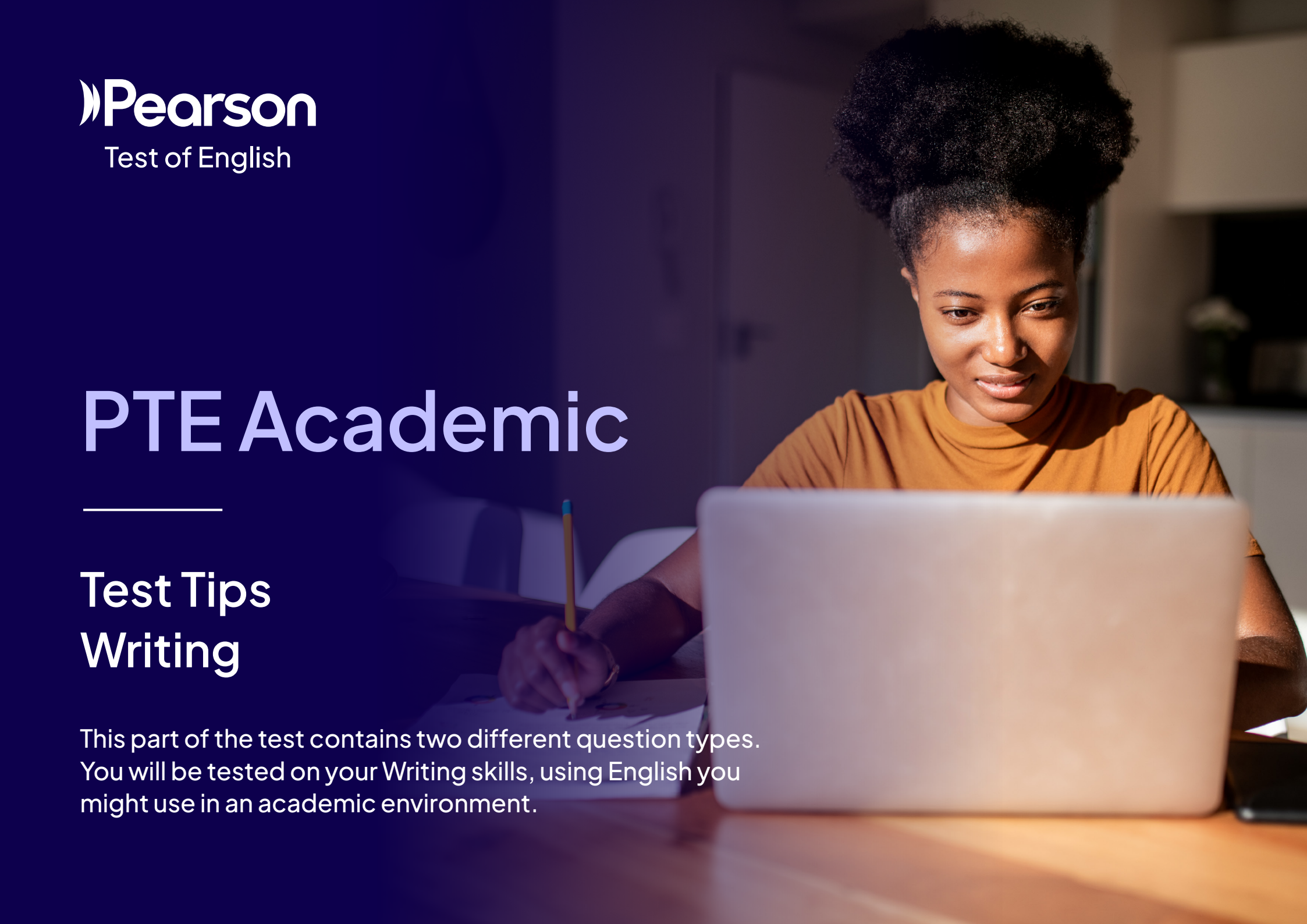
Pearson
Test of English

PTE Academic

Test Tips
Writing

This part of the test contains two different question types. You will be tested on your Writing skills, using English you might use in an academic environment.



Introduction to PTE Academic Test Tips for Writing

This resource provides test tips for anyone preparing for the Writing section of Pearson Test of English (PTE) Academic.

