

Topic 1a supporting the city life: **

Some people prefer to live in the country. Others prefer to live in the town or big cities. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Since the dawn of humanity, human beings have been involved in a great struggle to find an appropriate and convenient accommodation. In today's world, however, there is a heated controversy over living in the city or in the country. In my opinion, the virtues of the city life significantly outweigh those of the country life. I incline to the city life for some reasons, among which the issue of health, the quality of life, and children's upbringing are more considerable.

The astounding machine age in which we live and the unexampled development of technology have modified the essence of human life. Our cities today enjoy high-speed internet, which lets us communicate in a convenient and speedy manner; modern malls that provide any kind of products from around the world; different modes of transportation that simplify and accelerate transportation; and high-tech sport, education, as well as recreational centers that bring us a more satisfying life. Practically, in such a place, each of these activities can be done in an advanced fashion, and one can have access to various state-of-the-art facilities which help him or her to know more and enjoy the merits of them. These facilities, on the other hand, are sadly absent in the country, which, based on today's standards, causes the quality of life to be so low, making it almost impossible for many to live a high-quality life there.

Another privilege of the city life has to do with the general health that one can benefit there. The accessibility to the experienced doctors, modern hospitals, advanced level of hygiene, and varied training facilities in physical and mental grounds which a city enjoys guarantee its people's health. In contrast, lack of efficient medical services in the country - skilled doctors, modern facilities, and diverse medicines - can lead the country residents to confront quite a few vital problems. It may be true that country dwellers enjoy the serenity of the countryside and a healthy diet, but illness is an inseparable part of the life of human beings, since, in the circumstances of urgent need for medicinal services, the time that is needed to rush to a hospital in the city may even lead to a mortal consequence for the ailing person. Living in a city includes these integral services, which brings an invaluable convenience for the people who live there.

Decent upbringing of children plays a crucial role in family and social solidarity of any given society, which is sadly lacking in the country. It may be claimed that the corruption-free atmosphere in the country paves the way for a proper upbringing of children and makes the country a utopia for any thoughtful parent. However, poor educational conditions and having a limited access to advanced upbringing facilities that are inherent features of the country cause the youth not to boost in varied

grounds, and their potential abilities are not recognized. Those who live in the city, by contrast, can provide a decent upbringing for their offspring thanks to the state-of-the-art educational services. Their children are knowledgeable and aware of their abilities, so they have considerable opportunities to have triumph in quite a few aspects of life.

In summary, with all this taken to account, I do believe that the city rather than the country is the ideal place for living on the ground that one can live a modern life, can bring up their offspring in an adequate fashion, and have access to high level of hygiene and health care. Who can ignore these essential facilities and live in a country simply for solace?

595 words

Mahdieh Mollaie: Payame Noor University

Topic 1b supporting the country life: My Sample Writing ***

Some people prefer to live in the country. Others prefer to live in the town or big cities. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Country life		City life
+ <u>righteous</u> people + warm-blooded + <u>straightforward</u>	People	- <u>double-dealers</u> - cold and unwelcoming - <u>hypocrite</u>
+ physical and mental health + healthy life style + <u>wholesome</u> foods/fresh air + peace of mind	Health	+ access to experienced doctors/ <u>state-of-the-art</u> hospitals & facilities - <u>rife</u> with stubborn diseases - pollution of any kind - <u>hectic</u> lifestyle
+ corruption-free atmosphere + not <u>plagued</u> with social evils + well-mannered/ <u>docile</u> → family <u>solidarity</u>	Children's Upbringing	+ <u>elites</u> of the society - criminal tendencies as the result of bad environment - exposure to immorality & corruption - disobedient/ <u>delinquent</u>

Since the dawn of humanity, human beings have been engaged in a great struggle to find decent and comfortable accommodation. In today's world, however, there is a heated controversy as to whether one should live in the city or in the country. As far as I am concerned, the advantages of the country life substantially outweigh those of the city life. I have a penchant for the country life for some reasons, among which the issue of health, people, and children's upbringing are more significant.

→ This stupendous machine age in which we live, and from which we are just emerging, has taken the soul out of human beings. Our cities today are afflicted with such social evils as hypocrisy, dishonesty, and deception so much so that there is no trace of morality among people. Practically, every resident of the city can be considered as cold-blooded, unwelcoming, and soulless robots rather than humans. On the other hand, one can enjoy the company of the righteous, warm-blooded, straightforward, and humble people in the country. They have been brought up and inspired by unblemished, flawless, and

impeccable nature, so it stands to reason that they are endowed with such positive and charming qualities.

Another privilege of the country life has to do with the physical as well as mental health that one can enjoy there. The tranquility and serenity of the countryside provides its people with the peace and refreshment of mind. In addition, the healthy diet of the people there guarantees their physical health. In contrast, the hectic lifestyle in the city and pollutions of any kind—noise, visual, and air pollution—make the city rife with stubborn diseases. It may be true that city dwellers have access to state-of-the-art hospitals and experienced doctors they can refer to while feeling unwell, but why should they become sick in the first place to be in desperate need of hospitals and spend enormous amounts of their money on treatment. They can live a healthy, peaceful, and economical life in the country, instead.

Proper upbringing of children plays a crucial role in family and social solidarity of any given society, which is sadly absent in the city. It is claimed that the elites of the society are mainly in the city and can be of great influence as far as ethics and morality are concerned. However, bad environment, improper associates during childhood, as well as exposures to immoralities and corruption that are raging in urban societies cause the youth to have criminal tendencies, leading to juvenile delinquency, disobedience, and anarchy. Those who live in the country, by contrast, can pave the way for a decent upbringing of their offspring thanks to the corruption-free atmosphere existing there. Their children are law-abiding, docile, and well-mannered, which makes the country a utopia for any thoughtful, considerate parent.

In summary, with all this taken into account, I believe that the country rather than the city is the ideal place for living on the grounds that one can live a salubrious life, can bring up their offspring in an excellent fashion, and be with people whose company one enjoys. Let's get rid of the hustle and bustle of the city life and seek solace in the country.

535 words
Amir Khadem

Topic 2: **

Some people prefer to get up early in the morning and start the day's work. Others prefer to get up later in the day and work until late at night. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

In spite of the fact that ~~the~~ early morning sleep is incredibly delightful, in my opinion, ~~the~~ people who prefer to get up early in the morning can entirely enjoy every moments of the day. There are several clear reasons to demonstrate why getting up early in the morning ~~surpass the later one is~~ preferable to getting up late. Better time management, ~~more~~ nicer moods, and good impacts on health are the major reasons that I, personally, prefer getting up early.

These days, everybody believes that "time is money," even I believe that time ~~values is~~ worth more than money. One who gets up early in the morning can do his or her work on time and can use the best part of the day too. Most of ~~the~~ work begins early in the morning, and it brings opportunities to gain these wide ranges of jobs only for ~~the~~ people who can get up early every morning. A person who knows the value of the early rising can enjoy the advantages of it, like having plenty of effective-practical time on a day. Early birds have a suitable time from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. to perform their official work in the banks, governmental offices, and companies which are open only in the morning. A person who gets up late cannot perform these ~~work-tasks~~ on time, and even he or she should spend several days ~~for doing~~ a simple ~~work-errand~~ because the offices will be closed when he or she has ~~ve~~ "got up". Concerning this, there is a proverb ~~that says~~, "The early bird catches the worm," which tells us the importance of the time by getting up in the morning. Being early rising surely brings us an incredible discipline in life, ~~that it~~ which can help us to have a time management and a daily program. On the other hand, other people who are not early birds cannot use their time in the same way and have quite a bit of wasted time. They get up late and probably go to bed late, but, ~~in during~~ the time (at which) they are awake, they cannot perform any work because they missed the golden time, morning, of the day. In this regard, they wasted their time because they are not able to do some of their work ~~at in~~ the evening or at night.

Statistics demonstrate that early birds generally have better moods and are calmer than others. Scientifically, the best biological clock ~~for in~~ humans offered ~~the a~~ time of sleep between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., which is 8 hours a day. Making adjustments based on the biological clock helps us to be fresh when we get up in the morning. By doing so, a person can have a better moods and will behave kindly ~~with toward~~ other people because on-time sleeping makes him or ~~she her~~ calm and fresh all of the day. If one gets up late, for example at 12 o'clock, he or she probably feels sleepy and bored during the day. Early birds are healthier than others because they act based on their nature and biological clock. By so doing, they have enough time to exercise in the morning to keep ~~fit~~ their bodies fit. They breathe the fresh air of the morning in their lungs too.

In sum, there are many reasons to prove that getting up early in the morning is better than ~~doing so later one~~. The ~~p~~Proper use of time and improving ~~in~~ health are the major advantages of this habit. Early risers ~~ings~~ have a great deal of time to use, particularly in the ~~best~~ better time of the day, that is, in the morning.

581 Words

Mohammad Farahani: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

Topic 3: **

In some countries, teenagers have jobs while they are still students. Do you think this is a good idea? Support your opinion by using specific reasons and details.

There is a famous proverb in Persian which says that "working is a self-perpetuating asset." According to this proverb, working with its unique nature provides priceless experience, which can be utilized throughout one's life. With this in mind, I subscribe to the idea that it is better for teenagers to experience appropriate jobs apart from school time for a great number of reasons, two of which—that is—preparation for the future and economic issues are of great consequence.

