

## UPPER INTERMEDIATE UNIT 7

### a discursive essay

#### speakout WRITING TIP

When you write a 'for and against' essay, you need to give a balanced view and describe both sides of the argument. It is a good idea to use linkers of contrast to signal different viewpoints. Usually, you don't express your own opinion until the end of the essay.

#### 1 Read the statement below and make a list of arguments in favour of and against it.

The media should be more regulated.

For: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Against: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 2 Read the model essay. Does it include any of the arguments in your lists?

#### Should the media be more regulated?

Nowadays there is a lot of discussion about whether the media should be more regulated. This is happening because there have been plenty of examples in the past when the media has behaved unacceptably. It goes without saying that the media is against any type of stricter regulation.

It is often argued that the ability to criticise governments and politicians is a fundamental pillar of a modern society. There have been several times in recent history when journalists have uncovered illegal or dishonest behaviour by governments. Probably the best example of this is the Watergate scandal in the USA involving President Nixon.

Journalists also often do an excellent job of highlighting the hypocrisy of politicians, and this makes society stronger and healthier.

However, there are also many reasons why the media should be regulated. Many people are concerned about how the media often abuses an individual's right to privacy, especially in the case of celebrities. Despite journalists uncovering wrongdoing, if the media becomes too powerful it can be used by certain individuals to exert unhealthy pressure on the government and the state.

On the whole, I think the media needs to be regulated more, although there are good arguments against it. I feel that new rules will mean that honest journalists will continue to do good work, while journalists who have lower standards will be forced to change their ways.

#### 3 Discuss the questions:

- 1 Is the essay balanced? Why/Why not?
- 2 What is the author's personal opinion? Where does he/she express it?

#### 4 Identify four linkers of contrast in paragraphs 4 and 5.

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 5 Complete the sentences with one of the four linkers of contrast in exercise 4.

- 1 Some journalists have high standards \_\_\_\_\_ others have no problem with breaking the rules.
- 2 The media says it can regulate itself, \_\_\_\_\_ there being a lot of evidence to the contrary.
- 3 Journalists often try to write the biggest stories. \_\_\_\_\_, they sometimes write about the little guy in the street, too.
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ there is little regulation at the moment, politicians are thinking of bringing in new laws.



#### 6 Write a discursive essay on one of these topics (250–300 words).

*The media should not investigate the private life of royal families.*

*The media prefers negative stories to positive ones.*

*The standard of journalism on the internet is lower than in print.*

#### Plan your writing

- Think about the content of your essay. Introduce the topic and give arguments in support of the proposition.
- Give arguments against the proposition and conclude by giving your personal opinion or briefly summarising the arguments in the essay.

#### Check your writing

- Have you used some linkers of contrast?
- Have you checked your grammar and spelling?
- Did you find any mistakes?