You can use the information to help develop useful strategies to answer the two question types in this section.

The test tips are presented in the order in which they appear in the test.

You can use the PTE Academic Question Bank or Guided Practice Tests in conjunction with this resource for even more practice.

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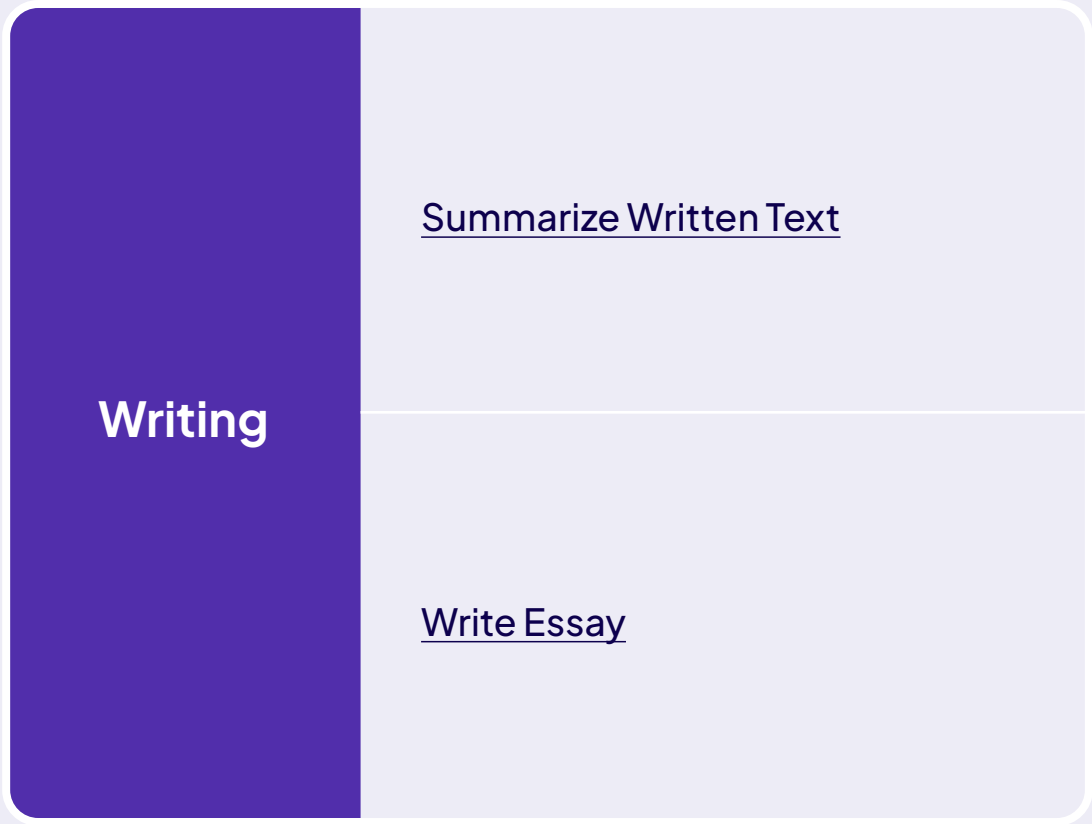


Summarize Written Text

Practice using compound and complex sentences

Your response must be expressed within one sentence, so you will need to **use a complex or compound sentence to be able to summarize the main point** of the passage and **also briefly mention the supporting detail.** For example, look at the clause structures used in these summaries to link supporting ideas to the main point:

Legal rights and safeguards lead to long-loved investments by individuals, which have a far higher impact on raising living standards of countries than these countries' natural resources.

'which' introduces a relative clause, creating a complex sentence.

'and' is a conjunction joining two simple sentences together to produce a compound sentence.

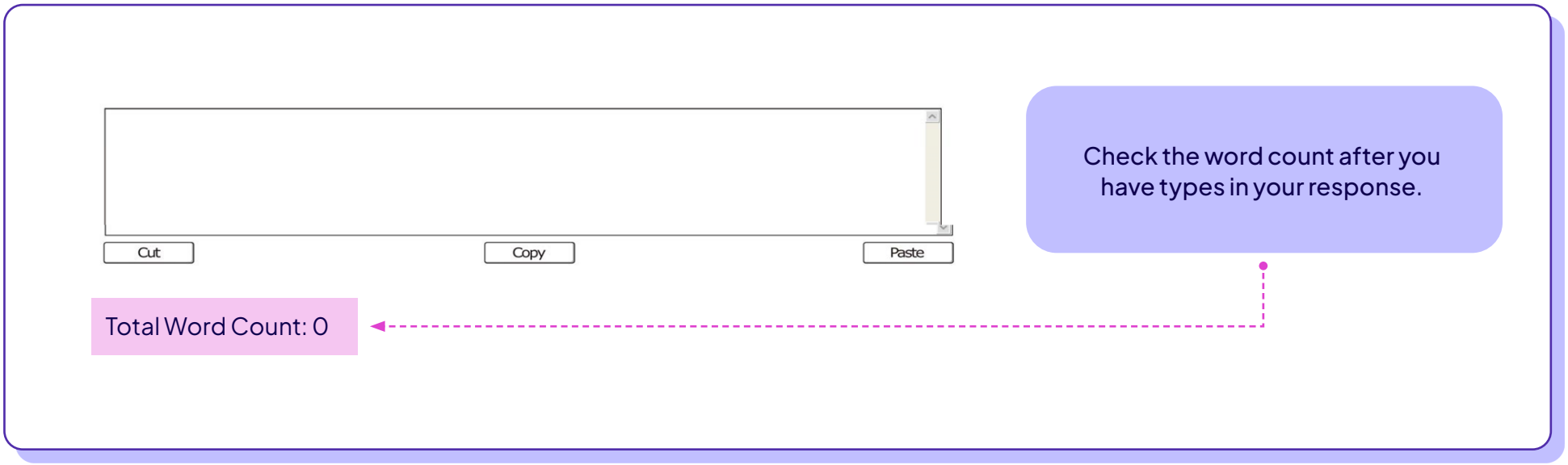
Just-in-time production synchronizes goods produced with demand, and many companies employ this method to control costs.

Summarize Written Text

Make sure your response is in the correct form

When you have written your response, **check to make sure that it is only one sentence,** with a capital letter at the beginning and only one full stop at the end.

Your response must be between 5 and 75 words so check the word count using the 'Total Word Count' counter below the response box. If you write fewer than 5 words or more than 75 words, your response will not be scored.



Summarize Written Text

Important Test Tips

Do

- Skim the text to understand the general topic, then read carefully for the main ideas and key supporting ideas.
- Write a full, single sentence of no more than 75 words.
- Use complex and compound sentences so that you can summarize the main point of the passage and also briefly mention the supporting details.
- Check the form, grammar, spelling, and punctuation once you have finished writing the sentence.

Don't

- Try to fit everything from the reading passage into the summary. A good summary doesn't have to contain a lot of words.
- Add any of your knowledge, opinion, ideas, or evaluation.
- Write the summary in more than one sentence.
- Copy the sentences from the text and simply add 'and' between the ideas.
- Give a response you memorized before the test. If you do, will be providing information that is not relevant to the question prompt and will receive a low score.

Summarize Written Text

Practice Question

Text to summarize:

It might not be common knowledge but actually small businesses make up the majority of businesses in many countries. In the USA, for example, only 0.3 percent of companies are not classed as small businesses. Of course, this does not mean that all small businesses are successful. In fact, the opposite is true and in the USA two thirds of small businesses registered will close within two years. Only half of those that remain will make it to five years. However, there are a number of things business owners can do to help them get past that five-year mark.

The first is that they should do detailed research before opening their business in order to make sure there is a market for what they are planning, and to check that they can actually make a profit. They also need to understand what the competition is, who is offering similar products or services, and whether the new business can exist alongside those already operating. Only when all this has been considered, should a more detailed business plan be written. This plan will need to include concrete steps indicating how the business will start and how it can be grown over the first years. It will also need to show where the finance will come from to fund the company in its early stages. The legal questions will also need to be answered so that the company can be registered in the correct way.

There is a great deal of research now to show that business directors who followed these important steps before creating their company tend to be more successful than those who did not. Of course, this planning stage is only the beginning as the real hard work comes afterwards in developing the company and trying to keep it going.

Summarize Written Text – Excellent sample answer

Answer A

Small businesses, which constitute the majority of businesses in the US, often fail within the first 2 years and the advice to those considering opening a small business is to conduct detailed research and specifically: understand the competition, develop a business plan, secure finance, have a growth plan and answer any legal questions – should these steps be taken, small businesses have a better chance of being successful.

ANSWER EXPLANATION:
This response excellently summarizes the text. Paraphrasing is used effectively and the main ideas are identified and included. The summary flows smoothly and the response is within the word count.

Summarize Written Text – Excellent sample answer

Answer B

Small businesses make up the majority of businesses in many countries, yet most fail within the first 2 years, but through market research, understanding competition, creating a solid business plan, securing financing, and handling legal requirements - they can significantly improve their chances of success, with studies showing that business owners who take these steps before launching, are more likely to survive and grow beyond the critical five-year mark.

ANSWER EXPLANATION:
This is an excellent summary which is within the word count (5–75 words). All the main ideas are identified and included and the summary flows smoothly.

Summarize Written Text – Good sample answer

Answer C

Although small businesses dominate many economies, most fail within a few years, but conducting market research, analyzing competitors, answering legal questions and developing a strong business plan can greatly increase their chances of long-term success.

ANSWER EXPLANATION:
The response adequately summarizes the text. The main ideas are included but there are some minor details left out (specifically having a business plan). The summary can be easily followed.

Summarize Written Text – Average sample answer

Answer D

Many of the businesses in the US are small businesses and they tend to fail. Furthermore, if businesses conduct market research, creating a business plan and secure finance – they are more likely to survive as a company. Also they will have more success.

ANSWER EXPLANATION:
This response mentions a number of the main ideas but many ideas from the text are not included. Many details are also left out. The response flows adequately but there is some repetition at the end with the final sentence repeating the previous sentence.

Summarize Written Text – Needs improvement sample answer

Answer E

Business in the US are small and they often fail and they can conduct market research and secure finance and survive as a company and they will be better in the long run.

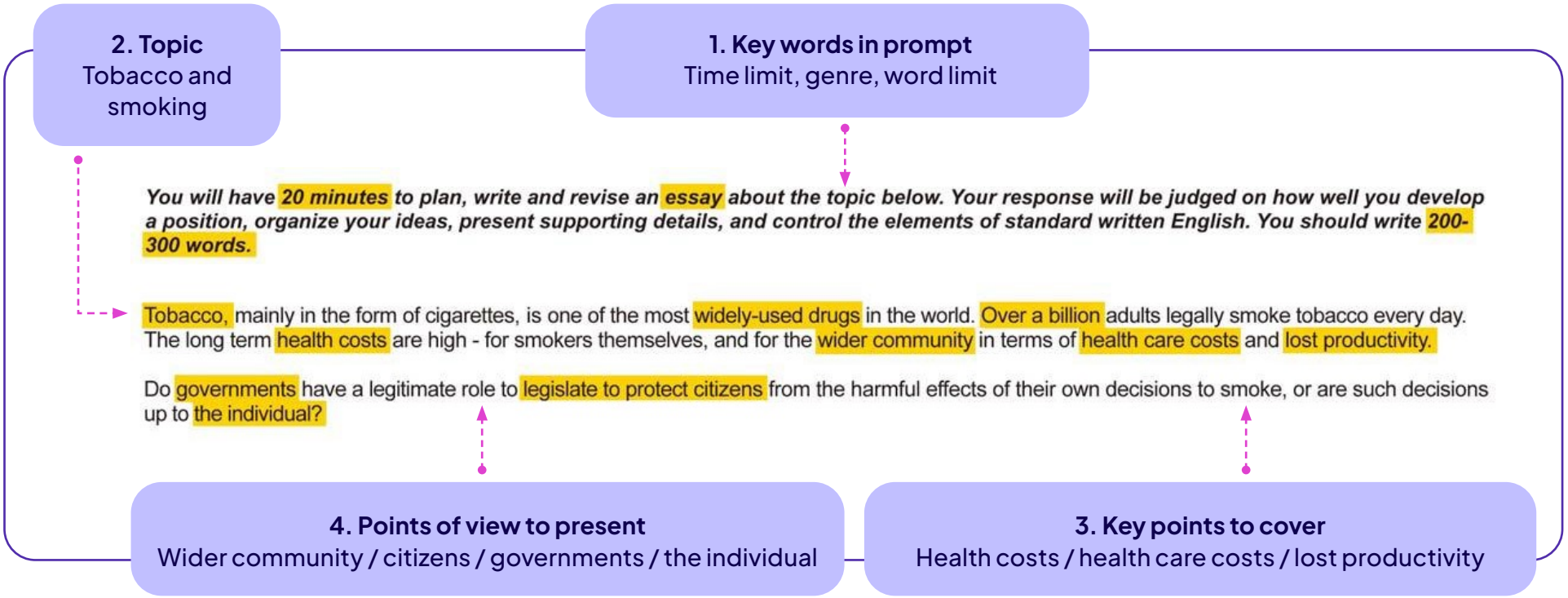
ANSWER EXPLANATION:
The response is relevant and written as one sentence but it does not summarize the text and it is very short. The summary includes some information from the text but then simply connects the sentences with the word 'and'. Many main ideas are not included and there is inaccurate information (business in the US are small).