In today's modern world, with its galloping progress, jobs are being very specialized and complicated so much so that everyone in charge of a particular job should enjoy a great amount of experience in that field. Therefore, teenagers can prepare themselves for their future by commencing easy and decent jobs, and in so doing, they can learn how to make money and make the ends meet in their future life. It is worth mentioning that working should not be at the sacrifice of regular attendance at school; rather, it should result in some additional experience besides education. Working may seem frustrating in the beginning, but it broadens the minds of students, especially in the cases of thought-provoking activities. Additionally, students with no job activities may have a one-dimensional characteristic and may use their precious time in such inappropriate ways as smoking and roaming, to name but two.

Secondly, it is incontrovertibly axiomatic that money is the most crucial factor for leading a comfortable life. In this regard, we can find many students that help their poor parents with working besides their school. By doing so, they help them to live their otherwise miserable life. Working in this period of life is not only a stepping-stone for the future, but it helps students to realize the difficulty of making money as well. The importance of this issue is rising according to today's economic recession, which is commonplace in many countries. Additionally, the participation of teenagers, who enjoy energy in full capacity, will improve the economy of a country and inject the "spirit of youth" to the society.

In conclusion, by taking into account all the above reasons and many others, working experience for teenagers provides them with a good "exercise" in such aspects of life as economic issues and responsibility. Using the young stratum of society as working people will pave the way for improving the economy of the country, thereby resulting in a healthy and progressive society. Thus, wouldn't¹ it be nice if we utilize our precious time as effectively as we can?

423 words

Mohammadreza Amirmoshiri: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

¹ NB We never use contractions in TOEFL, but in the case of rhetorical questions, it is better to use contractions.

4.2 Agreeing or Disagreeing

In this essay, depending on the question, you discuss either **one side of the issue**, model 1 A/D, or, in some cases, **both sides of it**, model 2 A/D. You must state an opinion and defend it through providing reasons and examples. The Key Words or Phrases in this type of writing are as follows:

Do you agree or disagree?

Do you support or oppose?

دو طرفه بحث A/D
دو طرفه بحث A/D

Topic 4: My Sample Writing ***

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Playing a game is fun only when you win. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer. (Model 2 A/D, both sides of the issue is discussed, similar to the Preference type)

I strongly disagree with this mentality	
<u>Monotony</u> and <u>dullness</u>	Similar to life; <u>Tedious</u> & routine; No motivation
Gaining experience	<u>A blessing in disguise</u> ; Learn a lesson; Being successful in the end → pleasure
Long-lasting success	All time winners → <u>a flash in the pan</u> → temporary joy Temporary losers → <u>ugly duckling</u> → <u>enduring delight</u> ; Example: successful athletes

Playing games and the life every single individual is living are much alike in that either one involves quite a few triumphs and failures. This is the very reality of life in which the sheer and true joys of our lives lie. As far as playing games is concerned, some are of the opinion that games are joyful as long as one wins, while others believe otherwise. I subscribe to the latter idea on the grounds that "all wins and no defeats make Jack a dull boy." Additionally, through losing a game, one can gain a great deal of invaluable experience and guarantee a long-lasting success.

To begin with, life is replete with ups and downs, so are games. Just as the curves that go up and down in a cardiograph, showing a person is still alive, the vicissitudes of life are the indicators of one's being living. Therefore, being alive and enjoying the joy of life is inherent in confronting and surmounting these so-called obstacles. In this regard, games are no exception. Winning all the time leaves no room for motivation and passion for the upcoming matches. It becomes tedious and monotonous after a while. Losing a game, on the other hand, may seem disappointing at the time, but later it fires our enthusiasm for winning, in which one can take a great delight. Hence, in order for a game to be fun, it should involve not only wins but also defeats.

Second, any failure one experiences may be considered as a blessing in disguise. Napoleon Hill puts it this way, "Every failure brings with it the seed of an equivalent success." What matters here is to learn

a lesson and convert defeat into stepping-stones to making progress. Temporary defeat is not permanent failure; one should turn defeat into victory through devising new plans, decreasing their faults, and increasing their virtues. As was already mentioned, life and games bear many similarities, one of which being two steps forward and one backward, in which one can find endless pleasure. Therefore, these transient defeats can pave the way for us so that we reach permanent, ever-lasting success, which brings us immense emotional satisfaction and maximum enjoyment.

Last but not least, the winners who have reached instant success usually prove to be a flash in the pan and lose the chance of winning all the time sooner or later. On the other hand, those who experience temporary failure turn out to be real ugly ducklings since they gain their skills through practice and persistence and the lessons they have learned from their failures. Winning may bring happiness, but this happiness is just ephemeral. The enduring delight resides in the success attained through perseverance and through surmounting formidable obstacles. Successful athletes all over the world are not those who achieved immediate success, but those who became successful by conquering short-lived defeats and failures.

All in all, I do believe that for a person to enjoy playing games, he or she is supposed to be courageous enough to accept defeat, but tries to make a step forward toward success by the lessons they learn from these disguised opportunities. Let's not take the blessing of a failure for granted and make the most of it, that is, feeling of pure delight.

547 words

Amir Khadem

Topic 5: In the following example, due to the nature of the essay topic, only one side of the issue is discussed, although both sides can be discussed in many cases. **

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? A person should never make an important decision alone. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

(Model 1 A/D, generally, one side of the issue is discussed, similar to the Explanation type)

I strongly support this statement	
Using diverse opinions (two thoughts are usually better than one)	<p>---consulting with various individuals can broaden one's view</p> <p>---one may see only one aspect of an issue</p> <p>---it may show novel ideas and choices regarding one's decision</p>
To reduce the possibility of disastrous mistakes	<p>---a decision should not be taken arbitrarily, but wisely or rationally</p> <p>---consulting prevents humans from misconception or delusion</p> <p>---helps humans to become prudent about the situation in which they are</p> <p>---there are landmark decisions in everyone's life which plays a crucial role in the future life</p>
To reduce the stress and pressure on the one who is in the situation	<p>---one can have the support of his or her relatives or friends which can relieve the pressure of a tough decision</p> <p>---it can diminish the indecision and make humans more confident and determined</p> <p>---sometimes opportunities in human life are elusive. Therefore, one is not able to make a prompt as well as rational decision on his or her own, but by consulting with others</p>

Human life is analogous with a tortuous way in a mountain in quite a few aspects. It is crystal clear that a mountain road has numerous ups and downs, which reminds the fact that life is a journey which is replete with hardships and joyfulness. In addition, one can reach a position in his or her path where the road bifurcates. Hence, in order to reach the supposed destination, making a rational as well as correct choice is vital. In similar fashion, humans may encounter several predicaments in their life where there is no but one way. Therefore, to make an appropriate decision plays an absolutely essential role in one's upcoming choices and the future goal. With this in mind, I think that important decisions in life should never be taken alone due to a number of factors, three of which are of great importance in comparison to others, which are elaborated upon hereunder.

Without any shadow of doubt, two rational thoughts always represent better results than one single thought. Obviously, different humans have diverse ideas towards the same issues, and in various situations in life, a person cannot consider each and every aspect of the issue, which they are faced with. Thus, consulting with others helps individuals to broaden their minds. In addition, one may be encountered with novel ideas that are able to unlock new doors to approach the very issue. There is no need to emphasize the point that one with whom we are going to consult should be wiser and more experienced as compared to us, or at least, they have been through the same situation before. Therefore, consulting with resourceful people culminates in making a wise decision.

There are landmark decisions in the span of everyone's life, which has a considerable influence on their future. Making a wrong decision in these situations can have a catastrophic effect on a person's life. Regarding every decision, there are several choices. However, quite a few of them not only considerably impede our progress but also significantly make us deviate from the right path to our goal. By the help of others, one can avoid any egregious errors which cannot be compensated. Another concomitant efficacy of consulting has to do with helping humans to become scrupulous about the situation in which they are, and assist them to become more resourceful for the future experiences. Thus, decisions should not be taken arbitrarily, but rather wisely, the latter of which can be accomplished thanks to consultation.

The last but not the least reason which reinforces the preceding assertion that important decisions should never be taken alone is the equanimity which we experience as a result of seeking guidance from our friends and family through high-pressure decisions, and although negligible at first, their mental support substantially affects human determination. In other words, consultation can diminish the state of indecision and make humans more confident and determined. In addition, transient opportunities in every human life lie in one of the prevalent challenging situations, in which one is not able to make a prompt as well as rational decision on his or her own, but by consulting with others.

To sum up, apart from what was mentioned above, there are several other reasons that make one subscribe to the idea of making a decision by the help of others. It is inevitable that no one is ideal in thinking as well as deciding, which puts an emphasis on the significance of consulting with others.

579 words

Pooyan Tirandazi: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

Topic 6: In the following example, due to the nature of the essay topic, both sides of the issue are discussed. *

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: books are not needed any more because people can read information on computers.

