

PRACTICE WORKSHEET + FULL ANSWER KEY

Developing a reasoned argument

Senior and university-level communication; general skill practice. Work through the sections in order, or choose the one that matches this week's topic.

QUESTIONS	SECTIONS	ANSWER KEY	WORKING SPACE
52	5	At the back	Ruled

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Before you start

Answer the actual question and develop a clear position. Each paragraph needs a relevant main idea, explanation and support. A short planning exercise can reveal a weak argument before you write a full essay.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Plan a paragraph on this prompt: Some towns are limiting cars in their centres. Discuss one possible benefit.

- 1 Choose one benefit, such as a safer pedestrian environment.
- 2 Explain how reducing vehicle traffic could produce that benefit.
- 3 Use a concrete example and acknowledge that access needs still require planning.

Use this method as your model. Set out your own working the same way.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Listing ideas without developing them
- Making absolute claims without sufficient support

There are 52 questions across 5 sections. Write in the ruled space, then mark your work against the answer key at the back. Topics covered: Understanding the prompt, Paragraph development, Editing.

SECTION A Understanding the prompt

Answer the actual question and develop a clear position from the start.

- 1** Write one sentence stating a clear position on limiting cars in town centres.

- 2** Give one possible disadvantage of that policy and explain it.

3

Identify the task words in: some people think schools should teach cooking. Discuss both views and give your opinion.

4

Explain what discuss both views requires.

5

Explain what to what extent do you agree requires.

6

Paraphrase this prompt: many young people leave rural areas for cities. Why? What can be done?

7

Explain why answering only half a two-part prompt loses marks.

8

Write a plan of three main points for the town-centre car prompt.

9

Explain why a plan is worth two or three minutes.

10

Explain the difference between a topic and a position.

11

Write a thesis sentence for an essay that agrees only partly with a statement.

SECTION B Paragraph development

Each paragraph needs one main idea, explanation and support.

12

Write a topic sentence and two supporting sentences for one paragraph.

13

Improve the vague sentence: This is good for everything.

14

Explain the purpose of a topic sentence.

15

Add an explanation to this claim: cycling reduces congestion.

16

Add an example to this claim: public transport needs to be reliable.

17

Explain why one well-developed point beats three undeveloped ones.

- 18 Write a paragraph of four sentences on one benefit of limiting cars.

- 19 Name three connectives and what each signals.

- 20 Explain what makes a paragraph cohesive.

- 21 Explain one problem with using too many connectives.

- 22 Rewrite so the ideas link: Cars cause pollution. Cities are crowded. People are unhealthy.

SECTION C Evidence and qualified claims

Make absolute claims only when you can defend them. Never invent research data.

- 23 Explain why an absolute claim is risky in an essay.

- 24 Qualify this claim: public transport is always better than driving.

- 25 Explain why you should not invent statistics.

- 26 Give a hypothetical example that supports a claim without inventing data.

- 27 Explain the difference between a reason and an example.

- 28 Name two hedging words and explain their function.

- 29 Rewrite with appropriate hedging: Restrictions solve congestion.

- 30 Explain why a counterargument strengthens an essay.

- 31 Write a sentence acknowledging a counterargument and answering it.

- 32 Explain why relevance matters more than the number of ideas.

SECTION D Describing data

Select and report the main features. Do not explain causes or give an opinion.

33 Explain what a data description task asks you to do.

34 Paraphrase this opening: the chart shows bus use in four towns from 2015 to 2020.

35 Explain what an overview paragraph should contain.

36 Write an overview for data where one town rose steadily and three fell.

37 Name three verbs for describing an increase.

38 Name three ways to describe a small change.

39 Rewrite with a comparison: Town A was 40%. Town B was 20%.

40 Explain why you should not explain the causes of a trend in a data task.

41 Explain why selecting features matters.

42 Write two sentences describing a peak and a low point in a trend.

SECTION E Editing and finishing

Keep a few minutes to check. Accuracy is assessed alongside content.

43 Correct: Many person prefers to travel by cars because it are convenient.

44 Write a brief conclusion that follows from your argument without introducing a new point.

45 Explain why a conclusion should not add new evidence.

46 Correct: The government should to invest in transport.

47

Correct: Nowadays, more and more people is using bicycles.

48

Replace the repeated word: Traffic is a problem because traffic causes delays.

49

Explain how to manage time across two writing tasks.

50

Name two things to check in the last three minutes.

51

Explain why word count matters.

52

Reread your essay. Name one sentence to cut and explain why.

Answer key

Work each section before you check it. These are model answers: an equivalent method, or a different well-supported interpretation, can be just as correct.

SECTION A - UNDERSTANDING THE PROMPT

1. A specific relevant position, such as supporting restrictions where accessible public transport is available.
2. For example, people with limited mobility may find access harder unless alternatives are provided.
3. The task words are discuss both views and give your opinion; the topic words are schools and teach cooking.
4. A fair presentation of each side, followed by your own reasoned position.
5. A clear degree of agreement, maintained and supported throughout the essay.
6. An accurate paraphrase naming both tasks: explain the causes and suggest solutions.
7. Task response is assessed on covering the whole question, so a missing part leaves the task incomplete.
8. Three distinct, relevant points that together support a single position.
9. It prevents repetition and a mid-essay change of position, both of which cost coherence marks.
10. The topic is what the essay is about; the position is what you claim about it.
11. A sentence naming the degree of agreement and the reason, for example: this holds for large cities, though less so for rural areas.

SECTION B - PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT

12. A focused topic sentence followed by relevant explanation and evidence or an illustrative example.
13. For example: Reducing traffic can make busy shopping streets safer for pedestrians.
14. It states the paragraph's single main idea so the reader knows what the paragraph will argue.
15. For example: each person who cycles removes a car from the road, which shortens queues at junctions.
16. For example: a commuter who misses one connection may arrive an hour late, which pushes people back to cars.
17. Development is assessed; listing ideas without explaining them leaves the argument unsupported.
18. Topic sentence, explanation, example and a linking or concluding sentence.
19. For example however signals contrast, therefore signals result, and furthermore signals addition.
20. Ideas are ordered logically and linked by reference words and connectives, so the reader follows without effort.
21. Overuse makes the writing feel mechanical and can obscure the actual logic.

22. For example: Because cars concentrate pollution in crowded cities, residents are exposed to air that harms their health.

SECTION C - EVIDENCE AND QUALIFIED CLAIMS

23. A single counterexample defeats it; a qualified claim is easier to defend.
24. For example: public transport is usually the better option in dense urban areas with frequent services.
25. Fabricated figures are not evidence and can be recognised as implausible; reasoned examples are safer and are what the task expects.
26. A plausible illustrative case, clearly framed as an example rather than as research.
27. A reason explains why the claim holds; an example illustrates it in a specific case.
28. For example may and tend to; they signal that the claim holds generally rather than always.
29. For example: restrictions can help reduce congestion, particularly where alternatives exist.
30. Addressing the strongest objection shows the position survives scrutiny.
31. For example: although deliveries need access, timed loading windows can protect both trade and pedestrians.
32. Irrelevant material is not credited and dilutes the response to the actual question.

SECTION D - DESCRIBING DATA

33. Select and report the main features and make relevant comparisons, without giving an opinion.
34. For example: The chart compares how bus use changed in four towns over a five-year period.
35. The two or three most striking general features, without individual figures.
36. For example: Overall, only one town saw sustained growth, while use declined in the remaining three.
37. Rose, increased, climbed and grew.
38. Slightly, marginally, a modest rise, or remained broadly stable.
39. Town A's figure was double that of Town B, at 40% against 20%.
40. The task asks you to report what the data show; causes are speculation beyond the chart.
41. Listing every number leaves no room for comparison and does not show judgement.
42. Two sentences naming when each occurred and its value, with a comparison.

SECTION E - EDITING AND FINISHING

- 43. Many people prefer to travel by car because it is convenient.
- 44. A concise restatement of the position and its main qualification, consistent with the body paragraphs.
- 45. There is no space to develop it, and it unsettles the position the essay has just argued.
- 46. The government should invest in transport.
- 47. Nowadays, more and more people are using bicycles.
- 48. Traffic is a problem because it causes delays.
- 49. Plan briefly, give the longer task the larger share of time and reserve a few minutes to check.
- 50. Verb agreement and tense, and whether every part of the prompt has been answered.
- 51. Writing under the minimum is penalised, and writing far over it usually costs accuracy and time.
- 52. A specific choice, usually a sentence that repeats a point already made.

Review and next steps

Mark your work against the answer key, record your score for each section, then answer the three questions below. Bring this page to your next lesson so your tutor can start from what actually blocked you.

Which question did you find hardest, and what exactly stopped you?

Rewrite the corrected working for that question here.

Which section do you want to practise again before your next lesson?

Score record

SECTION	QUESTIONS	NUMBER CORRECT	PRACTISE AGAIN?
A. Understanding the prompt	11		
B. Paragraph development	11		
C. Evidence and qualified claims	10		
D. Describing data	10		
E. Editing and finishing	10		
Total	52		

Keep going with one-to-one support.

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