

Writing task 2, lesson 3: Main paragraphs

In the video lesson I explained how to write two types of main body paragraph. This worksheet will focus on linking words and topic vocabulary.

1. Linking words

Here are the two paragraphs from the video lesson:

There are several reasons why I would argue against having compulsory community service for **secondary school students**. **Firstly**, the school curriculum is already full with important academic subjects, **such as** maths, science and languages. **For example**, I remember having an extremely busy timetable when I was at high school, **and** it would not have been possible to add to it. **Secondly**, students' performance in other subjects would be affected if valuable study time were taken by charity work or neighbourhood improvement schemes. **Finally**, I believe that **teenage students** would be reluctant to take part in any programme of obligatory work, **and this** could lead to poor motivation and even bad behaviour.

On the other hand, the opportunity to do voluntary community service could be extremely positive for **high school students**. By making **these** programmes optional, schools would ensure that only **motivated students** took part. **These young people** would gain valuable experience in an adult working environment, **which** could help to build their self confidence and enhance their skills. Having **such** experience and skills on their CVs could greatly improve **school leavers'** career prospects. **For example**, a period of voluntary work experience might impress a university admissions officer or a future employer.

Notes:

- Linking words do not help you to get a higher vocabulary score, but they do help your 'coherence and cohesion' score (organisation).
- You won't improve your score by using 'difficult' linking words. It **isn't** more difficult to use "first and foremost" instead of "firstly".
- If both main paragraphs contain three ideas, try not to use "firstly, secondly, finally" twice. In the first paragraph above, we could change "Firstly" to "One reason is that..." and we could change "Secondly" to "Furthermore".
- **The words highlighted in blue all act as 'linking words' to connect ideas in different sentences, and to hold the paragraphs together.**
- **The words highlighted in red are examples of paraphrasing. The theme of 'students' is expressed in a variety of ways, and this also helps to link the ideas and hold the paragraphs together.**

2. Topic vocabulary

Fill the gaps below with the words that I used in the video lesson. The answers are on page 3.

Firstly, secondly, finally

There are several reasons why I would argue against having compulsory community service for secondary school students. Firstly, the school _____ is already full with important _____ subjects, such as maths, science and languages. For example, I remember having an extremely busy _____ when I was at high school, and it would not have been possible to add to it. Secondly, students' _____ in other subjects would be affected if valuable study time were taken by charity work or _____ improvement schemes. Finally, I believe that teenage students would be _____ to take part in any programme of obligatory work, and this could lead to poor _____ and even bad behaviour.

Idea, explain, example

On the other hand, the _____ to do voluntary community service could be extremely positive for high school students. By making these programmes _____, schools would ensure that only motivated students took part. These young people would _____ valuable experience in an adult working _____, which could help to build their self confidence and _____ their skills. Having such experience and skills on their CVs could greatly improve school leavers' career _____. For example, a period of voluntary work experience might impress a university _____ officer or a future employer.

‘Firstly, secondly, finally’ answers:

1. curriculum
2. academic
3. timetable
4. performance
5. neighbourhood
6. reluctant
7. motivation

‘Idea, explain, example’ answers:

1. opportunity
2. optional
3. gain
4. environment
5. enhance
6. prospects
7. admissions