Nowadays, information is the most valuable property that anyone can have, and, with gaining information, one would have power, money, and fame. One of the easiest ways of obtaining information is via reading books. Some may hold the opinion that reading books can be substituted by getting information from computers, but others have a negative attitude toward it. As far as I am concerned, computer is a good replacement for books because all the books of a library can be stored in a computer, which is portable. Electronic books are much less expensive, and in computers, audio-visual facilities can be utilized for learning goals.

A great number of people need to look into their books for information as a part of their jobs. Carrying many books everywhere is not a wise choice, so by using a computer, one can have all his or her books with them, and, by the searching option, which is provided by computers, he or she can find the desirable data in no time. Thus, by the assistance of computers, one can do so in an accurate, fast, and practical manner.

With the current recession, which is happening all around the world, everyone needs to spend less in order to balance his or her financial status. Books, because of materials and labor, which is used in the process of making them, cannot be cheap. On the other hand, electronic information does not need any of them and can be copied with almost no cost. Hence, using the information which is provided by electronic devices would save us a great deal of time and money.

It is crystal clear that reading a book for a long period is doomed to get monotonous. A solution to this problem is to add multi-media features to books. Computers can provide an environment in which using audio-visual facilities is possible. Thanks to these features, namely movies, audio tracks, and quizzes, the person who is studying will not get bored and will be motivated to learn better; moreover, the information which one gains through these processes will not be forgotten easily.

Technology changes everything around us so fast that adaptation to these changes can be rough, but it facilitates a great number of actions, which we are obliged to take. Although reading a book and touching its cover and smelling the paper always deliver a nostalgic feeling, which cannot be replaced with anything, using computers in order to obtain information is more profitable than reading books, because with a computer, one can have thousands of books with him in anyplace, purveying electronic books needs less money, also the help of computers multi-media features can be a means of learning.

455 words: Pouyan Asgharzadeh: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

4.3 Giving an Explanation

In this essay, you must describe what something is, how it happened, or why it occurs. You may have to tell why something is good or bad. The Key Words or Phrases in this type of writing are as follows:

Describe...

Explain...

What do you consider most important? List.

What have you learned by (doing something)?

Why do you think (something happens)?

What are the qualities of (something)?

Choose an event and tell why you enjoyed it.

How has (something) changed?

Why is (something) important?

How does (something) affect (something else)?

Topic 7: My Sample Writing ***

Leaders like John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King have made important contributions to the people of the United States. Name another world leader you think is important. Give specific reasons for your Choice.

Mahatma Gandhi	
Leadership skills	Leadership by <u>consent</u> of the followers→ the independence of India; Non-violent protest
Personality	<u>Magnetism</u> of his personality; <u>Willpower</u> ; Faith and courage
<u>Demeanor</u>	Practiced what he preached Lived modestly; Lived an <u>austere</u> life; Believed in truth in all situations

History is filled with the biography of great leaders, whether politicians, economists, or religious ones, to name but a few, in which we can find some common qualities, pushing them toward success and also distinguishing them from ordinary people. From among the world leaders, in my opinion, Mahatma Gandhi is the one who has enormously contributed to and been the source of inspiration for the people of the world in general and Indian people in particular. The reasons why I believe so are manifold—three of which, however, are of great consequence: his leadership skills, personality, and demeanor.

The first and foremost quality of a successful leader is enjoying the major attributes of leadership, which he was perfectly blessed with. Leadership by consent of and with the sympathy of the followers, rather than leadership by force, is the cornerstone of dynamic leadership. Without the orthodox tools of power, namely authority, military strength, or wealth, Gandhi succeeded in unifying the whole nation to attain the independence of India from foreign domination. Gandhi's unifying personality helped him to practice non-violent civil disobedience and inspired others to do the same. His being trustworthy, ethical, self-sacrificing, and worldly-wise encouraged the people of India to have absolute trust in him, enabling him to accomplish the astounding feat of influencing two hundred million minds to coalesce and move in unison, as a single mind, which is impossible to achieve through force.

Another reason that makes Gandhi so worthy of admiration has to do with his personal qualities. Gandhi possessed magnetism of personality, persistence, willpower, faith, and courage—all of which are the characteristics a great man can enjoy. However, one of these qualities, that is, persistence was the ingredient that brought about the independence of India. Through having perseverance and an unshakable faith in what he desired, and through inspiring his followers to wholeheartedly model themselves on him, he managed to put into practice what he yearned for. In the face of problems, his

being perseverant and having an unwavering faith were the only ingredients that urged him to persist to the extent that he managed to realize his dream.

There is yet another element that distinguishes Gandhi from other world leaders - he practiced what he preached. Unlike many world leaders, he led an austere, modest, self-abnegating, ethical, and trustworthy life. He had nothing to hide from his people, and never lied to them—the stock-in-trade of the majority of the politicians. Moreover, he never indulged himself in materialistic joys of life, which is in stark contrast to what we are witnessing in the world of politics these days. Napoleon Hill puts it this way, “Deeds, and not words, are what count most.”

In sum, I believe that, through his personal features, leadership qualities, and his demeanor, Gandhi has made the world a better place to live for all strata of Indian society and other nations all over the globe. All of us can profit by following him since he is a role model worthy of emulation.

506 words

Amir Khadem

Topic 8: **

A gift can contribute to a child's development. What gift would you give to help a child development?

Without any shadow of doubt, childhood, the most critical period of human life, can be affected by many external factors. Apart from the emotional angle, giving a gift can improve children's skills. I do believe that a camera has the attributes which a good gift, being given to children, possesses. The reasons why I believe so are as follows:

From an educational standpoint, taking a photo by a camera encourages children to think creatively. They learn how to create some artistic phenomena, how to notice the subtleties of a scene, and how to transfer some actions into a memorable picture. Moreover, photography makes them keen to find subtle differences between natural creatures in their surroundings.

Learning photography not only helps children to learn some artistic skills, it gives the chance to spend their free time in a good manner as well. Because of the wide range of changes in the life style, children become excitingly free from some mandatory tasks. Accordingly, a camera, a state-of-the-art phenomenon, can play a significant role in their life; furthermore, they can shape a great relationship with their peers.

Additionally, no matter how old children are, a camera provides a best possible chance for them to be familiar with one of the astonishing jobs: photography. They can reveal their talent in artistic fields; in addition, it provides a good context to understand many things about practical experiences.

Taking into account what was already mentioned, looking at many successful people, we can realize that they find their interests in childhood. Giving a present would be a turning point in their life and would pave the way toward success.

274 words

Hamekasi, B.

Topic 9: *

**What qualities do you think a manager should possess in order to be successful in his or her job?
Give specific reasons to support your opinion.**

Nowadays, with all the economic crises that the world is going through, stakeholders and businessmen are more meticulous about businesses in which they invest than before; also, they are pickier about the managers they hire to run their businesses for them. A good manager should enjoy quite a few features, among which having the ability to communicate well with others, being a good planner, and having a vast knowledge are of great importance.

Communication is an essential part of a manager's job. Being able to have a good relationship with their subordinates, as well as clients, is very important. In order to do so, he or she should be a considerate person; that is, he or she is supposed to understand their employees' requests and needs, and, if possible, meet their demands. For example, if one of them seems to be sick or down, they should be given a day off. This attitude towards employees is an incentive for them to work harder because they understand that their manager cares about them and respects their feelings. This act also shows that their manager is watching them and that any hard work/endeavor is going to be appreciated by him or her, so it will motivate them to do their best at work.

Moreover, in order to be qualified for this job, one should have a vast knowledge of many fields of study. For example, in constructing a building, the manager should be familiar with the duties of architects, civil engineers, and other employees to be able to guide them and evaluate their work and understand which tasks have been done and which ones still need to be done.

Last but not least, planning is an incontrovertible part of a manager's duty. Planning consists of understanding the tasks that need to be done; choosing criteria; providing a timetable, by means of which one can understand the chronological order of tasks; allocating resources to these tasks; as well as many other ones. A good plan is the one that will complete the project with the minimum budget and time.

To sum up, as far as I am concerned, having the ability to communicate with others, besides being a good planner and having quite a bit of knowledge are the major requisites for this job.

379 words

Kiana: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

4.4 Making an Argument

In this essay, you will be presented with a hypothetical situation, that is, a situation which is imagined or suggested but not necessarily real or true. You will have to determine what needs to be done, make a choice, and support your hypothesis. In these essays, the topic is usually written in the future or conditional tense. The key words or phrases in this type of writing are as follows:

If...

How...

In your opinion...

If you could change (something), what would you change?

What is the best way to (do something)?

What should be the main focus?

What would you give to help someone?

How would you do something?

Topic 10: My Sample Writing ***

If you could make one important change in the educational system of your country, what change would you make? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

I would make some changes in our system of education	
Specialization in one field	<u>Miscellaneous</u> knowledge useless; <u>Jack-of-all-trades and master of none</u> ; <u>Specialization</u> matters; Example: Henry Ford.
Practical training	Practical use of one's knowledge is important; Professions and occupations now demand specialists <u>rather than</u> theoreticians; Example: additional training for our students after they graduate.
Having a definite purpose on the part of the students	Choose a definite course; Enrolment after determining one's major purpose; Result: successful graduates.

