

UPPER INTERMEDIATE UNIT 4

an opinion essay

speakout WRITING TIP

When you write an opinion essay you need to support your overall view with clear arguments and examples. You need to include arguments to support your opinion as well as counter arguments. You also need to provide a conclusion which re-states your overall opinion.

- 1 Is sport becoming less and less popular as a leisure activity? Why/Why not?
- 2 Read the essay and answer the questions.
 - a) Does the author agree with the proposition?
 - b) What arguments does the author give to support his/her position?
 - c) What counter arguments does he/she give?

Is sport becoming less and less popular as a leisure activity?

It is said that sport is one of the most popular of all leisure activities. However, it seems to me that nowadays people are spending more and more time using computers and mobile devices. As a result, they are playing far less sport.

To start with, the most popular free-time activities seem to involve computers. Moreover, these activities are occupying more and more of our lives. Take video games, for instance. You can now play them online with other people, so you have access to opponents twenty-four hours a day. Furthermore, video games have now grown so complicated that they can take months to finish.

In addition to this, it is now possible to play video games anywhere as a result of games that can be played on mobile phones and tablets.

At the same time, there are still some people who jog or go to the gym. Moreover, football continues to be a popular pastime, although it seems to me that people prefer to sit on the sofa watching it rather than playing.

To conclude, I think that sport is becoming less popular. We are now living in the digital age.

- 3 Find two phrases that are used to give opinions, one in the first paragraph and one in the final paragraph.

- 4 Look at the phrases in the box below. Which:
 - begin an argument _____
 - introduce additional points _____
 - introduce a conclusion _____
 - introduce a contrasting idea _____
 - introduce examples _____

firstly to conclude in contrast for example
to sum up furthermore to start with
moreover for instance in addition to this
in conclusion as an example at the same time
in the first place as opposed to this

- 5 Complete these sentences using phrases from the box in exercise 4.
 - 1 People don't do as much sport as they used to. _____, some sports are increasing in popularity.
 - 2 Video games are played at home on a computer or console. _____, you can see them being played on trains, buses and in the street due to the increase in smartphones.
 - 3 Team sports, _____ football, basketball and volleyball, are declining in popularity.
 - 4 There are many reasons why sport is on the decline. _____, there is the increase in popularity of the internet.
 - 5 Sporting activities are less popular, people have a more sedentary lifestyle and more and more fast food is eaten nowadays. _____, we are less healthy than we used to be.
 - 6 Smartphones sales are increasing. _____, tablet computers are also growing in popularity.
- 6 Write an essay on one of these titles (120–180 words).

Young children should not watch TV. Do you agree?

Using computers and the internet makes people less sociable. Do you agree?

People don't read books as much as they used to. Do you agree?

Plan your writing

- Think about the introduction to your essay and provide arguments and examples to support your position. Mention some possible arguments against your position and conclude by briefly re-stating your overall opinion.

Check your writing

- Have you used linking words to make your meaning clearer?
- Have you checked your grammar and spelling?
- Did you find any mistakes?