

VIEWPOINT WRITING

Purpose, audience and form

AO5 AO6

Paper 2,
Section B, Q5

What will you have to do?

- You will be given **one writing task** that will ask you to **express a viewpoint**.
- You will be presented with a **debatable statement**. This will help you **develop ideas to support your opinion**. The task follows this statement and will indicate the purpose, form and audience for your writing, like this:

5. 'The pursuit of extreme sports is too dangerous. The media must not promote these activities as they encourage children to take unnecessary risks.'

Write a letter to a student newspaper in which you explain your point of view on this statement.

Why is reading the task important?

You need to read the task to find the purpose, audience and form of the writing.

- **Purpose:** what the writing is intended to do, e.g. persuade others to change their opinion.
- **Audience:** who it is aimed at, e.g. the age group, interests, etc.
- **Form:** the type of writing required, e.g. a letter, an article, the text for a speech.

How will this help me to plan?

Once you have identified the purpose, audience and form, this will help you plan and craft your piece of writing effectively.

You could also add the **register** and tone to develop your plan further.

Register: the type of language used in a text, especially how formal it is.

Tone: the writer's apparent attitude towards the subject, e.g. humorous, angry, critical or passionate.

Putting it into practice

5. 'The pursuit of extreme sports is too dangerous. The media must not promote these activities as they encourage children to take unnecessary risks.'

Write a **letter** to a **student newspaper** in which you explain your point of view on this statement.

Tone = enthusiastic and committed, but clear for age group; could add humour

Form

Audience

Register = formal

Purpose

How can I write with a clear viewpoint?

Read this extract from a successful response.

Extreme sports are increasingly popular. Many adults have engaged in such activities and regard them as some of the most rewarding experiences of their lives. So why are children judged so harshly for wanting to do the same thing? We are surely capable of understanding the dangers. When interviewed, Luke, an 18-year-old student, said 'climbing to Everest Base Camp was the best experience of my life'. Extreme sports can give children the confidence and determination to succeed in all areas of life.

Uses clear and formal register; newspaper article form signalled by clear opening statement

Persuasive purpose shown by rhetorical question; maintains passionate and committed tone

First-person plural used to include the audience

Use of direct speech to give a personal perspective to connect with the audience (students)



Note it!

Use a fairly formal register in your response, even for a student audience. Your tone may shift (e.g. from humorous to serious) but should not change in formality dramatically.

Now you try!

Identify the register and tone that you would use for the task below.

Then write the opening paragraph of your response.

- 'Reality TV brings out the worst qualities in people and should be banned from all TV channels. It models low standards of behaviour and contributes nothing to our society.'

Write an article for a magazine in which you argue for or against this statement.

How can you use structure to organise your ideas effectively?

- Structuring your ideas clearly is one way to make your argument effective.
- Clear organisation is important within each paragraph and in the way you link paragraphs together throughout your whole response.

Structure across the whole text

An effective text usually contains:

- a clear and convincing opening paragraph that identifies key idea/s
- points organised in a logical sequence (beginning with the most powerful)
- clear paragraphs, with a new paragraph for each new point
- links between paragraphs to show how points develop the overall argument (using **topic sentences** and **connectives**) – for more, see pages 40–41
- a clear conclusion (see ‘Planning and structuring a response’ on pages 62–64).

Structure within paragraphs

Effective paragraphs usually:

- focus on exploring one central idea
- begin with a topic sentence
- develop the idea further (using evidence, for example)
- use connectives to link points.

Putting it into practice

Plan for one paragraph in response to the task below.

5. ‘The views of young people are ignored in our society. The voting age should be lowered to 16 so that young people have an opportunity to express their views on political issues.’

Write a letter to your local MP explaining your viewpoint on this statement.

Children are the
future of our
country

Voting age of 16?

Recent vote – over a
million young people
could not vote

Children lack control over their future,
despite having a good education

What connectives could you add to the plan to link these ideas within the paragraph?

Exam focus

How can I write a structured paragraph? AO5 AO6

Read this example of an effective paragraph using the plan on page 56. Note that the student has also used the persuasive techniques explored on pages 52–53.

What is more important to a society than its young people? Children work hard to get an education to prepare for their future, but is their future really theirs? In a recent political vote, it was suggested that the opinions of over a million young people were not considered as they were below the age of 18. Consequently, these young people will have to suffer in silence because their voices are not heard. It is time for change; we all need to work together to transform society for the better.

Clear topic sentence

Another rhetorical question

Inclusion of statistics develops the idea

Connective to link sentences

Summarises the point; a call to action



Note it!

Remember that Question 5 is about viewpoints – you need to have a consistent opinion. Don't change your mind half way through writing your response.

Now you try!

Write at least one paragraph in response to the task below.

5. 'Veganism is an important way to help save the planet, as it lessens the impact that humans have. Schools should encourage students to become vegan and offer vegan choices on their menus.'

Write a letter to your headteacher and school governors explaining your viewpoint on this statement.