We are living in an age in which education plays a significant role as far as the development of a nation is concerned. Millions of people, however, erroneously believe that "knowledge is power." I, personally, believe that knowledge is only potential power. Were I given the authority to change something in the educational system of my country, I would definitely strive to rectify the flaws and defects that are plaguing our educational system, the very "orthodox" methods of education which have handicapped the whole system. I believe that knowledge becomes power only when, and if, it is organized into definite plans of action, is practical as well as specialized, and is directed to a definite end.

To begin with, gaining miscellaneous knowledge has proved useless and has been the source of confusion to those who embarked on a broad university education in which students learn about many different subjects. The graduates of these universities are virtually "Jack-of-all-trades and master of none." Why should students clutter up their mind with various, unrelated subjects? If students are required to focus all their energy on one particular subject and attain mastery in it, their chances of success will be really high. Henry Ford, for instance, who was once condemned for being an ignorant person who lacked general knowledge, was a pioneer in car manufacturing for one single reason—having specialized knowledge.

Secondly, in the competitive world of today, this is the practical use of one's knowledge rather than theoretical training that matters. Professions and occupations now demand specialists rather than "theoreticians." They need the work force that can help their company thrive. This is why our graduates are in desperate need of additional training after the completion of their studies. As a result, what we need is placing more emphasis on practical issues besides what students learn theoretically. The day of theories has passed. It has been supplanted by practical use of knowledge. If

enough emphasis is put on practical training, a stupendous achievement would not be far-fetched/unattainable for students, who are the potential work force of any given society.

As far as schooling is concerned, having a definite purpose on the part of the students in choosing a certain course is the keystone of a decent system of education. I presume it would be no exaggeration of fact if I said that almost all the students in my country, except for a minority, opt for a major in university, which is not congruent with their interests, talent, or even their personality. These students are doomed and destined to fail in their major since no thought has been given to choosing them. The solution to this defect is for the students to consult a professional advisor as for the pros and cons of any major in university and choose, from among them, one that suits them most. Another way to ameliorate the situation is conducting an interview to make sure whether or not students have chosen the course they are supposed to do later in a purposeful and logical manner, the result of which would be successful, cheerful, and self-motivated students.

To sum up, in order for us to have a thriving and booming society, we are to revolutionize the entire educational system in three main areas, namely having a particularly purposed university curriculum, training students for practically applying their knowledge, and finally assisting them to select their major with great care. I hope, someday, our authorities concerned with education come to their senses and take proper measures to remedy the deficiencies that have paralyzed our education.

598 words

Amir Khadem

Topic 11: *

If you could change one important thing about your hometown, what would you change? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

In today's modern world, by the growth of population and their demand for a mechanized life, traffic jam and air pollution have become two major problems in most big cities. Tehran, my hometown, is one of the biggest cities in the world that has been suffering from both heavy traffic jam and air pollution in recent years. Consequently, these concerning problems make me change the transportation system in order to lighten the disruptive traffic jam, and restrict the emission of pollutants into the air, if I were able to change one.

These days, traffic jam in Tehran is quite a familiar problem to everyone who lives in it. Every day, heavy traffic jams, besides making people breathe a large amount of pollutants, which are released into the atmosphere, leads quite a few people, whether old or otherwise to the hospitals. In spite of these terrible conditions, because of using their own cars rather than using public transportation facilities for traveling, most people intensify these critical conditions.

In spite of this fact that using public transportation systems such as the subway and buses lessens air pollution and traffic jam issues, some big problems arise, which cause the rejection of such systems by most people. Irregularity and lack of proper and decent public services are two important reasons for the already mentioned objection, which are improvable by an active and responsible management for this system.

By taking into account all the above-mentioned factors, we reach the conclusion that improving the public transportation system not only attract people to such comfortable and economical facilities, but also helps people lighten traffic jam, and consequently, refine the polluted atmosphere of the city, which is the main source of respiratory diseases.

292 words

Topic 12: ***

If you were given the authority, what would you do for the young in your hometown? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

It is crystal clear that the young are the most crucial and effective human resources in every society. Bringing up a healthy generation has been always the ultimate objective of all psychologists and sociologists in the world since there are numerous concealed and conspicuous elements and factors, which are inextricably interwoven with one another that affect the mental and physical health of the young. Therefore, a wise and competent government comes to the result that whatever they invest in children in their younger ages will blossom in their youth. As a vision, if I were in office in my city, I would spend the entire allocated budget for the young in these ways: first, improving health, which consists of both mental and physical health; second, education, which is the first building block of a successful society; third, recreation, which is the best way to remove exhaustion and make jollification for the young.

Intelligibly, investing in the health of the young is the best way to thwart many other subsequent problems in the future. If I were in office in my city, I would do my best to establish well-equipped psychiatric and physical hospitals and infirmaries for both children and teenagers. I would employ competent, qualified, and experienced doctors to cure them free of charge. I would also monitor the behavior of parents toward their children periodically from birth onwards to foil future psychological difficulties in the society.

The practicable strategies and the quality of education have always been a challenging subject for the countries which do not take education for granted. If I were given the opportunity to reform something in my city, I would establish the best schools and colleges for the young. It is noteworthy that not only should the school's environment be attractive and warm, but also the behavior of the personnel who are engaged in teaching should be kind and amiable. I would employ the best professors to teach children and the young, and I would control the quality of it.

As far as I am concerned, and based on the latest statistics, the best way for alleviating and relieving mental ennui is recreation and entertainment since physical tiredness will be removed with rest and repose. If I were given the authority, I would construct and run several different parks and pure entertainment centers for children and the young to spend their leisure time at those places and enjoy their time, owing to the fact that when you are distracted in these places you do not think about daily and ongoing problems and matters in which you may be involved.

To draw the conclusion grounded on the above statements, I subscribe to the idea of investing in children and the young as much as possible since, in case of any negligence in this issue, irreparable and dramatic losses that emanate from this truth will affect the next generations.

481 words

Ali Mackvandi

4.5 Compare and Contrast

In this essay, you will be presented with a compare and contrast essay question. You will have to elaborate upon **the cons and pros of one specific issue** and finally mention your own stance. This essay type is similar to Task Two of IELTS exam, which sometimes appear in TOEFL test. These samples are usually **written in four paragraphs, one Introduction, one For the topic, one Against the topic, and one Conclusion**. The key words or phrases in this type of writing are as follows:

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of TV.

Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of TV.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of TV.

These samples may even look like the following topic.

Topic 13: **

Too much education is dangerous. If people receive more education than they need to function in their job, it only breeds dissatisfaction. To what extent do you agree with this. Use examples to support your view.

→→ The plan for this kind of writing looks like this.

For (in support of the topic)	Against (against the topic)
Gives people unreal expectations	How do you decide the level of education a person needs?
Expensive	High level human resources necessary for development
Not enough challenging jobs to meet people's expectations	Uneducated people unable to show initiative
Students a major cause of disruption, reject authority	People have the right to attain self-fulfillment

Now, let's take a look at a writing sample written by one of my students, corrected by the author.

In today's modern world, education and the level of literacy are two of the crucial facets, which can guarantee the progress of a society. In this regard, there is a famous quote according to which "education is simply the soul of a society, as it passes from one generation to another." Despite the fact that education plays an important role in the society, many people do not agree with the excessive amount of it. There are some pros and cons of this issue, which are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

One of the disadvantages of nurturing erudite people is the creation of unreal expectations. More precisely, highly educated people anticipate more salary and privileges in return for their precious life, which has been devoted to education. In addition, high levels of education require more expenses and budget that should be allotted to this part. As a consequence, a large number of educated people will impose laborious expenses on the governments. It is also worth mentioning that some sophisticated job positions may be lacking in a specific society, and consequently, highly educated people may not satisfy their expectations in this situation. Finally, students on the "summit" of their education may become too proud of themselves and in so doing they can cause disruptions by rejecting their authorities.

Apart from the disadvantages which are highlighted above, many people do not agree with impeding the education of people. One of the controversies in this regard is the impossibility of determining the level of education for people. This restriction should not be at the sacrifice of nurturing students. Moreover, the high levels of human resources are not only the mandatory factor for the development of a society but also the prerequisite for obtaining the otherwise far-fetched

successes. On the other hand, the utilization of uneducated people will result in a backward society on the grounds that these people will not be able to show any initiative throughout their activities. Last but not least, erudite people, similar to the other strata of a society, have the right to attain self-fulfillment and the governments cannot "quench" the desire of learning in this group of people.

In conclusion, by taking into account all the pros and cons of too much education, I do believe that every human being has the right to learn and educate as far as he or she can. I do not agree with the above statement, inasmuch as average education cannot guarantee the prosperity of a society, especially with the galloping progress in the current technology. The absence of postgraduate education is a drawback in under-developed countries. Thus, wouldn't¹ it be a failure if we hindered people toward reaching their goal?

452 words

Mohammadreza Amirmoshiri: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

¹ NB We never use contractions in TOEFL, but in the case of rhetorical questions, it is better to use contractions.

Topic 14: **

How do movies or television influence people's behavior? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

Undoubtedly, in our modern society, the media have a profound impact on human life. Every day, people watch television, listen to the radio, and read newspapers for quite a few reasons. Movies and television are a double-edged sword and have positive influence as well as negative ones on people's behavior. Hence, the influence of this ingenious innovation on people's behavior can be viewed from two completely different aspects.

