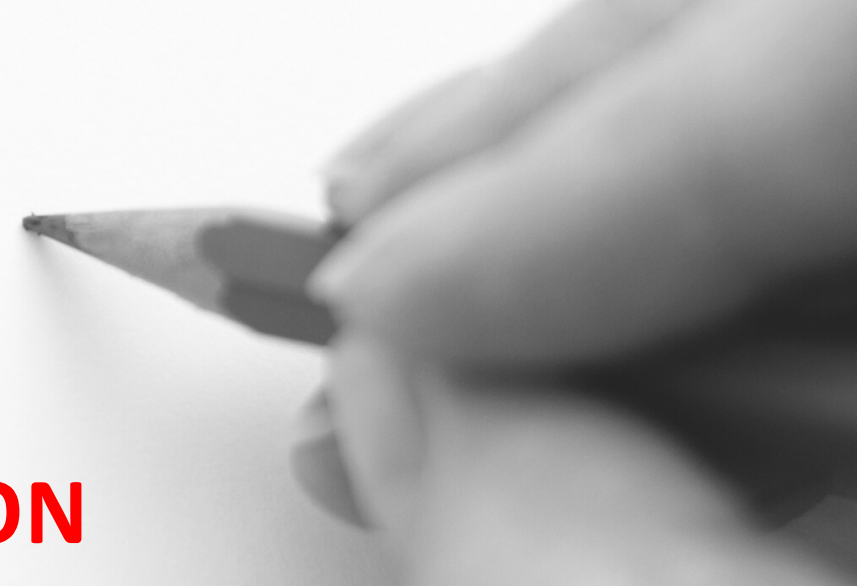


Master IELTS Writing Task 2

IELTS Writing Task 2

Question types: **EXPLANATION + OPINION**



Iain

Rebecca

FORMER IELTS EXAMINERS

Prepare for {**IELTS**}

OPINION + EXPLANATION Strategy

INTRODUCTION: Comment on the general topic and say why it is important; paraphrase the question; describe the position which opposes your position; include a thesis statement connected to both questions if possible (it can include your position for the OPINION part, or just your plan to deal with it)

MAIN PARAGRAPH 1: An explanation for the first question

MAIN PARAGRAPH 2: Describe and explain your opinion for the second question (Try to link your opinion to the EXPLANATION in the previous paragraph)

CONCLUSION: Reiterate your explanation for question 1; repeat your position for question 2; recap support for your position for question 2; include a hope, wish, fear, worry or prediction which supports your position

COMMENT: This is a useful strategy when it is possible to separate the essay into two distinct parts

Look at this IELTS Writing Task 2

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

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

Write at least 250 words

Look at this IELTS Writing Task 2

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. **Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?**

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

Write at least 250 words

You can start your essay with a very general comment about the topic, rather than referring to specific questions

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

There is no denying that all of us crave to be successful. However, agreeing on a universal definition of success is practically impossible, and establishing whether being successful is a consequence of our biological composition or our environment has perplexed experts for generations. This essay will attempt to shed light on these issues.

It is often possible to paraphrase both questions while explaining that they are difficult to answer

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

There is no denying that all of us crave to be successful. **However, agreeing on a universal definition of success is practically impossible, and establishing whether being successful is a consequence of our biological composition or our environment has perplexed experts for generations.** This essay will attempt to shed light on these issues.

If you have already referred to both questions, your thesis statement can indicate that you plan to answer the questions

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

There is no denying that all of us crave to be successful. However, agreeing on a universal definition of success is practically impossible, and establishing whether being successful is a consequence of our biological composition or our environment has perplexed experts for generations. **This essay will attempt to shed light on these issues.**

You should use your first main body paragraph to answer the first question

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

Obviously, the principal reason why this concept is so tricky to understand is that success implies very different things to different people. In our materialistic world, it often means possessing the latest gadget, the fastest sports-car, a mansion with stables and a swimming pool, or an exorbitantly expensive yacht. Ambitious individuals may consider success as relating to promotion at work or the ability to dominate and control others. Those who view life from a religious perspective may see being successful as connected to doing good to their fellow-humans. Others might believe that a self-confident, self-aware and emotionally fulfilled person has achieved what they should.

This topic sentence offers a clear answer to the first question

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

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All of these points support the topic sentence, which answers the first question

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You should use the second main body paragraph to answer the second question

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

Like many characteristics, our ability to be successful is probably determined by both our upbringing and our nature. Psychologists generally agree that we are born with specific instincts and natural abilities which will clearly impact on our progress in life, whether we seek financial gain, a great career, social acceptance or personal growth. Yet factors such as education also play a key role. Even the most gifted child will struggle in an environment which lacks stimulation. Likewise, those of us born with less natural talent might thrive with committed parents, a stable family background and superb teaching.

This topic sentence offers a clear answer. It indicates that both genetic and environmental factors matter

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In a two-part question, you probably only have one paragraph to put forward your position. It is often simpler to completely support/oppose the question statement

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In this paragraph, we need to support both genetic and environmental influence (because that is the position in the thesis statement)

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You can start your conclusion with a general comment which connects to both questions

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

After having considered the matter carefully, I have come to the conclusion that understanding success is impossible without a deep comprehension of human behaviour. For most of us, our fellow-humans' motives remain quite mysterious, and it is practically impossible to determine whether a successful individual owes more to their biology or environment. It will certainly require a great deal more scientific investigation before we can say that we have fully grasped the meaning of success.

**In the conclusion,
you can refer back
to your answers
for both questions**

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

After having considered the matter carefully, I have come to the conclusion that understanding success is impossible without a deep comprehension of human behaviour. For most of us, our fellow-humans' motives remain quite mysterious, and it is practically impossible to determine whether a successful individual owes more to their biology or environment. It will certainly require a great deal more scientific investigation before we can say that we have fully grasped the meaning of success.

Connecting the two questions is usually a strength in this type of essay

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

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You can often finish your essay with a comment or prediction about the future

Nearly all of us would like to be successful. Why is success so difficult to define? To what extent is our ability to succeed in life controlled by our genetic make-up?

After having considered the matter carefully, I have come to the conclusion that understanding success is impossible without a deep comprehension of human behaviour. For most of us, our fellow-humans' motives remain quite mysterious, and it is practically impossible to determine whether a successful individual owes more to their biology or environment. It will certainly require a great deal more scientific investigation before we can say that we have fully grasped the meaning of success.

Look at this IELTS Writing Task 2

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

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

Write at least 250 words

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Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. **Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?**

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

Write at least 250 words

You can begin with a general comment which introduces the issue

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

Statistics seem to suggest that far more money is donated to charities now than even a couple of decades ago. It is relatively unusual to find adults who refuse to contribute financially to organisations which look after the elderly, seriously ill children, the homeless, the impoverished or animals which have been cruelly treated. The questions of why we choose to give our hard-earned cash to these organisations and whether there are more effective ways of helping the needy remain unanswered.

It is a good idea to refer to both questions in your thesis statement

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

Statistics seem to suggest that far more money is donated to charities now than even a couple of decades ago. It is relatively unusual to find adults who refuse to contribute financially to organisations which look after the elderly, seriously ill children, the homeless, the impoverished or animals which have been cruelly treated. The questions of why we choose to give our hard-earned cash to these organisations and whether there are more effective ways of helping the needy remain unanswered.

This paragraph answers the first question with a list. The first item from this list is in the topic sentence

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

If asked, most members of the public would probably explain that they make donations in order to do good. The picture might be slightly more complicated than that, however. Some donate publicly, in an apparent attempt to gain respect, praise or admiration. I also suspect the more affluent might contribute in order to avoid the feelings of guilt which they get from their comfortable, worry-free lifestyle. Finally, many are swayed by sophisticated advertising campaigns which charities employ; they are more likely to support groups which care for children and animals and probably unwilling to help less 'beautiful' groups like the mentally ill, the housebound, and famine victims in far-off lands.

