the group will have a very enjoyable time in Newtown and the surrounding area.

Questions

1 Why would a bed and breakfast or a holiday cottage probably be unsuitable for the group?

2 Why might the Star Hotel be convenient as far as transport is concerned?

3 Why might someone interested in archaeology want to visit Newtown?

4 What is unusual about Appleby Forest?

5 The writer has put section headings in the report. How can this help both the writer and the reader?

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

You recently saw this notice in an international music magazine.

Reviews Wanted!

Next month, this magazine will be ten years old. In our next issue, we'll be looking at the best and worst CDs from the last ten years. We want to know which CDs you think should be included. Send in a review of a CD released in the last ten years. In your review, you should:

- describe the music on the CD
- give your opinion of it
- say which list (best or worst) the CD should be on and why

Write your review. You should write 120-180 words.

Sample

Sad Sunset

As most readers will remember, *All For You* was the incredibly successful debut album of the pop group The Ravers, released earlier this year. Unfortunately, the group brought out their second CD, *Sad Sunset*, very soon afterwards, hoping to cash in on their initial success. In my view, this was disastrous.

All For You held the number 1 spot for four weeks running, and most of us thought that the excellent vocals and unusual lyrics were an indication of even greater things to come. What a disappointment *Sad Sunset* has turned out to be! The tracks are mediocre at best, poorly performed, repetitive and monotonous. As for the lyrics, it is clear that not much thought has gone into them; they are weak and full of clichés.

Not surprisingly, *Sad Sunset* hasn't even got into the top 100. In my opinion, it is probably the worst CD of the decade, especially considering what was expected of the group after their first success. Compared to *All For You*, *Sad Sunset* is, I'm afraid, simply sad.

Questions

- 1 Which list (best or worst) does the writer think the CD *Sad Sunset* should be on?
- 2 In which paragraph does the writer start giving his/her opinion of the music?
- 3 What adjectives does the writer use to describe *Sad Sunset* in paragraph 2?
- 4 Which two expressions (one in paragraph 1, & one in paragraph 3) does the writer use to introduce an opinion? What other expressions have the same meaning?
- 5 How does the writer describe the group's latest release in the last line? Why?

Read the TOPIC and the SAMPLE, then answer the QUESTIONS.

Topic

You and your English-speaking friend, Hannah, have been talking about working this summer. Read Hannah's email and the notes you have made.



Write an email in reply to Hannah. You should write 120-150 words.

Sample

Hi Hannah,

How are you? I read your email, and the job you've found sounds really good! I'd love to work in the hotel with you this summer, but I'd like to ask a few questions before I can say 'yes'.

You say the hotel's in a popular tourist resort, but you don't say which one. Where is it, exactly? Of the two jobs being offered, I think I'd prefer to work at the reception desk because then I'll be able to practise my English and French with the guests. Also, can you find out how many hours we'll be working each week and how much we're going to get paid? One last thing: will they give us a room to stay in at the hotel, and will it be just the two of us or will we have to share with others?

Let me know soon so I can give you a final answer.

Bye for now,
Irene

Questions

- 1 Does Irene include all of the notes she made in her email?
- 2 Give some examples of informal language used in the sample email.
.....
- 3 Which job in the hotel would Irene prefer to do and why?
- 4 What information did Irene ask for in her email?
- 5 Does Irene say whether she definitely wants to work at the hotel?