It is crystal clear that television can play an absolutely pivotal role in quite a few fields, namely education, information, and entertainment, to name but a few. By the help of television, education can be spread all over the world. The main users of television are composed of children and teens. With keeping this in mind, proper and well-organized programs can have a significant impact on the promotion of teens' educational level. In some countries, people can find many educational TV channels that have focused on training a broad spectrum of jobs and skills. In addition to the aforementioned educational merit of television, this product of technology can be a warm-hearted teacher for mentally or physically challenged people. In addition, television is a very important source of information. In this hectic era in which time is equal to or even higher than gold in terms of value, people can achieve information through television. By doing so, they would be aware of events from all over the world. Thus, they can make their routine as well as pivotal decisions based on the reliable information that is obtained through TV programs. Another attractive aspect of television is its amusing programs. People, through watching the mentioned programs, can soothe their minds and pump fresh blood to their vessels. Therefore, people can consider these funny movies as a capsule of energy. When people watch the mentioned programs, they locate themselves under a hidden shield that protects them from the stresses and difficulties of modern life.

Looking on the dark side of this issue, one can find the destructive effects of television and movies on people's behavior, especially on children's behavior, among which violence and health are more important than other aspects. Statistics show that the teens who watch violent movies have an inclination towards aggressive behavior. Thus, this kind of movies can create an inappropriate culture, by which teens will become cruel and stone-hearted humans. They watch "true heroes" who gain quite a bit of money, and date with beautiful girls by using violence. Therefore, these teens repeat the behavior of their "hero" and make trouble for themselves. Another demerit of television is its harmful effect on people's health. By spending much time in front of TV, people reduce their activities and increase the probability of heart problems. In addition, through improper advertisements, television makes people eager to have fast foods, the bad effect of which on human health cannot be denied.

To sum up, television has its own merits and demerits. In this regard, people should be aware of the efficient ways of using the media, especially TV to live a happy life. I strongly suggest that children be trained to enjoy television and movies.

522 words

Iman Soleiman Meigouni: Amirkabir University of Technology (AUT)

Topic 15: *

What are the merits and the demerits of wearing a uniform at schools? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

Every day in our lives, we need to connect to people for various purposes, and the first thing that is obvious at first sight is their appearance, especially the clothes they wear. It has always been said that “everything you put on is a reflection of your taste, style, and aesthetic sense.” Nowadays, most people participating in an organization’s activity are forced to wear a set of standard clothing. I believe that wearing a uniform in organizations and schools is a good idea and has a lot of/quite a few benefits, while many people think otherwise and are against it, which are going to be broadly discussed hereunder.

Here are several reasons which make uniform an integral part of work, culture, and lifestyle at different circumstances. The wearing of uniform shows equality - the fact that everyone wearing that uniform is of the same status, and no one is “better” in any way than anyone else, no matter how rich or poor he or she is. It emphasizes that they all belong to the same group, which helps foster a community spirit and ultimately creates a better atmosphere among people. Another advantage is that uniforms are usually very reasonable in terms of price. For instance, if children were allowed to wear their own clothes at school, the tendency to keep up with “the latest fashions” would make them put pressure on their parents to buy them extra, new clothes to wear at schools. Furthermore, through making the uniform compulsory, we can indirectly obligate students to comply with the rules set by the school. This will later nurture a feeling of obedience and discipline among the students.

There are also some disadvantages associated with wearing a uniform. First, by doing so, everyone looks the same, so they cannot really stand out in a crowd: one “color,” one “design,” and one “pattern.” Secondly, if there is a stain on the uniform, the employee cannot just wear another piece of clothes. Another issue is that most people who deal with someone in uniform do not see the person in uniform—they just end up seeing the role that the uniform signifies. Additionally, many people think that the uniforms they are forced to wear are ugly, in which they do not feel comfortable. For instance, the uniforms of many schools in Iran are loose with awful colors.

To sum it up, if the dress of the members of an organization remains the same, there is a sense of community spirit, which develops among them. By so doing, they concentrate more on their work rather than their appearance. I wish we could do away with our prejudice against the uniform and paid our attention to our work, instead.

Paria Mirhashemian: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

4.6 Three kinds of plans for the essays in TOEFL

4.6.1 For *Agree/Disagree type 2* and *Preference*, the plan looks like this.

Country life ++-		City life --+
	1	
	2	
	3	

4.6.2 For *Agree/Disagree type 1*, *Argument*, and *Explanation* essays, the plan looks like this.

Mahatma Gandhi	
1	
2	
3	

4.6.3 For *Discuss or Compare* and *Contrast* essays, the plan looks like this.

For (in support of the topic)	Against (against the topic)
+	-

4.7 Tips to Have in Mind While Writing

4.7.1 Diction: Choose the right words.

Students learning to use a thesaurus often use it excessively and incorrectly in their selection of words. Knowing that all synonyms do not mean the same thing—that each synonym has a subtle nuance of meaning making it distinct from the other words—will help you avoid random substitutions of words that merely seem to look better. Using good diction in your essay involves choosing exactly the right word for the meaning you want. If you are unsure of a word's meaning, look it up in a learner's dictionary.

Poor Diction: *Devlin's essay predicates that a society consists of a group of people brought together by a common set of morals and assurances.*

Better Diction: *Devlin's essay asserts that a society consists of a group of people brought together by a common set of morals and beliefs.*

Poor Diction: *Hart responds that Devlin's essay is nothing more than a babble and malentendu of what a society is.*

Better Diction: *Hart responds that Devlin's essay is nothing more than a confusion and misunderstanding of what a society is.*

4.7.2 Vary your sentence length.

"Choppiness" is the effect of multiple short sentences in a row giving a sense of breathlessness and childlike simplicity. Contrastingly, the opposite - multiple, successive elongated sentences one after another - gives a sense of never-ending lung-power and pompous sophistication. A short sentence can be a good option for the content you are writing, just as a long one can as well. **The key is to mix them up so that you have some short sentences and some long alternating with each other.** This variety will give rhythm to your prose.

Choppy sentences: *John turned on the computer. He opened Frame maker. He selected a new document. The document was blank. He opened the graphics panel. He chose the shape tool. It was a polygon. He filled the polygon with red shading. He put a black border on it. It was a nice day. His mother brought him sandwiches. The sandwiches tasted good. (Holy Smoke! I could not take more than about half a page of this before I would go crazy!)*

Over-elongated sentences: *Turning on the computer, John opened Frame maker and, after selecting a blank document and opening the graphics panel, chose a polygonal shape tool, which he filled with red shading and a black border while his mother brought him sandwiches, all of which contributed to him having a nice day. Then, deliberating between a black and white or a color layout,*

John decided that for a publication that would be on the web as well as in print, he would need to create both types of documents, because the print would be too costly for color photos, while the web would be too dull for merely black and white, but this color vs. non-color dilemma was only the tip of the iceberg for John in Frame maker, for he knew neither how to create anchored frames for his graphics, nor how to manipulate the sizes and resolutions of the photos he wanted to import, which was giving him a headache, despite his mother's nice sandwiches. (Combining sentences is fun up to a point, and then it gets ridiculous.)

Perfect mix of short and long: *After turning on the computer, John opened Frame maker and selected a blank document. He then opened the graphics panel, chose a polygonal shape tool, and filled it with red shading and a black border. His mother brought him sandwiches, which made his day nice. Then, deliberating between a black and white or a color layout, John decided that for a publication that would be on the web as well as in print, he would need to create both types of documents. The print would be too costly for color photos, while the web would be too dull for merely black and white. However, this color...* (You get the point by now--variety leads to a pleasing rhythm.)

4.7.3 Avoid sexist pronouns.

Although in the past it was acceptable to use "he" when referring to both men and women, it is no longer acceptable to do so now. Why? Because linguists found that language use actually does have an impact on the way people think and act. If pronouns are always "he," and certain professions are always **fireman, policeman, chairman, congressmen**, etc., then it is more likely that men - by simple virtue of the privileged masculine pronoun and noun use - will fill those positions, and that women will feel that they do not belong in them. Avoiding sexist pronouns will help you find liberation from these restricting gender roles.

Even if you disagree with the above theory, using "he" only pronouns is a practice that is no longer tolerated. You should instead choose to pluralize your subject and use "they" or "their" when referring back to that subject. Alternatively, you can choose "he or she," but if you need to write "he or she" more than twice in the sentence, you might give your reader a headache. Try to **avoid "s/he" or "he/she"** simply because it is unsightly.

4.7.4 Avoid the bias of using gendered pronouns. To do so,

- Rephrase the sentence
- Use plural nouns or plural pronouns - this way you can use "they" or "their"
- Replace the pronoun with an article - instead of "his," use "the"
- Drop the pronoun - many sentences sound fine if you just omit the troublesome "his" from the sentence

- Replace the pronoun with a noun such as "person," "individual," "child," "researcher," etc.

Example:

*An **incompetent manager** cannot run a company in an excellent fashion, nor can **he or she** make a friendly relationship with **their/the** employees.*

Note:

→→ Even for singular nouns or pronouns you can use the pronoun "they."

