

What's the topic?



1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- a) What kinds of things do you use the internet for?
- b) How much time a day do you spend using the internet?
- c) Do you think people spend too much time on the internet?
- d) Look at the photos. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of using the internet?

2a Work in pairs. What do you know about Task 2 of the IELTS Writing test?

- a) What do you have to write about?
- b) How many words must you write, and how much time do you have for this?

2b Read the information below and check your answers. Then complete the information with words from the box.

60 250 **essay** opinion question

In Task 2 of the IELTS Writing test, candidates have to write an **(1)** *essay* You will have a **(2)** which will ask you to discuss or argue different points of view (for example, the advantages and disadvantages of something), and give your **(3)** about something.

For this part of the Writing test, you will need to write at least **(4)** words. You must follow the instructions given in the question, and you need to write in an academic style. The complete IELTS Writing test (Task 1 and Task 2) lasts **(5)** minutes, and you should spend around 40 minutes of this on Task 2.

3 The information in exercise 2b is written in two paragraphs. Choose the correct answers.

- a) We sometimes / always need to organise essays into paragraphs.
- b) A paragraph is made of one / more than one sentence.
- c) There is / isn't a space between each paragraph.
- d) A paragraph has one clear topic / lots of different topics.
- e) The first / last sentence of the paragraph usually explains what its topic is.

4 Work in pairs. Look at the Task 2 question. What is your opinion?

People spend too much time using the internet and not enough time talking with family, friends and neighbours. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Exam tip

In IELTS Writing Task 2, you need to write in paragraphs to get a good mark. Paragraphs help the reader understand what your main topics are, and what you want to discuss in your essay.

5 Look at the essay. Match the topics (a–e) with the paragraphs (1–4).

- a) agreeing with the opinion in the question2....
- b) summarising the essay, and mostly disagreeing with the opinion in the question
- c) disagreeing with the opinion in the question
- d) introducing the essay and the things that the writer wants to discuss

- 1 *Many people spend several hours each day using the internet. **In this essay, I will** discuss whether I agree that this stops people from spending enough time with their family, friends and neighbours.*
- 2 *I agree that some people spend too much time online. **For example**, some people play games online, or use the internet for shopping or checking news. Many people spend too much time in front of screens, which can be unhealthy. It means that they do not communicate with real people, in the real world. It is true that people nowadays prefer looking at their smartphones to talking with their families, friends and neighbours.*
- 3 *However, the internet can also help people to communicate. Millions of people use it to make new friends or stay in contact with old ones. Family members who live far away from each other can communicate with each other any time they want to, thanks to new technology. I do not think that a conversation which uses text messages or video calls is very different to a face-to-face conversation. Many community groups use social media to help organise events and to get new members. **In my opinion**, people can communicate and make friends more easily than before the internet existed.*
- 4 ***In conclusion**, I do not agree that using the internet means that people don't spend enough time talking to their families, friends and neighbours. I believe that it has increased the amount of communication between people, and offers new ways for people to communicate.*

Exam tip

Phrases like *In this essay, ...*, *For example, ...*, *In my opinion ...*, and *In conclusion, ...* are useful for organising your ideas and making your essay clearer to read.

6a Match the phrases in bold in exercise 5 to the reasons the writer uses them (a–d).

- a) to introduce a final paragraph *In conclusion*
- b) to give his/her personal view
- c) to explain something, by giving examples
- d) to say what the essay will include

6b Match the phrases (1–4) with phrases with a similar meaning (a–d).

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) In this essay, I will ... | a) For instance |
| 2) In my opinion, ... | b) To summarise |
| 3) For example, ... | c) I am going to ... |
| 4) In conclusion, ... | d) I believe that ... |



7a Work in pairs or small groups. Look at the Task 2 question and the plan. Discuss ideas for paragraphs 2 and 3.

EXAM TASK: Writing (Task 2)

Some people think that old houses should be knocked down to build new houses or apartment blocks. Others think that old houses should be protected because they are part of a nation's history. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your knowledge or experience.

You should write at least 250 words.

1 Introduction paragraph	One or two sentences to introduce the topic, then a sentence starting: <i>In this essay, I will discuss ...</i>
2 Reasons to knock down old houses	
3 Reasons to protect old houses	
4 Conclusion paragraph	Your opinion, starting: <i>In conclusion, ...</i>

7b Work with another pair or group. Listen to other students' ideas. Decide what your own opinion is: do you think that old houses should be knocked down or protected?

8 Write your essay in at least 250 words. Make sure you write in clear paragraphs.