

Writing task 2, lesson 7: Discussion essay

Here's the question and the full essay that you saw in the lesson:

Some people think that a sense of competition in children should be encouraged. Others believe that children who are taught to co-operate rather than compete become more useful adults. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

People have different views about whether children should be taught to be competitive or co-operative. While a spirit of competition can sometimes be useful in life, I believe that the ability to co-operate is more important.

On the one hand, competition can be a great source of motivation for children. When teachers use games or prizes to introduce an element of competitiveness into lessons, it can encourage children to work harder to outdo the other pupils in the class. This kind of healthy rivalry may help to build children's self confidence, while pushing them to work independently and progress more quickly. When these children leave school, their confidence and determination will help them in competitive situations such as job interviews. It can therefore be argued that competition should be encouraged in order to prepare children for adult life.

On the other hand, it is perhaps even more important to prepare children for the many aspects of adult life that require co-operation. In the workplace, adults are expected to work in teams, follow instructions given by their superiors, or supervise and support the more junior members of staff. Team collaboration skills are much more useful than a competitive determination to win. This is the attitude that I believe schools should foster in young people. Instead of promoting the idea that people are either winners or losers, teachers could show children that they gain more from working together.

In conclusion, I can understand why people might want to encourage competitiveness in children, but it seems to me that a co-operative attitude is much more desirable in adult life.

(270 words, band 9)

Analyse the essay by completing the following tasks:

1. Count the sentences in each paragraph. Did I use my normal approach, writing 2 sentences for the introduction, 5 sentences for each main paragraph and 1 sentence for the conclusion?
2. Highlight the linking words in each main paragraph. Which method did I use in each one: 'firstly, secondly, finally' or 'idea, explain, example'?
3. Underline the good vocabulary that I mentioned at the end of the video lesson.

Answers:

1. I did use my normal approach: 2 sentences, 5 sentences, 5 sentences, 1 sentence.
2. Linking in paragraph 2: on the one hand, this kind of, while, these, therefore
Linking in paragraph 3: on the other hand, this, instead of
Both paragraphs develop one main idea: idea, explain, (example)
3. See the video lesson.