*One can improve **his or her** knowledge by doing **their** best.*

More examples:

Sexist: *If a medical student wants to succeed, he has to learn to budget his time wisely.*

Liberated: *If medical students want to succeed, they have to learn to budget their time wisely.*

Sexist: *If one wants to become a DJ, he has to be familiar with the current music styles and have a strong sense of internal rhythm and musical flow.*

Liberated: *If one wants to become a DJ, he or she has to be familiar with the current music styles and have a strong sense of internal rhythm and musical flow.*

Sexist: *A good computer programmer has to root his knowledge in practical experience.*

Liberated: *Good computer programmers have to root their knowledge in practical experience.*

4.7.5 Maintain a level of formality

Just as in daily life, in writing you naturally adjust the level of formality of your writing style to the situation and audience. You may use one level of formality with your teacher, and another level with your best friend. **In an academic essay, be sure to maintain a formal voice.** One way to adjust your level of formality is by **avoiding contractions** (i.e., using "do not" instead of "don't").

Hyper-formal: *The degree to which private controversial moralities are decriminalized by the federal government depends on the extent of their injurious repercussions on an otherwise benign society.*

Too informal: *The feds will start putting pervs in the slammer if they feel their smutty actions are mixin' up good men and women.*

Just right: *Whether private immoralities are outlawed by the government or not depends on the harm they inflict on public society.*

To maintain a level of formality, **AVOID...**

- beginning a sentence with a conjunction (e.g. **But, And, Or, So, Yet**)
- contractions (e.g. **can't, won't, doesn't**)
- using the word **you**. Use "one", "a person", "any/every individual", and so forth.
- using the imperative or command form (e.g. **Watch**-this film.)
- abbreviations (**e.g.** or **etc.** instead of and so forth)
- short sentences and short paragraphs
- stories in the text that are too personal or too compelling.

5. Academic Skills for TOEFL Writing

5.1 Paraphrasing¹

The word paraphrase means “to express what somebody has said or written using different words”.² “In the TOEFL, you will also be tested on your ability to paraphrase parts of the text. This means you must know how to rewrite sentences by using other words and phrases without changing the original meaning. The TOEFL tests your ability in this area because when you do research in college, you are not allowed to copy and paste scholars’ works directly. Instead, you should paraphrase and integrate the scholars’ works with your own.”³ ***This skill is used in all the four modules of Reading, Listening, Writing, and Speaking in the TOEFL iBT Test.*** Therefore, it is worth learning this key skill.

5.1.1 Necessary Skills

- Understanding the original text accurately
- Using your own words to convey essential information and ideas from the reading and the lecture
- Being able to express the same information using different vocabulary and sentence structure

5.1.2 The Process of Paraphrasing

- *Understand the full meaning of the original text.*
- *Take notes on the passage. Write down key information including a few phrases, major points, and important details.*
- *WITHOUT looking at the original passage, paraphrase the information in your own words, just by looking at your notes.*
- *Check the original passage for any missed key information.*

5.1.3 Strategies

1. *Use related words and phrases, including synonyms and antonyms of words and concepts in the original passage.*

Example:

The average daytime temperature in the Gobi desert does not often go below 38°C.

The average daytime temperature in the Gobi desert is usually at or above 38°C.

2. *Change word forms, and rephrase to make things simpler.*

Example: For organization → in order to organize

¹ *Mastering Skills for the TOEFL iBT (2nd Edition)*

² *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th Edition*

³ *Top the TOEFL: Dr. Kaiwen Leong*

People at the age of thirty → thirty-year-old people

3. *Use different sentence structure.*

Example: Many Asian countries export rice to North America.

Rice is exported to North America by many Asian countries.

4. *Change the order of presentation of the information.*

5. *Cite information from the original source by using signal words.*

Example: According to the professor/passage...

The professor says/mentions/states/argues/believes/found that...

Example¹:

Original Statement: The hardest woodwind instrument to learn is the oboe.

Unacceptable Paraphrase: The *most difficult* woodwind instrument to learn is the oboe.

Why is the first paraphrase unacceptable? Did you notice that only one word was different from the original statement? Remember that substituting one synonym is not a restatement and not an acceptable paraphrase.

Now, look at an acceptable paraphrase:

Original Statement: The hardest woodwind instrument to learn is the oboe.

Acceptable Paraphrase: The *most difficult* woodwind instrument to *master* is the oboe.

Why is the second paraphrase acceptable? Did you notice that more than one synonym was different? The phrase *most difficult* was substituted for the word *hardest* and the word *master* was substituted for the word *learn*. But this paraphrase is still very close to the original sentence.

This is an improvement in paraphrasing:

Original Statement: The hardest woodwind instrument to learn is the oboe.

Excellent Paraphrase: The oboe is the most difficult woodwind instrument to master.

Why is this paraphrase considered excellent? Like the acceptable paraphrase, more than one synonym was different. The phrase *most difficult* was substituted for the word *hardest* and the word *master* was substituted for the word *learn*. Did you also see how the structure of the sentence changed? The subject of the original statement was *the hardest woodwind*

¹Barron's TOEFL iBT Internet-Based Test (12th Edition).

instrument and the complement was *the oboe*. In the excellent paraphrase, *the oboe* was the subject and *the hardest woodwind instrument* was the complement.

Exercises¹:

Paraphrase the following sentences using the model. Try to rewrite each sentence that you may see in a textbook by substituting synonyms for the underlined words and phrases. As you have learned, an excellent paraphrase will also change the structure of the sentence, but in this practice activity, let's begin by writing acceptable paraphrases. Substitute multiple synonyms. The first one is completed to give you an example. Your answer is correct if the words or phrases you use are synonyms for the underlined words or phrases and the meaning of the sentence is the same.

Original: Thomas Edison was a very curious child, performing his first experiment when he was only three years old.

Paraphrase: Thomas Edison was a very inquisitive child, conducting his first experiment at the age of three.

1. The copperhead, a snake that strikes without warning, is considered much more dangerous than the rattlesnake.

2. Because J. P. Morgan was known as a reputable and prudent businessman, he was able to persuade others to remain in the market even after the crash had begun.

3. Phosphorus is used in paint on highway signs and markers because it is bright at night.

4. Rain forests are often located near the equator.

5. By the mid-nineteenth century, land was so expensive in large cities that architects began to conserve space by building skyscrapers.

6. Research studies of vertebrates show development from a very simple heart in fish to a complex four-chamber heart in humans.

7. When two products are fundamentally the same, advertising can influence the choice that the public makes.

8. As a whole, in birds, the male of the species is more brilliantly colored.

¹Barron's TOEFL iBT Internet-Based Test (12th Edition).

9. The price of gold on the world market is subject to several variables, including but not limited to supply and demand.
affected by *Paraphrase* *bounded by*

10. The idea of a submarine is not recent, dating from the 1400s when Drebbel and da Vinci drew initial sketches.
new *unprecedented*

Some great techniques of paraphrasing are as follows:

A) Use Phrases¹

There is a tendency to try to find one word to paraphrase, but **phrases** can be a useful alternative.

Practical Strategy

The English language contains many phrasal verbs that express the same meaning as a one-word verb.

In general, the phrasal verbs used for informal writing and speaking, and the one-word verb is used for more formal language. Some of the phrasal verbs that are common to academic language are listed here.

* Bring about	cause
Carry on	continue
* Carry out	transact; accomplish
Clear up	clarify
Come about	happen
Come across	find
Come by	find accidentally
Come out with	publish; produce
Come up with	create
Cut down on	reduce
* Fall through	fail
Figure out	understand
Find out	discover
Give off	emit
Go after	follow
Go back	return

¹ *ibid*

Go before	precede
Go down	decrease
Go on	continue; happen
✎ Go over	review
Go through	experience; penetrate
Go up	increase
Keep on	continue
Keep up	remain current
✎ Leave out	exclude; omit
Look for	seek
Look into	investigate
Look like	resemble
✎ Look over	examine
✎ Look up	locate information
Look up to	respect
✎ Make out	understand with difficulty
Make up	invent; compose
Pick out	select
Point out	show; indicate
✎ Put off	postpone
✎ Put up with	tolerate
✎ Rule out	eliminate
Run across	find accidentally
Run into	meet by accident
Setup	arrange
Show up	appear unexpectedly
Spell out	state in detail
Stand for	represent
Stick out	protrude
✎ Take into account	consider
✎ Take over	assume
Take place	occur
Think through	reason
Throw away	discard

✓Touch on	mention briefly
Try out	test
Turn into	transform
Turn out	conclude
✱ Turn up	discover
✱ Wind up	finish
Work out	exercise
Write up	report

Exercise:

Try to say each sentence using a phrase instead of a one-word verb. The first one is completed to give you an example. Your answer is correct if the phrases that you use are synonyms for the underlined words and the meaning of the sentence is the same. The phrases do not have to be the ones that are used in the answer key. Example answers are given orally in the folder for paraphrasing on Track 1.

Written:

A balance of international payment refers to the net result of the business that a nation transacts with other nations in a given period.

Spoken:

A balance of international payment refers to the net result of the business that a nation carries on with other nations in a given period.

