**Writing to Persuade or Discuss.**

Discursive writing makes up part of the folio at both National 5 and Higher level. It can earn you up to 15% of your final grade so obviously it is well worth putting time and effort into this part of the course - especially as if you do it well, then that is 15% of the course you don't have to worry about after it is sent off. Discursive writing will look at both sides of the argument before deciding on a stance whereas persuasive writing tends to come down heavier on one side of the argument throughout.

1) The first thing you need to do is to pick a topic - there are loads of them out there! Some of the ones that are traditionally used include 'should abortion be allowed?' and 'Should cannabis remain illegal?' If you want to make yours stand out try and pick a topic that you think no one else will be using and try going for something that is current and topical. If you find yourself getting stuck try flipping through some of the newspapers or looking at them online as most new articles are shaped around a person’s opinion or view on something and they are forming an argument to persuade you to their opinion.

Here are some topic ideas for your writing. You can chose anything you want so long as it is a reasonable topic that has enough to write about.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *TV talent shows destroy music industry*  *Literature affecting modern relationships*  *Christmas – Christian or commercial*  *Ebooks detrimental to literature?*  *today’s youth a menace to society*  *Compulsory to learn a language*  *Atheism as a modern religion?*  *Create rules for the media*  *Scottish independence*  *Phones and education*  *Endangered species* | *Airbrushed adverts*  *jobs paid on merit*  *Single sex schools*  *Is terrorism justified*  *Endangered species*  *Social network sites*  *Tesco domination.*  *Legalise cannabis*  *Animal testing*  *Football and racism*  *Energy sources* | *Climate change*  *Aliens are real*  *Drink limits*  *Shooting laws*  *HP or LOTR?*  *The burqa*  *Monarchy*  *Media piracy*  *national service*  *Gambling adverts*  *Gay marriage laws* |

For the purposes of this piece I'm going to say that my discussion will focus on how the media needs to stop promoting female celebrities are bad role models.

2) Now I have decided on my main discussion I need to come up with sub-arguments. These will form the focus point in each of my paragraphs and will show that I have formulated a clear line of thought and have reasoned through the debate. My final piece is going to be a persuasive piece so I'm going to focus mainly on the bad points. Because this is just an example, I've only focused on four sub-arguments but yours should feature at least five or six.

\* They start out with a young following because of their initial target market

\* They are overly sexualised which encourages us to objectify women

\* They do not hide their worst behaviours

\*There are other role models who should be promoted - Jessica Ennis,

3) Now I have decided on my sub-arguments I need to find evidence that will back this up. I will look at this in more detail and analyse it so it supports my answer. The evidence could take the form of statistics, quotes or anecdotes and it can be lifted from a variety of sources - newspapers, internet pages or people you have spoken to. Some consideration should be given to the reliability of your source - You want to know that the information you are taking is true. Oh, and remember to keep a log of your sources.

If I look at my first bullet point again, I need something that shows these celebrities are capturing an audience at a young age. Hannah Montanah is a good example of this. Hannah Montanah is a TV series that ran from 2006 to 2011 starring Miley Cyrus. (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0493093/) The TV show became hugely popular and began its own brand of merchandising including stationary, dolls and clothing (http://www.amazon.co.uk). Both these points demonstrate that Hannah Montanah had a young target market which I will develop further later.

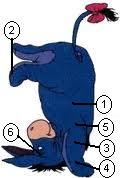
For my next point I want to talk about how certain female celebrities appear over-sexualised in the media. For this I'm going to look at some recent images of Rihanna and Miley which show them attending award ceremonies and fashion shows and there is an abundance of flesh on display. One shows Miley Cyrus dressed in very little (http://metro.co.uk/2013/11/10/mtv-emas-another-awards-ceremony-another-outrageous-outfit-by-miley-cyrus-4181523/) During New York Fashion Week, Rihanna showed up scantily clad yet again (http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-2746598/Rihanna-takes-underdressed-new-level-New-York-Fashion-Week-Altuzarra-show.html). The evidence here is photographic and I can look in further detail at how these women's clothing choices support my point about women being over-sexualised in their dress choices.