Write Essay

Start by analyzing the task

Before you write anything, note key words in the prompt. Find out the topic, what key points you should focus on to answer the question and any points of view to present and discuss. Analyzing these four areas will help you to approach the task, structure your essay and decide on your main ideas.

The content of your answer is very important. **If your response does not address the topic in the prompt or includes a significant amount of pre-prepared scripted material, you will receive no score** at all for this question type.



Write Essay

Essay prompts can be written in a number of ways. For example, you may need to discuss whether you agree or disagree with a statement:

> "Education is a critical element of the prosperity of any nation. The more educated the people in a country are, the more successful their nation becomes." Discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with this statement. Support your point of view with reasons and/or examples from your own experience or observations.

You may have to consider how different groups of people might feel about a particular situation:

> Tobacco, mainly in the form of cigarettes, is one of the most widely-used drugs in the world. Over a billion adults legally smoke tobacco every day. The long term health costs are high - for smokers themselves, and for the wider community in terms of health care costs and lost productivity.
>
> Do governments have a legitimate role to legislate to protect citizens from the harmful effects of their own decisions to smoke, or are such decisions up to the individual?

You may need to **argue for or against** an opinion or **discuss advantages and disadvantages** of a situation. If there is a statement followed by a question, read the question very carefully and note key words. Make sure you know what to do.

Important Test Tips

Do

- Plan before you start writing by identifying 3 main ideas and supporting details.
- Write your response with 4-5 paragraphs.
- Ensure each paragraph has a main idea and supporting details.
- Write between 200-300 words.
- Use a variety of language and expressions.
- Use connecting devices effectively in your writing.
- Check your writing carefully after you have finished. Leave yourself 2-3 minutes to proofread and correct any errors.

Don't

- Write down all the ideas you can think of which are related to the topic.
- Write less than 200 or more than 300 words.
- Write sentences which could belong in any essay (e.g., This is a highly interesting and debatable topic and in this essay I will discuss the main ideas). Make each sentence specific to the topic you are writing about.
- Go into the test with sentences you are ready to use. Apply the language you know flexibly to meet the needs of the question.
- Write up to the 20 minute mark and then press next. You need time to check your writing.

Write Essay

Practice Question

You will have 20 minutes to plan, write and revise an essay about the topic below. Your response will be judged on how well you develop a position, organize your ideas, present supporting ideas, and control the elements of standard written English. You should write 200-300 words.

Some people say maths and science are more important school subjects than arts subjects such as literature and history. Do you agree with this opinion? Support your point of view with reasons and/or examples from your own experience.

Write Essay - Excellent sample answer

Answer A

I strongly agree that maths and science are more important than arts subjects.

The first reason why I agree with this statement is to do with the improved salary you receive through having a maths or science degree rather than an arts or literature one. Those with a science or maths qualification can be hired in professions such as medicine, accountancy, statistics, banking and these jobs tend to be higher paid. Through focussing on maths and science skills and working in one of these fields, one's lifetime earnings would be higher than those with an art degree and as a result that person would live a more comfortable life with more opportunities.

The second reason why maths and science skills are more important that arts skills is related to job prospects. It is easier to obtain employment with these degrees as they lend themselves to specific jobs or careers and there are a wider range of jobs available. For example, a maths graduate can become a banker, an accountant, a statistician and many other jobs. History graduates have limited options related to history, for example they can become a history teacher, a librarian or work in a museum, but there are generally fewer vacancies available to those graduating with an arts degree.

Finally, and an argument semi-related to previous one, people cannot be recruited for certain professions if they do not have a maths qualification. Without a maths qualification, you cannot become a primary school teacher. This example again shows why maths is more important than arts.

Maths and science provide people with more job opportunities, better pay and today maths skills are a pre-requirement to be hired into certain fields. With this mind, I feel strongly that maths and science are more essential than arts subjects.

ANSWER EXPLANATION:
This is an excellent answer. The writer provides a clear position and develops topic ideas with supporting details. The essay is logical and flows very well using connecting devices effectively. A variety of expressions and vocabulary are used.

Write Essay – Good sample answer

Answer B

I mostly agree that maths and science are more important than arts subjects like history and literature.

Subjects help people get good jobs. Many companies look for workers with science and maths skills, and these jobs usually pay well. For example, engineers and doctors earn a lot of money, and there is always demand for them. As well as this, it can be harder to find a job with a degree in history or literature. Also, maths and science help people think logically and solve problems, which is useful in many situations.

Art subjects are still important. It help us learn about history and culture, and they can also be interesting. Studying literature, for example, can improve communication skill. But I am of the opinion, they are not as necessarily as maths and science. At my school, we studied both, but my parents focused more on my science and maths grades. I think this is because they believed these subjects will help me more in the future.

To sum up, I think it is good to study all subjects, but maths and science are more useful because they lead to better jobs and are more practical in daily life.

ANSWER EXPLANATION:
The essay is adequate and develops a convincing argument. It introduces topics well, but examples are not always given and ideas are not always developed. The essay could flow more logically with better use of connective devices.

Write Essay – Average sample answer

Answer C

Maths is a very important subject and so is science but I think art is important too. It's difficult to say whether one is more important than the other.

Maths skills can help people get jobs. Also you can make more money if you do maths. A final reason is maths is not only an exciting subject but also interesting. People who are good at maths can do many skills like calculations but also rubix cubes.

Science is also important. science can help people become more interesting and science magazines are fascinating. Science also can help you get jobs.

Art is creative. People who do art have many skills. I think AI can now make better art than people. One reason people should study art is because it's interesting and fun. Also people have fun visiting art galleries and there are many famous and beautiful pictures.

I think maths, science and art are important but I think AI developments mean we don't need art skills so much any more. Also art, in my opinion is more difficult than maths or science.

ANSWER EXPLANATION:
The essay only partially answers the prompt. Arguments and ideas are presented but there is no clear position and many ideas lack supporting detail or clear explanation. The range of language is quite narrow and the response is under 200 words. Although there is some good use of connecting devices (e.g., 'one reason') there is an over-reliance on simple connecting devices (e.g., 'also' is used four times).

Write Essay - Needs improvement answer

Answer D

The topic of whether maths and science are more important than arts subjects like literature and history is a highly debated issue. Some people believe that science and maths provide good jobs, while others argue that arts subjects are important for creativity. In my opinion, maths and science are more important. This essay will discuss both perspectives and explain why I believe science and maths play a greater role in this area.

To commence with, there are many arguments that are in favour of my belief. The most prominent one is that maths leads to advantages. According to research conducted by Victoria University, more than 90% of participants acknowledged the benefits showed by maths. In addition, maths also has the merit of better jobs.

However, critics may point out that one of the most significant disadvantages of art is not getting good jobs. For instance a survey conducted in the United States of America agreed with this point of view and found that there are negative impacts related to art.

To conclude, even when there are numerous demerits associated with maths, the advantages of studying outweigh the disadvantages. I am of the opinion that maths is important and many people agree with me.

ANSWER EXPLANATION:
This response receives a very poor score. The response is mainly pre-memorized sentences which have no connection to the essay question. Many sentences do not mention the topic at all (e.g., To commence with) whereas others simply put the key words from the prompt into the pre-memorized sentences.

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