1. Because light travels faster than sound, lightning appears to precede thunder.
2. Congress respected Jefferson because of his intelligence and creativity.
3. The lower teeth in crocodiles protrude when their mouths are closed.
4. Some sponges resemble plants.
5. The first census was accomplished in Great Britain in 1801 .
6. People who have experienced a traumatic event may have recurring images of it.
7. In algebra, letters and other symbols represent numbers.
8. During periods of stress or excitement, the heart rate increases and airways to the lungs become dilated.
9. Theories of prehistory and early humans are constantly changing as we consider the new evidence from archeological finds.
10. Dreams may have been the inspiration for the Surrealists to create their works of art.

B) Make an Explanation¹

→→ Sometimes even native speakers cannot retrieve a word from memory when they are paraphrasing, especially when they are speaking. When this happens to you, there are several ways to compensate for the word that has slipped your mind.

Practical Strategy

- a) If it is an **adjective**, you can use an **opposite adjective with the word *not***. For example, if a synonym for the adjective ***large*** slips your mind, you can say, ***not small***.
The sum was not small.
- b) If it is a **verb**, you can use a **general verb** instead of a specific synonym. For example, if you forget the synonym for the verb ***rely on***, you can say, ***use***, which is a very general verb that includes many meanings. Early traders *used* barter instead of money to exchange goods.
- c) If it is a **noun**, you can **describe the noun with a descriptive phrase or clause**. For example, if you forget the synonym for the noun ***farmer*** or if the word *farmer* slips your mind, you can describe it by saying, ***the person who engages in agriculture***.

These compensatory strategies are used to get out of a problem when you are speaking. They should be used as a last resort instead of stopping when you are speaking.

Exercise:

Try to restate each sentence that you may see in a textbook by explaining the meaning instead of substituting a synonym for the underlined word. The first one is completed to give you an example. Example answers are given orally in the folder for paraphrasing on Track 2.

Example:

The Constitution guarantees that private homes will not be searched without a warrant.

The Constitution guarantees that private homes will not be searched without written authorization.

a) Adjectives: Use an opposite.

The second movement of a symphony is usually slow.

The second movement of a symphony is usually not fast.

1. The temperature in many desert regions is cold at night.
2. Facial expressions may be common across cultures.

¹ *ibid*

3. Obsidian is shiny because it cools too quickly for crystals to form.
4. Few musical instruments play louder than 100 decibels or softer than 20 decibels.
5. The people who have adapted to life at very high altitudes are usually short.

b) Nouns: Use a phrase.

Skyscrapers are representative of the International Style of architecture.

Tall buildings are representative of the International Style of architecture.

1. In many cities, vendors must have a license to set up their booths in public places.
2. Studies show that small pets are a positive influence in elderly people's lives.
3. Staircases were an important feature of the palaces constructed during the Baroque period.
4. Global wind patterns are affected by the Earth's rotation.
5. Bilingual education is more common in regions where language minorities live.

c) Verbs: Use a general verb.

Many managers employ teams to accomplish complex goals.

Many managers use teams to accomplish complex goals.

1. Unlike cast iron, pure wrought iron contains no carbon.
2. Hypnosis achieves a heightened state of suggestibility in a willing participant.
3. Productivity increases when fewer employees are required to accomplish the work.
4. Normally, the plasma in human blood constitutes 50-60 percent of the total blood volume.
5. Three fourths of the goods manufactured in Canada for export are sold to the United States.

C) Use Alternative Grammatical Structures

Strategies to Use

1. *Produce restatements*
2. *Read and listen for meaning*
3. *Edit problem paraphrases*

1. Produce Restatements

Learning to identify possibilities for alternative structures will improve your paraphrasing skills. A restatement with an alternative structure is not a paraphrase because it uses too many of the same words and phrases.

Practical Strategy

Study the examples of restatements in each of the categories below. Learn to make restatements using alternative structures. When you can use both synonyms and alternative structures, you will be able to paraphrase appropriately. For now, focus on **alternative structures**.

- **Chronology** *before/after/during*

- **Coordination** *only-but also/neither-nor/not-but/both-and/as well as*
- **Cause** *because/because of/since/as a result*
- **Comparison** *similar/like/the same/differ/different/more/less*
- **Concession** *although/even though/despite/in spite of/but/whereas*
- **Negatives** *not + un-/not once/not one/very rarely/very seldom*
- **Passives** *BE + past participle*

a) Chronology

Original: After the Missouri Compromise was abandoned by Congress, the Republican Party was formed in 1854, partly in opposition to the spread of slavery in the United States.

Restatement: Before the Republican Party was formed in 1854, in part to oppose the spread of slavery in the United States, the Missouri Compromise had already been abandoned by Congress.

b) Coordination

Original: Byzantine art consisted not only of oriental style but also of Greek ideas that maintained its popularity for more than eleven centuries.

Restatement: Popular for more than eleven hundred years, Byzantine art consisted of both oriental style and Greek ideas.

c) Cause

Original: In the classic experiment in operant conditioning, Pavlov's dog salivated when he heard a bell because he associated the sound with food.

Restatement: Since Pavlov's dog associated the sound of a bell with being fed, he salivated when he heard it in the classic experiment in operant conditioning.

d) Comparison

Original: As a conductor of heat and electricity, aluminum exceeds all metals except silver, copper, and gold.

Restatement: Silver, copper, and gold are better conductors of heat and electricity than aluminum is.

e) Concession

Original: Despite the great differences in size, shape, and function, all human cells have the same forty-six chromosomes.

Restatement: Although the forty-six chromosomes are the same in all human cells, there are different in the size, shape, and function.

f) Negative

Original: It is not illegal in some cultures to be married to more than one woman at the same time, but the monogamous relationship is the most common.

Restatement: In some cultures, it is legal to be married to several women at once, but it is more common to be married to just one woman.

g) Passive

Original: The explosive properties of nitroglycerin, later one of the components of dynamite, were discovered by Ascanio Sobrero, an Italian chemistry professor.

Restatement: Italian chemistry professor Ascanio Sobrero discovered that nitroglycerin, later used in the production of dynamite, had explosive properties.

Exercise¹:

Make changes to the grammar but do not make changes in the meaning of the sentence. The first one for each structure is completed to give you an example. Example answers are mentioned after each section.

Chronology

After the death of Queen Mary In 1558, her half-sister Elizabeth ascended the throne of England.

Before Elizabeth ascended the throne of England in 1558, her half-sister Mary ruled.

1. Not until the Triassic Period did the first primitive mammals appear.
2. Glass became a major construction material during the late Middle Ages.
3. Helium replaced hydrogen as a power source for dirigibles because it was safer.
4. The Moriori people settled the Chatham Islands off the coast of New Zealand long before the Europeans arrived in 1791.
5. Always rinse your test tubes and pipettes with a small amount of distilled water before you store them in the lab cabinets.

Answers:

1. The first primitive mammals appeared in the Triassic Period.
2. Before the late Middle Ages, glass was not a major construction material.
3. Hydrogen was used as a power source for dirigibles before helium, which was safer.
4. The Europeans arrived in 1791, long after the Moriori people settled the Chatham Islands off the coast of New Zealand.
5. Store your test tubes and pipettes in the lab cabinets after you rinse them with a small amount of distilled water.

¹ *ibid*

Coordination

Before the introduction of the musical staff, composers preserved their work not only by writing it down but also by teaching it to a younger musician.

Before the introduction of the musical staff, composers preserved their work by both teaching it to a younger musician and writing a book.

1. Both genes and viruses are made of essential chemicals called nucleoproteins.
2. Successful managers neither proceed without a plan nor ignore opportunities that arise.
3. Technically, not only glass but also water are considered minerals.
4. Neither corn nor winter wheat are native to the Americas.
5. Ethnicity is usually based on race and religion as well as national origin.

Answers:

1. Not only genes but also viruses are made of essential chemicals called nucleoproteins.
2. Successful managers don't proceed without a plan, but they don't ignore the opportunities that arise.
3. Technically, both glass and water are considered minerals.
4. Corn and winter wheat are not native to the Americas.
5. Ethnicity is usually based on race, religion, and national origin.

Cause

The diesel engine that runs on oil is more efficient than most other engines because it converts more of the useful energy stored in the fuel.

The diesel engine runs more efficiently than most other engines because of the oil that converts more useful energy.

1. Psychologists suggest that incentives cause workers to increase productivity.
2. Because many flakes have been found in excavations of Stone Age settlements, anthropologists conclude that they were used as tools for cutting and scraping.
3. Too much water can cause plants to turn brown on the edges.
4. Blood pressure can become elevated as a result of increased salt consumption.
5. Since the interstate highway system linking roads across the country was built in the 1930s, most of the roads in the system need to be repaired.

Answers:

1. According to psychologists, workers increase productivity because of incentives.
2. Anthropologists conclude that flakes were used as tools for cutting and scraping since many of them have been found in excavations of Stone Age settlements.

3. Plants can turn brown on the edges because of too much water.
4. Increasing the consumption of salt can cause higher blood pressure.
5. Most of the roads in the interstate highway system linking roads across the country need to be repaired because they were built in the 1930s.

Comparison

Although they are smaller in size, for the most part, chipmunks are like most other ground squirrels.

Chipmunks are mostly like other ground squirrels except for their smaller size.