My third point was to look at how they exemplify their worst behaviours. In this country we have a glut of minor celebrities made famous through reality shows. In July this year three members of the Made in Chelsea cast were embroiled in a drugs scandal (http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-2681793/Made-Chelsea-trio-drugs-tweet-scandal-Binky-Louise-Jamie-pictured-table-covered-drug-paraphernalia-Independence-Day-party-New-York.html). everything about the way it was covered and then brushed away suggests that there was nothing wrong with their behaviour.

My fourth point was that other females should be promoted for their positive messages. Jessica Ennis, Victoria Pendleton, Rebecca Addlington and Nicola Adams all exemplify a healthy and driven lifestyle (http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/olympics/18913924). There are actresses like Jennifer Lawrence, Emma Watson or Emma Stone who also create a positive image to follow. Jennifer Lawrence discusses positive body image, Emma Watson has spoken out about equal rights for all and Emma Stone chooses roles that give a positive message - look at her role in 'The Help' where her character contributes towards the civil rights movement in America.

4) So I'm almost ready to start writing my main piece. I've considered my main argument, I've plotted my sub-arguments and I've collected evidence to back up what I'm saying. At this point I would probably re-organise my notes, either on a sheet of paper or a word document, so I could see the order in which all this information is going. I now need to start thinking about my narrative style. Am I going to be really formal? Do I want to sound scathing? Would it be appropriate to sound a bit more informal and use slang terms?

As a last point, I also need to think about how I am going to frame this essay. What am I going to say in my introduction that will catch a reader's attention whilst making clear to them the argument I am discussing and my stance on it. What will I say in my conclusion to leave my reader thinking and show my stance once more.

So that’s all the sections of my essay. Here’s a wee reminder of what all those sections were.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Main argument – body  2. Introduction – two feet to stand on  3. sub-topics/arguments - limbs | 4. Evidence – fore-limbs  5. Hinge words – joints to attach it all  6. conclusion – head where all thoughts are gathered |

Take a look below to see how the final piece turned out:

**Battling Bad Behaviour (**Word count:1, 127)

Miley Cyrus bends over for the camera; bum wagging, tongue protruding. It’s an image that has been shown again and again in newspapers and online. Many slate Miley for her behaviour and the image she promotes, demanding change in the way she projects herself. However, the problem is actually two-fold. First of all, Miley, and the rest of her crew, do have a responsibility to behave responsibly and show an awareness of their influence over young girls. In addition though, the media should stop promoting and endorsing these behaviours as somehow glamorous or cool and instead push forward those women who do act in a positive light and set a positive example.

Part of the problem is that the likes of Miley and Rihanna have a strong teenage (and tweenage) following. When they were younger, their images were bubbly and fun compared with their current edgier incarnations. Cyrus was Hannah Montana, a sweet TV character whose popularity is proven by the shows five year run on American (and British) television. Her fame is further proven by the huge brand this lone TV character created. Merchandise was produced including stationary, dolls and clothing. Little girls wanted to be Hannah Montana and they continued to eagerly follow Miley’s career, probably expecting more of the saccharine Hannah. Instead, they were confronted with a twerking, tongue-poking celebrity. Similarly, Rihanna started out with a sugary sweet image – one of her first biggest hits was the super-chipper Umbrella which saw her twirl her way across our screens and The New York Times magazine even went so far as to give her the label Cookie-Cutter Teen Queen in 2009. Quite a contrast then with later hits like S & M, with its highly sexualised lyrics. It is not right to criticise Miley Cyrus and Rihanna for their actions in themselves but there is a problem when young girls are being exposed to behaviours, images and actions that they are not old enough to fully contextualise yet.

