

Teacher's Notes

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

WRITING
comes easy

Warm-up.

On the board write the heading: *Shopping malls*. Divide students into two groups. Tell one group to come up with arguments for building shopping malls in Polish towns, and the other group to come up with arguments against this. Then ask students to work in pairs so that everybody could work with a person from the other group. Tell students to try and convince each other about whether more shopping malls should be built in Poland or not. On the board write the following concepts: *Variety. Comfort. Employment. Access. Local shops. City life*. Have a class discussion using the prompts on the table.

Exercise 1

Ask students to read the exam task and choose the correct words or phrases in the statements referring to the task below. Elicit how this type of essay is different from a for-and-against essay (it should present your opinion with respect to two aspects of a given problem or situation).

Key:

- The essay *should* / **shouldn't** be balanced and objective.
- You **should** / *shouldn't* present your own opinion in the essay.
- The main body of the essay should consist of *one* / **two** paragraphs.
- Each paragraph of the main body can contain **both arguments for and against** / *either arguments for or against* building shopping malls.

Exercise 2

Individually, students read some arguments for the exam task in the columns below and complete them with their own ideas. Ask them to decide whether they could be used as arguments for or against building shopping malls. Tell them to add one or two arguments of their own. Allow students to discuss their answers in pairs. Have a class feedback.

Exercise 3

Ask students to think carefully about what their opinion is on the topic from Exercise 1 and write their thesis under the heading Introduction. Tell them to write down the arguments they would like to use in their essay. Ask them to discuss their ideas in pairs. Ask selected students to read out their thesis statements to the class. You can also ask them to present their arguments and discuss them with the class.

Exercise 4

Individually, students read the sentences below. In each sentence, they underline the phrase in italics which expresses the writer's opinion more strongly and circle the correct word in bold to make collocations. Allow students to compare their answers in pairs. Have a class feedback. You can also ask students to write five sentences beginning with the phrases expressing opinion, or you ask selected students to speak them out to the class.

Key:

- I'm absolutely convinced that* / *I think that* shopping malls **do** / **make** more harm than good in Poland.
- I would say that* / *I firmly believe that* the number of people who lose their jobs after a new shopping mall is built **outweighs** / **outnumbers** the number of people who get employed in them.
- I have no doubt that* / *Personally, I think that* a shopping mall **stops** / **gives** opportunities for students to work part-time.
- It seems to me that ...* / *I am certain that ...* shopping malls have a negative **effect** / **impact** on the life of the local community.
- To be absolutely honest*, / *In my opinion*, shopping malls will be built as long as there are people who are willing to **do** / **go** their shopping in them.

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Exercise 5

Ask students to match the phrases 1–7 with phrases A–G to make fixed phrases which might be useful for writing argumentative essays and write the letters in the first column. Have a class feedback.

Key:

1 F	1 according to	A account/consideration
2 D	2 some people	B of the opinion that
3 E	3 statistics/data	C accepted/claimed
4 B	4 most people are	D argue/claim/propose that
5 C	5 it is generally	E show/reveal/prove
6 G	6 economically/ statistically	F statistics/data/experts,
7 A	7 taking into	G speaking

Exercise 6

Individually, students read the introduction to the essay from Exercise 1. Ask them to decide how they might make it sound more convincing.

Suggested answers:

Shopping malls have become such a natural part of our urban landscapes that it is difficult to imagine what life was like before them. A lot of people (think) believe/are convinced that they do more harm than good to us. However, (I think) I firmly believe/I am convinced/I am absolutely certain that they are beneficial both for our local economies and communities.

Exercise 7

Individually, students read the second paragraph of the essay from Exercise 1 and choose which of the words or phrases in bold matches the text better. Tell them that in some cases both options are correct. Ask students to compare their answers in pairs. Have a class feedback.

Key:

*As for the local economy, a lot of people **claim/propose** that shopping malls have a **dramatic/significant** impact on local shops which lose **customers/clients** and as a result have to **close/shut** down. My doubt is what did these local shops have to **offer/suggest** in the first place? Those local shops which sell specialised products you can't get in shopping malls, like fishing equipment or second-hand books, will **survive/pull through**. Local shops*

*selling fresh, good-quality food will also survive as people **rarely/barely** feel like travelling to a shopping mall to buy a loaf of bread. **Besides/However**, shopping malls may lead to people losing jobs, but they also **employ/lay off** lots of people, **creating/giving** college students and unqualified employees an opportunity to find some work.*

Exercise 8

Students read the third paragraph of the essay and complete the gaps with some phrases from Exercise 5 to make it logical and coherent. Allow students to compare their answers in pairs. Have a class feedback.

Key:

1 into consideration/account, 2 the opinion, 3 According, 4 claim/argue/believe, 5 data/statistics

Exercise 9

Ask students to work in pairs and discuss with their partner whether they agree with the opinions and arguments presented in Exercises 6–8. Have a class discussion.

Exercise 10

Individually, students finish the concluding paragraph for the essay presented in Exercises 6–8. Have them compare their answers in pairs. You can ask selected students to read out their paragraphs to the class.

Homework

Ask students to read the task below and write an essay. Remind students that they can use the ideas and the language from the above exercises. Tell them to use the 5-step writing programme to write their essays.