1. Viruses and the first life forms that appeared on Earth millions of years ago have a similar structure.
2. The lungs have a higher oxygen concentration than the blood does.
3. The Indian Ocean is smaller but deeper than the Atlantic Ocean.
4. Picasso's works were not the same during various artistic periods.
5. The difference in the gravitational attraction of various places on the Earth's surface is the reason that the weight of objects is not the same.

Answers:

1. Viruses have a structure that is like that of the first life forms that appeared on Earth thousands of years ago.
2. The oxygen concentration in the blood is lower than that in the lungs.
3. The Atlantic Ocean is larger but it is not deeper than the Indian Ocean.
4. Picasso's works during various artistic periods differ quite a lot from each other.
5. The weight of one object cannot be the same as that of another because the gravitational attraction differs from place to place on the surface of the Earth.

Concession

Although oil paint tends to yellow with age, tempera colors retain their vibrancy for centuries.

Oil paint tends to yellow with age, but tempera colors retain their vibrancy for centuries.

1. Whereas insulin levels are close to or above normal in type 2 diabetes, target cells cannot respond adequately.
2. Although the idea of an English language academy is regularly proposed, the response has never been very positive.
3. Even though the Jovian planets are grouped together, each one has had a very different evolutionary history.

4. Despite the advantage that young people enjoy for recall in vocabulary studies, older people appear to be better at word recognition.
5. In spite of the fact that interviews are the most common strategy for assessing job applicants, they tend to have low validity.

Answers:

1. Even though insulin levels are close to or above normal in type 2 diabetes, target cells cannot respond adequately.
2. The idea of an English language academy is regularly proposed, but the response has never been very positive.
3. The Jovian planets are grouped together; however, each one has had a very different evolutionary history.
4. Even though young people enjoy an advantage for recall in vocabulary studies, older people appear to be better at word recognition.
5. Although interviews are the most common strategy for assessing job applicants, they tend to have low validity.

Negative

The addiction to gambling is not unlike the addiction to substances.

The addiction to gambling is like the addiction to substances.

1. Not once has the geyser known as Old Faithful failed to erupt on time.
2. Nonstandard dialects are not used as educational models in schools.
- ★ 3. Never has there been such wide access to news from so many media.
4. The construction of a city on the ruins of a previous settlement is not uncommon.
5. Not until the Triassic Period did the first primitive mammals develop.

Answers:

1. The geyser known as Old Faithful has never failed to erupt on time.
2. Only standard dialects are used as educational models in schools.
3. There has never been such wide access to news from so many media.
4. The construction of a city on the ruins of a previous settlement is common.
5. The first primitive mammals did not develop until the Triassic Period.

Passive

Sea gulls need either fresh or salt water for them to survive.

Either fresh or salt water is needed by sea gulls for them to survive.

1. It is interesting that people over the age of 65 experience fewer mental health disorders.

2. In the stringed instruments, a bow produces the tones when it is played across a set of strings made of wire or gut.
3. High-frequency radiation from the Sun and other sources partly ionize gases in the ionosphere.
4. Architects can use a domed roof to conserve floor space.
5. The Egyptians used papyrus to make paper, sails, baskets, and clothing.

Answers:

1. It is interesting that fewer mental health disorders are experienced by people over the age of 65.
2. In the stringed instruments, the tones are produced by a bow when it is played across a set of strings made of wire or gut.
3. Gases in the ionosphere are partly ionized by high-frequency radiation from the Sun and other sources.
4. A domed roof can be used by architects to conserve floor space.
5. Papyrus was used by the Egyptians to make paper, sails, baskets, and clothing.

2. Read and Listen for Meaning

When you read or listen for meaning, you learn to **think about the ideas that the writer or speaker is communicating, not the individual words or grammar used.**

Practical Strategy

Practice reading and listening for meaning. By focusing on sentences or even paragraphs, you will train your mind to make connections and comprehend the ideas instead of trying to understand word by word. The important question is this: **What does the author or the lecturer mean? What ideas are being expressed?**

Exercise¹:

Try to identify the sentences that express the same idea. The first one is completed to give you an example. Example answers are mentioned after the exercise.

Example:

What does the professor mean by the following statement:

Poet and humorist Ogden Nash tried but failed to adapt himself to the academic and later the business world.

- a) He was a better businessman than he was a teacher.
- b) He did not succeed in either teaching or business.**
- c) He tried teaching before he finally succeeded in business.

¹ *ibid*

d) He made no effort to succeed in teaching and business.

1. What does the professor mean by the following statement:

After hitting a bar several times with similar results, an animal learns that it can get food by pressing the bar.

- a) An animal is able to press the bar more after it is fed three or four times.
- b) Three or four animals are used in the experiment with similar results.
- c) There are several trials by an animal before the food is released.
- ✓d) An animal learns how to get food by hitting a bar.

2. What does the professor mean by the following statement:

Although he wrote many short stories, it was a poem, "The Raven," that brought Poe his greatest recognition as a writer.

- ✓a) Poe is remembered more for a poem than for his short stories.
- b) "The Raven" is less well-known than Poe's short stories.
- c) Poe is famous for writing both short stories and poetry.
- d) Poe wrote more short stories than poems during his career.

3. What does the professor mean by the following statement:

It was an atom that contained in the form of pure energy, the fundamental components of the entire universe.

- ✓a) The universe was made up of many atoms of pure energy.
- b) The effect of a pure atom in the universe was to produce energy.
- ✓c) Everything in the universe was reduced to pure energy in one atom.
- d) The energy in the universe was stored in pure atoms.

4. What does the professor mean by the following statement:

Although a bear does not eat during the winter, sustaining itself from body fat, its temperature remains almost normal, and it breathes regularly.

- a) When a bear survives on body fat instead of eating, its temperature and respiration are reduced.
- b) Not eating during the winter does not affect the bear's breathing, but it does affect its temperature.
- ✓c) During the winter, the bear's temperature is normal and its respiration is regular, but it does not require food.
- d) The bear's diet of fat during the winter does not affect its temperature and respiration.

5. What does the professor mean by the following statement:

It is generally true that as long as the CEO maintains the confidence of the board of directors, they will not intervene to dictate specific policies.

- a) Policies are dictated by the board with the approval of the CEO.
- b) The board will assume control only if they lose confidence in the CEO.
- c) The confidence of the CEO is important to decisions that the board makes.
- d) The intervention by the CEO in board policies does not occur often.

6. What does the professor mean by the following statement:

Temperature variations cause pressure differences in the air.

- a) Fluctuations in the air pressure are a result of changes in temperature.
- b) Changes in the air pressure and temperature vary at different times.
- c) The temperature is usually different from the air pressure.
- d) Changeable temperatures are caused by reversals in the wind.

7. What does the professor mean by the following statement:

To maintain a healthy body weight, an animal must balance energy intake with energy output, largely by metabolic activity and regular physical exertion.

- a) Metabolism regulates activity and exercise reduces body weight for a healthy life style.
- b) A healthy life style includes exercise in order to control weight gain that is caused by the metabolism.
- c) Metabolism and exercise are ways to stabilize consumption and production of energy for a healthy weight.
- d) Animals generally balance their metabolisms by healthy eating and exercise, which also controls their weigh.

8. What does the professor mean by the following statement:

An example of children's literature that supports the natural inclination to play with language is the nursery rhyme.

- a) The nursery rhyme is a good example of children's literature because it is fun.
- b) Children like nursery rhymes because they enjoy them during playtime.
- c) Children's literature is written in language that the child can understand.
- d) The child's interest in playing with language is encouraged by the nursery rhyme.

9. What does the professor mean by the following statement:

For employees whose jobs involve sitting at a computer terminal entering data or typing reports, the location of the computer relative to the company is of no consequence.

- a) Employees who work at their computers like to choose their locations.
- b) It does not matter where employees work at their computers.
- c) The location of their computers should be comfortable to employees.
- d) Computer terminals must be located near each other in a company.

10. What does the professor mean by the following statement:

Ireland was first settled around 7500 B.C. by hunting tribes from Scotland, followed by people from the Mediterranean known as the Firbolgs.

- a) The Firbolgs arrived in Ireland from the Mediterranean after the Scottish people had already settled there.
- b) Irish tribes went to Scotland and then followed a hunting route all the way to the Mediterranean area called Firbolgs.
- c) The Irish and Scottish people explored Europe, reaching as far as the Mediterranean where they settled.
- d) Looking for a place to live, the Firbolgs went to Scotland and then to Ireland where they finally settled.

Answers:

- 1. **D** An animal learns how to get food by hitting a bar.
- 2. **A** Poe is remembered more for a poem than for his short stories.
- 3. **C** Everything in the universe was reduced to pure energy in one atom.
- 4. **C** During the winter, the bear's temperature is normal and its respiration is regular, but it does not require food.
- 5. **B** The board will assume control only if they lose confidence in the CEO.
- 6. **A** Fluctuations in the air pressure are a result of changes in temperature.
- 7. **C** Metabolism and exercise are ways to stabilize consumption and production of energy for a healthy weight.
- 8. **D** The child's interest in playing with language is encouraged by the nursery rhyme.
- 9. **B** It does not matter where employees work at their computers.
- 10. **A** The Firbolgs arrived in Ireland from the Mediterranean after the Scottish people had already settled there.

3. Edit Problem Paraphrases

Here are some problems that you can learn to avoid: