

## Answer the Question – Writing Task 2

### Teacher's notes

**Aim:** To analyse Writing Task 2 questions to ensure ideas for essay are relevant to the task.

(Under the Assessment Criteria for Task Response in Writing Task 2, candidates are assessed on how fully they have addressed all parts of the task and how relevant their ideas are to the task).

### **Instructions**

1. Tell students they are going to look at analysing Writing Task 2 questions.
2. Write on the board or powerpoint / dictate the following to students:

**When answering an IELTS Writing Task 2 question you should always...**

- a) read the question carefully
  - b) make sure your ideas are directly relevant to the question
  - c) answer all parts of the question
  - d) change the topic if you have no ideas related to the question
  - e) re-read the task regularly to check you are answering the question
3. Students in pairs decide which of the options (A – E) are true / false.  
**(Answer: D is false.** It is very important that students' ideas are directly relevant to the question, therefore they should make sure that they understand what they are being asked to write about).
  4. Tell students they are going to practise identifying ideas which are relevant / not relevant to the question.
  5. Handout worksheet 1. For each task students decide which ideas are relevant / not relevant to the question. Do question 1 together. Pairs do questions 2 and 3. Feed back (answers below)
  6. Hand out worksheet 2. Students work in pairs. Monitor to make sure their relevant ideas *are* relevant.
  7. Students pair up with another pair. They read out their ideas, the other students tell them which ideas are not relevant and why. They can repeat this several times with other pairs.

### **Follow up**

Brainstorm students' relevant ideas onto the board. They then use the ideas to plan and write the assignment.

Exercise can be repeated whenever a new Writing Task 2 is set.

### **Alternative suggestion**

For stage 6, instead of all students writing about the same Task 2 question, you could give them all different questions. Stick their answers around the room. Pairs go around the room reading each and noting non relevant answers. Award points for correct answers.

## ANSWER KEY - Worksheet 1 - Answer the Question

1. Some people think that parents should teach their children how to be healthy and have a balanced diet. Others, however, believe that school is the best place to learn this.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

- a) parents can encourage children to be active in their free time ✓ **supports the view that parents should teach their kids how to be healthy**
- b) regular exercise is more important than a balanced diet ✗ **you are not asked to decide which is more important**
- c) teachers have better knowledge about health and nutrition ✓ **supports the view that school is the best place to learn about health and nutrition**
- d) parents can involve their children in selecting healthy food choices ✓ **supports the view that parents should teach their kids how to have a balanced diet**
- e) fast food and lack of exercise can lead to heart disease ✗ **you are not asked to talk about the results of an unhealthy lifestyle**

2. Encouraging people to use public transport is the best way to solve traffic problems in cities.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

What other measures do you think might be effective?

- a) increasing the price of petrol might encourage people to walk ✓ **an alternative measure**
- b) traffic jams cause stress which can lead to 'road rage' ✗ **you are not asked to talk about the results of traffic problems**
- c) if people used buses and trams there would be fewer cars on the roads ✓ **why it's an effective way of solving traffic problems**
- d) companies could reward employees who car share ✓ **an alternative measure**
- e) buses and trams can slow down movement of vehicles on the road ✓ **why it not the best way to solve traffic problems**

3. An increasing number of people work from home these days and stay in touch with their office using computer technology.

What are the effects on employees of working from home?

- a) may feel isolated from the company and colleagues ✓ **a negative effect for employee of working from home**
- b) employee should go to the office at least one day a week ✗ **you are not asked to recommend ways to make working from home successful**
- c) company may lose money because the employee doesn't work as hard ✗ **this is an effect on the employer not the employee**
- d) employee can save money on transport to and from the office ✓ **a positive effect for employee of working from home**
- e) more temptation to work outside office hours > difficult to maintain work-life balance ✓ **a negative effect for employee of working from home**

## Worksheet 1 – Answer the question – Writing Task 2

In Writing Task 2 it is very important that your ideas are **directly relevant to the question** in the task.

### TASK

For each Writing Task 2 question below, a student has written five ideas in note form. With a partner decide which notes are / are not directly relevant to the question and why.

1. **Some people think that parents should teach their children how to be healthy and have a balanced diet. Others, however, believe that school is the best place to learn this.**

**Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.**

- a) parents can encourage children to be active in their free time
- b) regular exercise is more important than a balanced diet
- c) teachers have better knowledge about health and nutrition
- d) parents can involve their children in selecting healthy food choices
- e) fast food and lack of exercise can lead to heart disease

2. **Encouraging people to use public transport is the best way to solve traffic problems in cities.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree?**

**What other measures do you think might be effective?**

- a) increasing the price of petrol might encourage people to walk
- b) traffic jams cause stress which can lead to 'road rage'
- c) if people used buses and trams there would be fewer cars on the roads
- d) companies could reward employees who car share
- e) buses and trams can slow down movement of vehicles on the road

3. **An increasing number of people work from home these days and stay in touch with their office using computer technology.**

**What are the effects on employees of working from home?**

- a) may feel isolated from the company and colleagues
- b) employee should go to the office at least one day a week
- c) company may lose money because the employee doesn't work as hard
- d) employee can save money on transport to and from the office
- e) more temptation to work outside office hours > difficult to maintain work-life balance

**Worksheet 2 – Answer the question – Writing Task 2**

**TASK**

For the Writing Task 2 question below, write five ideas in note form. Write one or two ideas which are not directly relevant to the question.

Some people believe that it is fairer to assess a student’s ability based on their performance during the whole course rather than giving a formal examination at the end of the course.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

a) .....

b) .....

c) .....

d) .....

e) .....