

9E ■ Writing A for and against essay

1 SPEAKING Work in pairs. Answer the questions.

- 1 When was the last time that you did the things below?
 - checked your emails ■ wrote a letter ■ bought something online ■ bought something at a shop
 - looked for information online ■ looked for information in a book ■ read the news online
 - read a newspaper
- 2 Do you switch your phone off when you go to bed?
- 3 How soon after you wake up in the morning do you go online or check your text messages?

2 Read the statement. Think of two advantages and two disadvantages of constant connection. Then read the model essay and see if any of your ideas are mentioned.

With modern technology, we can be connected to the web 24 hours a day. The advantages of constant connection are greater than the disadvantages. Discuss.

The advantages and disadvantages of constant connection

- A With smartphones and computers, ¹it is often said that we are rarely more than a few minutes away from our emails, updates from friends or global and local news. However, ²it could be claimed that we have become too reliant on technology. Does this make our lives better or more stressful? In this essay, I will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of being constantly connected.
- B One advantage is that people can find important information very quickly and they don't have to go to the library or read books for research. Another point is that people can buy many things online. This is useful for people who have mobility problems. ³It may also be argued that people are safer because they know that they can instantly get help if there is an emergency. Furthermore, photographs, videos and news can be shared online, so people can always catch up with friends who live on the other side of the world.
- C However, there are also some disadvantages to constant connection. Firstly, although people can access a lot of information online, some claim that the information is often misleading or inaccurate. Anyone can put information onto a webpage and, as a result, it can be difficult to check the source. Secondly, ⁴it seems evident that some shops on the high street are now struggling due to the rise in online shopping. Many shops are being closed down. Thirdly, although there are people who feel safer because of mobile phones, others would argue that there are new dangers like cyberbullying. ⁵It is true that constant connection helps us to keep in touch with friends, but it can be very stressful when people expect instant responses.
- D In conclusion, I believe that although there are many advantages to constant connection, we should also switch off our phones sometimes, walk away from our computers and talk to some real people.

3 Match the descriptions to paragraphs A–D.

- 1 Conclusion and statement of writer's own opinion
- 2 Introduction of topic
- 3 Arguments against the statement
- 4 Arguments for the statement

4 Answer the questions.

- 1 According to the writer, who can benefit from shopping online?
- 2 How can we maintain contact with friends who live far away?
- 3 Why can there be problems with using online information?
- 4 What can make people feel stressed?
- 5 What advice does the author give at the end?

Introductory *It*

5 Study sentences 1–5 in the model essay. Then put them into the correct part of the table.

<i>It + the passive</i>	
<i>It + the passive (with modal verbs)</i>	
<i>It + is / seems + adjective</i>	

6 Rewrite the sentences using the introductory *It* and the words in brackets.

- 1 There is no real privacy in today's world. (said)
- 2 Computers are getting smaller, faster and cheaper. (could argue)
- 3 People have forgotten how to think for themselves. (may claim)
- 4 The internet has changed the way that we do our research. (obvious)
- 5 Students are able to access more information about their subject. (clear)
- 6 Constant connection is a normal part of our lives. (seems evident)

STRATEGY**Making your writing neutral**

When you write a for and against essay, you should avoid using phrases, like *I believe* or *I think* until the conclusion. You should use impersonal language to express different opinions.

The most common impersonal structures are:

- 1 Introductory *It*
- 2 The passive
- 3 *Some / Other people:*
Some people claim / believe / say ...
There are those who say that ...
Other people (would) argue that ...

7 Read the strategy. Underline examples of impersonal structures in the model essay.**8 Use the strategy to make the sentences more neutral. Use as many different structures as you can.**

- 1 I think that children should read books rather than play computer games.
- 2 In my view children's attention spans are getting shorter.
- 3 I think we need to change our teaching methods.
- 4 In my opinion computer games develop important skills.
- 5 I believe that young people's brains are developing differently.
- 6 The internet is a very important tool in language development.

WRITING GUIDE**Task Choose one of the statements and write a for and against essay about it.**

- 1 We are losing our social skills in real life due to the amount of time we spend online. Discuss.
- 2 Modern technology has made life much better for most people in the developed world. Discuss.

Ideas Make notes about:**Essay 1**

- the importance of body language and facial expressions.
- telling the truth online.
- ways of sharing our interests with people.
- ways of finding out about different cultures and beliefs.

Essay 2

- how modern technology can help people with poor mobility.
- the amount of free time we have now.
- the amount of stress in our lives.
- how modern technology develops our skills.

Plan Follow the plan:

- Paragraph 1:** Write an introduction with a clear outline of the topic.
- Paragraph 2:** Present the arguments in favour of the statement.
- Paragraph 3:** Present the arguments against the statement.
- Paragraph 4:** Write a conclusion to the essay. Include your own opinion.

Write Write your essay. Use the paragraph plan to help you.**Check Check the following points:**

- Have you used a clear paragraph structure?
- Have you included all your points for and against the statement?
- Have you used neutral language?
- Have you checked grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation?