

C.E.F.: B2-C1

1. OPINION ESSAYS

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I. DISCURSIVE ESSAYS

DISCURSIVE ESSAYS present strong arguments and relevant examples concerning different topics, such as the Internet, health, the gap between generations, current activities, immigration, food, technology and the list can go on. Discursive essays are divided into opinion essays and for-and-against essays.

1. OPINION ESSAYS

An opinion essay presents our own opinion on a certain topic. We use a formal style and present tenses. The clear presentation of our opinions and viewpoints on the topic is very important and the arguments must always be strengthened with examples. The essay has five or more paragraphs grouped into three main parts : the introduction, the main body and the conclusion.

In the **introduction** we make general remarks about the subject, stating our opinion clearly, if we agree or not with the topic. To present our opinions we can use expressions such as: *in my opinion, I believe, I think, I consider, as I see it, as far as I am concerned* and so on.

The **main body** usually includes three paragraphs. The first two convey our viewpoint: if we agree with the topic, we present its advantages and if we disagree with it, we present its minuses. We justify our opinions with arguments, reasons and relevant examples. Each viewpoint is presented in a separate paragraph and we use connectors such as *firstly, secondly, furthermore, also, moreover, in addition* to introduce the arguments. In the fourth paragraph we present the opposing point of view. So, if we agree with the topic, we present a negative point and if we disagree with it, then we present a positive aspect. This last paragraph of the main body can be introduced by words such as *however* or *on the other hand*.

In the **conclusion** we sum up the topic, then we state our opinion once again using different terms, to clarify our personal point of view. To introduce the last part of an opinion essay we use phrases such as *in conclusion, in brief, briefly, to sum up, all the things being considered* and so on.

1

**Speak about the qualities that would make a good doctor.
Give arguments and examples to support your ideas**

When we were kids and someone would ask us what we wanted to become, most of us would answer: "I will be a doctor", not knowing then what this really implied. Surely, being a doctor is a nice and respected profession, offering a good salary and great satisfaction in most cases, but I think we should also be aware of its risky implications. Before choosing such a profession we should consider all the advantages and disadvantages, but more importantly, we need to understand what qualities make a good doctor, as this is at the least a job and more of a vocation that chooses you, instead of you choosing it.

To begin with, being a good doctor means being extremely knowledgeable in the field and this requires studying all your life. It also means to be in tune with the latest technology advancements that help doctors determine a better diagnosis and provide better treatment. In order to keep up the pace with all this information at all times, a doctor needs to be an open-minded, intelligent and fast thinking person with an ability to learn continuously.

Furthermore, patience is an even more important quality in a doctor. Medical professionals meet new, difficult, strange cases everyday and have to brace themselves for the worst life-threatening crisis a patient might encounter, while at the same time empathize with the anxiety and fear of all the patients. However, a doctor must not become involved emotionally with a patient but stay focused entirely on the case, as any particular situation could be an answer to larger problems, such as incurable diseases. A doctor's patience is also crucial when he or she is urgently needed at the hospital in the middle of the night even if it is not his or her shift, because some emergency occurred. Last but not least, patience is essential for a doctor when a hypochondriac rushes into hospital,

convinced that he or she suffers from the most dreadful afflictions. It is again the doctor's job to convince them that they are all right.

However, neither technology nor patience would suffice to make a good doctor if there wasn't any passion involved. I strongly believe that the underlying motivation for any profession is a personal, ultimately selfish one. Therefore, I would say that the most important quality in a doctor is to really like being a doctor, to love each moment of your work. This means you have got the call to do it, hence patience, study and hard work come as second nature. If you love what you do and it all becomes part of who you are, the phone calls in the middle of the night or the sickness and the desperation of the patients will never put you off, although I am sure there are difficult moments in a doctor's career.

To conclude with, being a good doctor requires specific qualities like intelligence, hard work, open-mindedness, patience and a good attitude towards the patients and people in general. But in my opinion, the strongest motivation and underlying force behind every doctor's work should be passion, maybe more so in this case than with any other profession.

2

Speak about three factors that affect our lives in a negative way in today's world. Give arguments and examples to support your ideas.

The turn of the 21st century brought about a worldwide feeling of insecurity as we find ourselves more and more on the verge of irreversible natural changes. We are now said to be sacrificed generations, because over the past decades people have constantly tried to make life easier and better through technological breakthroughs, more food and more entertainment, ignoring the environment. Why did our progress and welfare turn against us and what are the main factors that affect us in a negative way? These are questions with no easy answers, but if I were to identify the main problems we face in the world today, I would say pollution, consumer society and the side effects of our hi-tech enriched life are at the top of the agenda.

To start with, pollution is a very complex issue that affects everything pertaining to our existence: the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe. Unfortunately, pollution reaches beyond our existence into vast eco-systems that sustain the land as well as the sea, spreading toxic waste into natural habitats, destroying them and causing species to become extinct. At the beginning of the 20th century, industry was seen as the golden key to progress, but 100 years later, it turns out that humankind has earned its welfare the hard way and now faces a new threat, global warming. What's more, industry has brought about an unprecedented number of afflictions such as tuberculosis and other lung illnesses, as well as cancer and heavy metal poisoning. It has contaminated the water of the rivers with highly toxic chemical waste and has led to massive land clearing. Ironically, we now have a lot more food than in the past and at smaller prices. Yet the real price is the use of chemical fertilizers and additives to enhance the flavour of all these products. So we eventually eat unhealthy food, no matter the destructive costs of production. I think we still have a lot to learn about our planet and about preventing pollution, as we carelessly keep on buying more fancy cars and produce more garbage every year. Although we agree in theory to all the social programmes aiming at stopping pollution, we do very little to mend our ways when it comes to giving up our personal comfort.