This leads into the next point. These women often dress in a way that is overly sexualised and encourages the objectification of women. There have been a spat of award ceremonies recently, and whilst the majority of celebrities turn up rather nattily attired, there are a select group who seem to go out of their way to dress as controversially – and presumably as sexily - as possible. If we look at our two favourite offenders again we see that Rihanna and Miley attend numerous award ceremonies and fashion shows where there is an abundance of flesh on display, and most of it is theirs. For a New York Fashion Week event, Rihanna, ever on the cutting edge of fashion, appeared to forget both her trousers and her top, wearing only her lingerie and a sparkly blazer accessorized with some strappy stilettos and a man. Yes, this was a fashion event where things are a bit quirky and different but why was it okay for her to go out into the streets like that? It’s unsuitable as well though because it detracts from their actual work and good deeds. Cyrus turned up at the amfAR LA Inspiration Gala, at which she also donated a whopping $500,000 to help fight AIDs. Yet it was her generous show of skin rather than her generous donation that was picked up on by the majority of the press. She had turned up wearing a bondage styled dress, which criss-crossed her torso leaving little to the imagination. What should have been reported on in this instance was her giving nature not what nature had given her.

Not content to just appear inappropriately attired, often at such public events these celebrities do nothing to vet their inappropriate behaviour, in fact in some instances they seem almost proud of it. In this country we have a glut of minor celebrities made famous through reality shows. In July this year three members of the Made in Chelsea cast were embroiled in a drugs scandal. Their photo appeared on their social media pages and appeared to show drug paraphernalia on the table behind them and it was heavily suggested that Binky and her cohort of fillies had been indulging in illegal substances. Everything about the way it was covered and then brushed away suggests that there was nothing wrong with their behaviour.

Even these celebrities self-promotion can be bad. To return to our old favourite, Cyrus crouches down in her webpage, grabbing her crotch whilst sticking her tongue out. What a lovely image to present to the world. There’s a second shot of her wearing what appears to be bondage gear and a third image shows her topless with bits of chicken edited over her breasts to keep her dignity (although the presence of cartoon drumsticks suggests it left some time ago). All this demonstrates to our young people is that this behaviour is accepted or, even worse, a nice way to behave. Yes, all of this is part of their image, their brand, but why would you want to make out that you are something akin to a Barbie doll to be propped up in daft positions with nothing but fluff filling up the space usually given over to a brain?

There are other role models who should be celebrated such as actresses and athletes. And this is perhaps where we see the media’s role in all this best. Jessica Ennis, Victoria Pendleton, Rebecca Addlington and Nicola Adams all exemplify a healthy and driven lifestyle. These young women are ambitious and achieve their dreams. Instead of focusing on this the media instead chose to focus on Miss Addlington’s weight issues or Miss Pendleton’s vanishing thighs during her stint on Strictly. There are actresses like Jennifer Lawrence, Emma Watson or Emma Stone who also create positive images to follow. Jennifer Lawrence regularly discusses positive body image, Emma Watson has spoken about equality and Emma Stone chooses roles that give a positive message - look at her role in 'The Help' where her character contributes towards the civil rights movement in America. It’s difficult to see or hear any of this though behind the excited chatter at Lawrence’s hacked nude photos, or whispered speculations at Stone’s relationship status. The media needs to stop focusing on women for just their appearance or outlandish behaviour and show that what women do should be counted.

So how do we counter act this? It’s going to be a battle on two fronts and yes it will take some time. But we would ask that these starlets think about what persona they project into the stratosphere and what they are vicariously encouraging young folk to do. And we would like to see the media think about how they present these tales to the world.

***Sources to be added at end also***

**The SQA has spoken**

Now you’ve had a look at how an essay is put together. Have a look at the following five essays. These were collated by the SQA. See what you make of them. Are they any good? If so, what makes it a good piece of writing? If not, what makes it a bad piece of writing?

Use the following criteria to help you decide:

* What is the main idea I am arguing about? Have I made this clear in my introduction?
* Each paragraph has a sub-topic which contributes to my essays main topic: what is each paragraph contributing to my argument?
* What evidence do I offer to support my arguments? Anecdote, statistics, comparisons, quotations.
* Is my type of argument easy to identify? for/against/neutral
* Do I link ideas clearly in the essay?
* Is there a conclusion that reiterates my own opinion on the matter?
* Have I included a list of my sources – one for each sub-argument paragraph?

**SCRIPT 1: Phones for you? (15/15) word count: 1073**

Have you ever looked down and witnessed something truly horrifying. Something so horrifying that it makes your hair stand on end and your toes curl. Well I have. I had just finished doing my fly up and when I looked down – to my horror- I saw my iPhone bobbing in its watery grave. Mobile phones are a central part to everybody’s life how will I cope without mine. Mobile phones are selling rapidly. Since 1994 a whopping ten billion mobile phones have been sold worldwide, which is more mobiles than human beings, with five billion phone connections currently in use. Thirty million mobiles are sold in the UK each year alone. But is this widespread use of mobile phones beneficial to society or are they simply another way to waste time?

Mobiles provide simple, quick and cheap communication between family, friends and work. Today a text is only 5p and a call is a mere 10p per minute. Now when a mum needs to tell her kids to come home for dinner she simply needs to phone her child’s mobile. Mobile phones are also useful in emergencies. For example if you are involved in an accident with no payphone around all you need to do is make a call from your mobile. Mobiles are now equipped with 3G Internet which allows the user to access the internet on the go. This can be used to send emails. The GPS function built into some mobile phones allow trackers to find people who are lost in the woods or up the mountains. So mobile phones can be the difference between life and death.

Although communication between mobiles is brilliant there is a downside to it. The majority of the working population now have no escape from work. They are in constant contact with their work via email or text or even video call. This can impinge in family life. For example: a family are out at dinner and a parent is emailed on their phone by work. They feel obliged to send an email back. This can be a contributing factor in the separation of many families. Also texting and phoning from a mobile is only cheap when used in moderation. Parents have no control over how many texts their child sends or how many times they update their status on facebook. In 2010 there were 129 billion texts sent worldwide up from 7 billion in 2000. The number of texts being sent each year is increasing at an alarming rate. In a report by the Guardian it found that 9 in 10 children under the age of 16 have a mobile phone. So can kids really be trusted not to use their £10 top up in less than a week?

Mobiles are becoming increasingly sophisticated. Today we can read a newspaper, watch our favourite film, carry your entire music collection, take photos and video in HD quality, enjoy a book, catch up on current affairs, play games and if you are old fashioned you might even listen to the radio all on your mobile. A large part of this amazing technology is through applications more commonly known as apps. The apple app store has sold 25 billion paid and free apps since its launch in July 2008. According to apple “there’s an app for just about anything”. Today apps can allow you to check exactly where you have parked the car, find a taxi, figure out your share of the bill for a group of friends, read an MRI scan, name a song that is playing on the radio, write a text with our voice, board an aeroplane and even translate languages. Mobile technology just continues to amaze us and I’m ready to see how far it can go.

But how far is too far? On the other hand all of this impressive mobile technology may be a bit of a distraction. People are becoming addicted to their phones. A survey by the Guardian found that a staggering 37 per cent of adults and 60 per cent of teenagers admit to being “completely hooked” to their phones. The survey found that people used their phones whilst on the toilet, at dinner, in a venue where asked to switch off and whilst socialising with others (i.e. people are becoming anti social). Kids in school nowadays can’t help but check their facebook page or post something on twitter in the middle of class. What is even more worrying is that pupils have been found cheating in exams in recent years by being text the answers by their friends. A survey carried out by AAA (with 1000 teenagers) found that 46% of teenager’s text message while driving. It’s not just kids who are guilty either. In 2008 the tragic Chatsworth train collisions occurred in Los Angeles. The cause of the crash was due to the fact that the engineer of the train had been distracted by texting. Twenty five people were killed in the accident. Before the train crashed he had sent forty five text messages. He was clearly not paying attention.

Mobile phones designs have changed dramatically over the years. Once big and clunky pieces of equipment they are now slim, slender and stylish. Since phones are now becoming more superior their prices are rising dramatically. Kids and adults alike are always looking for the newest mobile design. But can we really keep up with the accelerating speed in mobile advances and their costs? What about the kids who can’t afford the latest smart phone. A social stigma may surround children who cannot afford the latest mobiles. Those kids may be tempted to steal a mobile from a shop or someone just to feel accepted Also many children and adults alike have the tendency to lose these expensive devices (as you know I’ve even dropped my iPhone down the toilet). So is it really worth paying hundreds of pounds on a phone which you may lose, have broken or stolen.

Mobile phones have definitely changed the way we live our lives today whether we care to admit it or not. We all have astonishing technology in the palm on our hands. Who knows perhaps we could all benefit from dropping our mobiles down the toilet? In the time that it takes us to rush out and buy a new one you might even talk to another human being not via a screen. It’s just a suggestion…

**SCRIPT 2: Our lives today have become too cluttered. Give your opinion. (12/15) word count: 705**

Our society today is increasingly obsessed by material goods: this, it could be argued, is partly what is creating so many problems today. In recent decades the western world has been consuming even more goods; luxury cars, expensive electronics such as computers, cosmetics, huge volumes of children’s toys, gadgets of all kinds… The list truely is endless. There is a product available to do nearly anything that can be imagined and the value placed on having the latest item on the market places strain on everyone.

However this strain isn’t just emotional it’s also financial. When the economy was growing lenders were inclined to offer huge loans to those who didn’t really have the means to repay them. This may have allowed many people luxuries they wouldn’t have had without the loan but it also caused the economic downturn and credit crunch. So what would cause people to get themselves into such debt? Surely it seems illogical to most reasonable people? The answer is that many felt the social pressure to live a certain a lifestyle so took on debt in order to live up to these ideals.

However when we consider the damage that has now been done to some people’s financial and emotional well being it doesn’t seem quite as worth it. Having our home repossesed can and does, happen. This not only causes a huge amount of stress to the debtor as they would then become homeless but also affects their families. If they live with a partner and/or children this can be particularly distressing for the whole family. This huge change in lifestyle can cause many to feel embarrassed by their situation and to become excluded from their previous social group. Mental health problems can become an issue at this point for some due to the extreme stress and feelings of isolation.

Social exclusion doesn’t just apply to those that have lived a privilaged life for some time; it can also apply to those in deprived areas. In less wealthy areas of many large cities and towns having the newest phone or clothing can make someone feel far more important and more included in society as a whole. This can lead to many problems particularly for young people. Those who do not have any of the expensive items others have may face bullying and being excluded by their peers. To try to avoid this, some turn to crime. This may mean the selling of illegal goods or controlled substances or simple theft in order to obtain money or just the desired items. This creates issues for law enforcement as the causes of this crime is largely due to the person’s social conditioning.

In the modern western world it is impossible to fully escape the constant marketing propaganda of the consumer giants. Advertisements for products and retail outlets can be found on nearly every street and major travel route in the country. The marketing strategies are equally prevailant online. They have a presence on many social media sites as well as retail sites. Children born today will grow up with this as the norm because it is all they will see. As long as our society continues to be driven by money, financial gain and consumerism companies will continue to bombard us with huge volumes of marketing.

Although material possessions or the wish to have many material possesions is not inherantly bad it can cause a lack of good judgment for some people when it comes to other aspects of their lives. When the drive for material gain outweighs the wish to maintain healthy social relationships problems tend to develop. Relationships with family and friends can be severely affected when someone becomes obsessive about earning enough to buy non-essential luxury items. This can lead to family breakdown which can link back to being a contributing factor to mental health issues.

The overall pressure on people – especially the young – to buy new things is immense and can cause serious problems for individuals and their families. These problems are unlikely to go away or improve greatly until our society as a whole gives up at least part of its consumer goods obsession and the pressure to conform to the majority’s stereotypical ideals reduces significantly.

**SCRIPT 3: Has the game changed? (8/15) word count: 740**

Has there been any change in the world of rugby? I would say so, but not for the good. The main speculation of changes in today’s game is the Scrum, lack of consistency in referees and the countess kicking which throws away good game momentum. The head of rugby, the IRB need to bring in knew laws to bring back the twentieth century style of play.

In this days game it takes an average of four minutes for a scrum to be completed. This has ruined the game to watch because of its stop start pattern through out the eighty minutes. This has been complained about over half a million times in the last year, and the IRB (International Rugby Board) have failed to address this severe problem in the game. The scrum had always had a lot of criticism, the main reason being the amount of strain going down each player’s necks, and when a scrum collapses it can cause severe damage an can cause permanent paralysis or even death. Most of the criticism about scrums come from worried parents that there child is in danger of serious injury, and to be honest, if these parents are going to moan and complain, then don’t let there child play, simple. The scrum doesn’t really affect my game because I play with the backs, but it is very frustrating when scrums collapse every five minutes and the referee fails to address the perpetrator. On average there is a ton of weight going down each professional player’s neck; you can even hear the crunch between the opposing team’s neck after the referee commands the engage. The scrum has changed dramatically in the last twenty years, they used to actually charge at each other and stamp on one another with there studs, which was deemed to be normal, well at least until someone lost an eye. These problems must be addressed to open up the game and create fast running rugby, like the southern hemisphere teams, a good example of this is the famous All Blacks, Notable for there high tempo game which is almost impossible to close down.

It is said that referees aren’t tough enough on offences, which can cost teams games because they weren’t given a scoring opportunity. Countless infringements occur again and again whether it’s the handling in the ruck, or entering the ruck from the side or it’s the deliberate collapse of the scrum in a near scoring position. Referees have assistant referees to help pick up fouls, but still manage to get the decision wrong. The decision should be a straight yellow card and ten minutes in the sin bin.

The one thing I laugh at, at every Glasgow Warrior’s game is the Mangers League Officials are all sponsored by Specsavers, to be honest what a joke, they cant even see half of what goes on during the game, and they wonder why they get a lot of complaints from angered fans. You do get a good laugh out of it; you always hear the odd fan shouting some sort of abuse to the referees, mainly the ones who have the shiny bald head.

Referees definitely play a big part in the brutal killing of the game of Rugby; they get in the way of play, making wrong decisions under pressure, being too soft on persistent offenders. There just not consistent any more, so something has to be done.

One of the other problems with the game is that there is too much kicking, one game where there was countless kicking was in the France v Italy RBS Six Nations 2011, every time a player got the ball, mainly Italian full back Andrea Masi, it was kicked away, kicks are good when they work, when they actually find touch but this whole kicking for nothing makes the game boring. As you are sitting watching a good game, there always has to be one consistent player who will kick possession away for no reason, its just laziness and unwilling to run at opponents, it actually becomes predictable. Should the IRB bring in new kicking laws? I think they should but it could cause serious problems.

Overall, it is actually heart breaking to watch the amazing game go into disrepute, if no one acts to save the game, it will be gone forever, all these points I have made can be fixed over time, but it must happen now.

**SCRIPT 4: Problems faced by today’s teenagers (6/15 - FAIL) word count: 502**

There are many problems facing teenagers in society today.

The main problem facing teenagers are Parents, Money, Media, Teachers, School and Rules/Law.

The problems that occur between Parents and Teenagers are that on the one hand Parents are always telling you to grow up and act your age as well as at the same time they treat you like a child.

The Parental outlook to this is that after all they look after you, protect you, clothe you, feed you and put a roof over your head.

The problems that are always ongoing for teenagers in today’s society with regards to money are that they need money to cover things like Birthdays, Easter, Christmas and so on.

However to do this they need to get a part time job after school or at the week end but due to their age they cannot get a job or they have too much homework after school, so they cannot work after school.

Teenagers are given a raw deal when it comes to the media, because every time that they portray a teenager in the television or on the radio they always show them smoking, drinking, fighting or taking drugs. Although some teenagers actually do these things that the media portrays not every teenager does so therefore it is not right to put all teenagers as one in the same.

Some people say that the violent video games that teenagers play can actually turn them violent.

Teenagers have problems with their Teachers because they think that they are given too much study material for their upcoming exams, or they have supported learning classes at lunchtime or after school. They also feel that the Teachers push them too hard and apply a lot of pressure on them to pass their exams.

Teenagers have problems with school because they think that the teachers are too strict, when in fact what the Teachers are actually doing are preparing us for the outside world after school, like getting a good job, they do this by sending us on work experience for a week to give us an insight into what awaits us on the outside world when we leave school. Teenagers also feel that school hours are very long and tiring, you get little time to rest and relax during term time. One plus about School for Teenagers is that you get lots of breaks and holidays.

There are many Rules/Laws for Teenagers nowadays, some are very practical whereas some are very stupid and unnecessary.

Teenagers think that some of these laws are not fair like only 2 or 3 schoolchildren in a shop at the one time because although this to help the shopkeeper keep an eye on the kids and prevent stealing not every teenager is out to steal from them.

There are certain rules that Teenagers think are right are rules such as Speed Limits, Selling Alcohol to under 18s, Cigarettes to under 16s are put in place to protect them and for their own benefit.

**Mini Discursive Essay Challenge**

We already know you can come up with a strong verbal case, but what about a written one? You are a freelance journalist and you have been asked to write an article on goldfish making appallingly bad pets for a lifestyle magazine. Your main argument then is that:  *I don't think goldfish make very good pets.*

**To get you started here is the rough plan for your main paragraphs:**

* Goldfish have a short life span so their not a good investment.
* It is a very expensive pet to have in a debt crisis.
* It is a boring pet.

**Here is the evidence you will be working with:**

Argos catalogue: Cost of a goldfish + bowl + food = £50

cost of a lava lamp = £20

life span of a goldfish = 2 weeks to 2 years

life span of a cat or dog = 13 years

life span of a horse = 40 years

medical magazine – article reports that dogs, cats and rabbits can be used in therapy sessions with sick patients in hospital to stimulate recovery as they promote and encourage happy thoughts.

Newspaper article – old dog learns new tricks, 9 year old border collie wins *Crufts* dance show.

A video clip of a cat running into a glass door.

**Think about how you are going to make this interesting using tone, word choice and sentence structure. There should be an introduction, three main paragraphs and a conclusion.**

**Now you have finished your piece it is time to review it. Then get someone else to review it for you.**

1. Is the essay clearly structured with intro, four main paragraphs and a conclusion?

2. Is the tone relevant? Humorous, persuasive, authoritative?

3. Is it easy to identify whether they are presenting a strong or evenly balanced case?

4. Does there introduction grab you?

5. Do they make a neat conclusion?

6. Have they used topic sentences correctly to identify each paragraph?

Identify three sentences you really liked and explain why.

Identify one sentence that you think could be improved and explain why.

Sentence Starters: The phrases below can be used in your essay to help structure it clearly and to develop strong arguments.

