

Presenting your case.

It is better to use impersonal phrases rather than 'I think':

It is widely believed that young children need to be with their mothers . . .

Most people consider that fast food is very convenient . . .

It is generally agreed that school uniforms develop a group identity . . .

It is probable/possible that fast food will become more acceptable . . .

This evidence suggests that most children benefit from nurseries . . .

It can be argued that children benefit from a diet of hamburgers.

It has been suggested that school uniforms make children more rebellious.

Some people believe that nursery education damages children.

Counterarguments.

Should they be presented?

What is the most effective way to do it?

Study the example and identify:

(1) Counter-argument

(2) Your position

Although it has been suggested that school uniforms make children more rebellious, it is generally agreed that they help to develop a group identity.

Invent and give for and against arguments for the following topics

Instead of going out to work, mothers should stay at home and look after their children until they are at least 5

Fast food, which is spreading round the world and destroying national cultures, should be resisted.

Before giving your own opinion, it is necessary to show that you have read the relevant sources and have studied the evidence. Opinions without evidence have little value.

Identify the structure of the following paragraph discussing the environmental effects of deforestation.

Lomborg (2001) claims that the danger of extinction of species has been exaggerated. He says that the number of species had been expected to decline dramatically within the next half century, but maintains that this is unlikely: 'Species (. . .) seem more resilient than expected.' He points out that in the eastern USA, although 98% of the original forests have been cleared, only one forest bird became extinct in the process. Against this, Brooks (2001) feels that Lomborg is ignoring the true rate of forest loss and the related extinction of species: 'The ongoing wave of extinctions, due primarily to deforestation in the moist tropics, has been widely documented.' It seems that Lomborg, as a statistician, is too dependent on optimistic data, and is ignoring the widespread concerns of wildlife experts.

Complete the following paragraph, which discusses air pollution, to give an opinion.

According to Lomborg (2001), air quality is improving in rich countries. He gives the example of London, where he claims that the air is cleaner now than it has been since 1585, thanks to decreases in smoke and sulphur dioxide. Brooks (2001), however, argues that Lomborg is 'ignoring the more recent global rise in toxic contaminants, now found at high concentrations (. . .) even in the remote reaches of the Arctic.' It appears that _____