The topic sentence also makes it clear that this paragraph deals with the first question

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

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You can indicate that the first answer which you gave is not complete

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

If asked, most members of the public would probably explain that they make donations in order to do good. **The picture might be slightly more complicated than that, however.** Some donate publicly, in an apparent attempt to gain respect, praise or admiration. I also suspect the more affluent might contribute in order to avoid the feelings of guilt which they get from their comfortable, worry-free lifestyle. Finally, many are swayed by sophisticated advertising campaigns which charities employ; they are more likely to support groups which care for children and animals and probably unwilling to help less 'beautiful' groups like the mentally ill, the housebound, and famine victims in far-off lands.

You can add extra points to the list which answers the first question

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

If asked, most members of the public would probably explain that they make donations in order to do good. The picture might be slightly more complicated than that, however. **Some donate publicly, in an apparent attempt to gain respect, praise or admiration.** I also suspect the more affluent might contribute in order to avoid the feelings of guilt which they get from their comfortable, worry-free lifestyle. Finally, many are swayed by sophisticated advertising campaigns which charities employ; they are more likely to support groups which care for children and animals and probably unwilling to help less 'beautiful' groups like the mentally ill, the housebound, and famine victims in far-off lands.

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You can support points with explanation or evaluation

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This explanation is strong because it connects to the answer for the second question

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

If asked, most members of the public would probably explain that they make donations in order to do good. The picture might be slightly more complicated than that, however. Some donate publicly, in an apparent attempt to gain respect, praise or admiration. I also suspect the more affluent might contribute in order to avoid the feelings of guilt which they get from their comfortable, worry-free lifestyle. Finally, many are swayed by sophisticated advertising campaigns which charities employ; they are more likely to support groups which care for children and animals and probably unwilling to help less 'beautiful' groups like the mentally ill, the housebound, and famine victims in far-off lands.

In the second main body paragraph you need to answer the second question

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

It seems abundantly clear that charitable funding fails on many levels. It would make far more sense if it was replaced by financial contributions from the state. If we agreed to pay slightly higher income taxes, the extra money could be distributed by the authorities to those most in need in our country and around the globe. Professionals would determine who should benefit. In addition, recipients of funding would probably have greater self-respect if they were given support from the state. It can be quite demeaning to depend on the kindness or goodwill of wealthy individuals, and most vulnerable people are reluctant to receive charity.

By referring to the fact that charity funding fails, you can connect to the final point in the previous paragraph

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

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By indicating that the government should be involved, you state your position for the second question

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It seems abundantly clear that charitable funding fails on many levels. It would make far more sense if it was replaced by financial contributions from the state. If we agreed to pay slightly higher income taxes, the extra money could be distributed by the authorities to those most in need in our country and around the globe. Professionals would determine who should benefit. In addition, recipients of funding would probably have greater self-respect if they were given support from the state. It can be quite demeaning to depend on the kindness or goodwill of wealthy individuals, and most vulnerable people are reluctant to receive charity.

You can support your position by explaining how your suggestion would work

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You can put forward other arguments to support your position

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It seems abundantly clear that charitable funding fails on many levels. It would make far more sense if it was replaced by financial contributions from the state. If we agreed to pay slightly higher income taxes, the extra money could be distributed by the authorities to those most in need in our country and around the globe. Professionals would determine who should benefit. In addition, recipients of funding would probably have greater self-respect if they were given support from the state. It can be quite demeaning to depend on the kindness or goodwill of wealthy individuals, and most vulnerable people are reluctant to receive charity.

You can evaluate your arguments to show why they are strong

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You can start your conclusion by restating your position for the second question. This works very well if you have connected your answers to the two questions

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

Having considered the matter in some depth, I have to say that I have reached the conclusion that charities should be reduced in number or even abolished altogether. I am somewhat suspicious of our motivations for giving, and convinced that asking politicians and bureaucrats to fulfil this role would be more efficient. I appreciate this is not a widely-held view but I feel that putting this proposal into practice would be a positive step.

You can make a comment connected to your answer to the first question. This is stronger if you have managed to link the two answers

Many people around the world give money to charities which support older or weaker members of society. Why do people choose to give money to charities? Would it be better if governments increased taxes to pay for the elderly and vulnerable instead of relying on charities?

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You can end with a hope/wish, and can even comment on your own hope/wish

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Look at this IELTS Writing Task 2

These days there are many families around the world where both parents work full-time and spend much less time with their children than they would like to. Why does this happen? Is it a problem?

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

Write at least 250 words

Look at this IELTS Writing Task 2

These days there are many families around the world where both parents work full-time and spend much less time with their children than they would like to. **Why does this happen? Is it a problem?**

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

Write at least 250 words

You can start your essay with a general comment about the topic

These days there are many families around the world where both parents work full-time and spend much less time with their children than they would like to. Why does this happen? Is it a problem?

A great many significant changes in family structure have taken place over the last few decades. One of the most impactful alterations is that nowadays, in many societies, mothers and fathers are forced to spend the vast majority of their days working, and cannot care for or look after their young children. Many experts in child-rearing consider this to be extremely detrimental to the development of infants, toddlers and pre-school children as well as those in primary and secondary education. Its causes and effects need addressing.

It is often good to explain how the situation has changed or stayed the same. You can also comment on how serious this issue is

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**You can
paraphrase the
question
statement**

These days there are many families around the world where both parents work full-time and spend much less time with their children than they would like to. Why does this happen? Is it a problem?

A great many significant changes in family structure have taken place over the last few decades. One of the most impactful alterations is that nowadays, in many societies, mothers and fathers are forced to spend the vast majority of their days working, and cannot care for or look after their young children. Many experts in child-rearing consider this to be extremely detrimental to the development of infants, toddlers and pre-school children as well as those in primary and secondary education. Its causes and effects need addressing.

You can make a comment to explain that this is a serious issue

These days there are many families around the world where both parents work full-time and spend much less time with their children than they would like to. Why does this happen? Is it a problem?

A great many significant changes in family structure have taken place over the last few decades. One of the most impactful alterations is that nowadays, in many societies, mothers and fathers are forced to spend the vast majority of their days working, and cannot care for or look after their young children. Many experts in child-rearing consider this to be extremely detrimental to the development of infants, toddlers and pre-school children as well as those in primary and secondary education. Its causes and effects need addressing.

Your thesis statement can indicate your plan to answer both questions (or can indicate your position for the second question)

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You should use the first main body paragraph to answer the first question

These days there are many families around the world where both parents work full-time and spend much less time with their children than they would like to. Why does this happen? Is it a problem?

The principal reason for this modern-day phenomenon is clearly economic. The old-fashioned model with father as bread-winner and mother as home-maker and caregiver is no longer viable. Financial conditions for many have worsened, and wages have been squeezed down. Simultaneously, the cost of raising children has soared. The consequence is that it now takes salaries from both parents to provide the necessities and little luxuries which youngsters need or want.

You can start with a topic sentence which indicates the focus of your answer

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**You can add
explanation for
your argument**

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You can use evidence from the world to support your argument

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You can also refer to results to support your argument

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You should use the second main body paragraph to answer the second question

These days there are many families around the world where both parents work full-time and spend much less time with their children than they would like to. Why does this happen? Is it a problem?

Although it could be argued that those who spend their time in nurseries or being looked after by strangers can develop inner strength and independence, few developmental psychologists would agree with this. Youngsters need to have stable and loving relationships with close family members in order to be emotionally mature in later life. They need the sense of safety and security which can only be experienced if they are in close physical proximity to their mothers or fathers. Above all, young children need to feel loved and cherished, and this is practically impossible if they hardly ever see their parents.

You can completely support/oppose a position, but here a clause of concession is used to indicate that even the position you generally disagree with has some merit

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You can add explanation to support your position

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You can start your conclusion by commenting on the situation

These days there are many families around the world where both parents work full-time and spend much less time with their children than they would like to. Why does this happen? Is it a problem?

All in all, I find the current situation awfully worrying. Unless we ensure that parents can spend a reasonable amount of time with their offspring, the future for our civilisation might be quite bleak. I wish that the authorities would realise this, and take steps to make sure that mothers and fathers did not have to work such long hours. For instance, governments should offer grants which would reduce the financial difficulties which parents face, making it easier for families to spend more quality time together.

**You can then
restate your
position**

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You can end with a wish, hope or suggestion which is connected to your position

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Master IELTS Writing Task 2

Thanks for watching!



Iain

Rebecca

FORMER IELTS EXAMINERS

Prepare for {IELTS}