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| Making a point:  It can be argued that…  One might say…  Another view is that…  Some (name of group) argue…  There are those who say that…  A popular belief is that…  It is clear that…  One view is that…  One theory is that…  It may be true that…  Many commentators state that…  It is generally accepted that…  Ordering ideas by importance:  In particular…  More importantly…  Of greatest significance…  Above all…  Firstly, secondly, lastly etc  Introducing analysis:  In this way we can see…  This reinforces the …  I feel that this is important in…  It is this effective use o f…  This emphasises/highlights… | Linking points/sentences:  Furthermore…  Moreover …  In addition to this…  Additionally…  Similarly…  This is continued by/in …  The author also achieves this effect by…  To add to this argument…  Besides…  Consequently…  On the other hand  One might add that  On the whole …  In agreement …  Concluding:  Thus…  Therefore…  As a result of this…  Consequently…  On the one hand… and on the other…  In conclusion…  One can conclude that…  For the aforementioned reasons…  All evidence considered…  On balance…  It is therefore clear that…  Given these facts, one can say that…  In closing…  If both sides are considered…  To summarise… | Contrasting views:  Oppositely…  Nevertheless…  On the other hand…  It could also be said that…  However…  Other views have argued that …  Whereas…  Yet another view states…  In contrast…  Conversely…  It may also be argued that…  Another argument states that…  Other evidence shows that…  In comparison…  On the contrary …  To put it differently…  Two methods of quoting:  To put it into quotes OR make it part of a sentence.  Kerr, a sociologist, states that “the Black Panthers supported the use of violence to force change”.  The sociologist Kerr argues that the Black Panthers reinforced using force to create change. |

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| Hinges (for making comparisons) | | Bolts (for argument building) | | Sealers (for summing up) | |
| unlike  whilst  yet  both  but  despite | Although  however  in comparison  in contrast  likewise  on the other hand | thus  perhaps  maybe  hence  firstly  another  indeed  therefore | Also/ as well as  consequently  furthermore  in addition/additionally  interestingly  it could be said  undoubtedly  moreover | overall  finally  in general  in summary | Above all else  most importantly  in conclusion  to summarise |

Checklist for editing: Copy this checklist and tick if your writing fulfils the criteria. If it doesn’t, go back and revise your work.

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| Selects and highlights significant information |  | Communication is clear |  |
| Supporting ideas and evidence are used |  | Communication is stylish |  |
| These ideas have depth and complexity |  | Attention to purpose is detailed |  |
| Objectivity/generalisation/evaluation shown |  | Attention to purpose is sensitive |  |
| Language manipulated for effect |  | Shows a distinction of ideas |  |
| Personal feelings expressed sensitively |  | Shows a distinction of construction |  |
| Insight and self-awareness are displayed |  | Shows a distinction of language |  |
|  |  | Vocabulary is apt and extensive |  |
| Communicates meaning clearly on first reading |  | Skilful use of paragraphing |  |
| Sentence construction is accurate |  | Skilful use of sentence construction |  |
| Mistakes are minimal |  |  |  |
| Around 900 words |  |  |  |

**Example Goldfish essay**

Goldfish, the glittering menace. Don't let their looks deceive you, at a given moment they'll nibble their partner’s tail off before you can say ouch! As well as being boring and just swimming for a day job, goldfish take a lot of money to care for. If you enjoy this lifeless pet, savour every moment of it! With an average life span of two weeks the ball of scales doesn't stick around for long!

In a debt crisis with a drought of money and living fees what better way to light up your hallway than with a goldfish, right? Wrong. The slippery, scaly sea dwellers will burn a hole right through your pocket... and singe your leg! Even with a suitable environment, food, water and friends the common goldfish will take, sit down for this part, well over £50 to take care of for its lifespan. If after, for some miraculous reason, you think “what a brilliant pet” that is another £50, then another £50, and another. So in a modern financial crisis, a goldfish is a big no no.

I know what your thinking - “what is a goldfish's point of view on this?” - well here's the thing, with the colossal memory span of three seconds the goldfish probably won't remember its a goldfish. Its daily routine? Wake up, eat, swim, sleep. Over and over constantly! As it drives its head back and forward on the glass, just trying to get your finger for hours on end, you start to wonder if it has nothing better to do. So, if you want an annoying, boring, blank, self-centred pet get a gold-fish! If not, spare yourself the hassle and don't buy one.

Five words to sum up a goldfish? Annoying, bleak, selfish, repetitive, boring. If you wish to keep sanity and avoid breaking household items due to frustration, don't get a goldfish! If you wish to keep yourself out of debt, don't get a goldfish! If you want a fun, loveable pet, don't get a goldfish! Can you see my overall point? Don't get a goldfish!