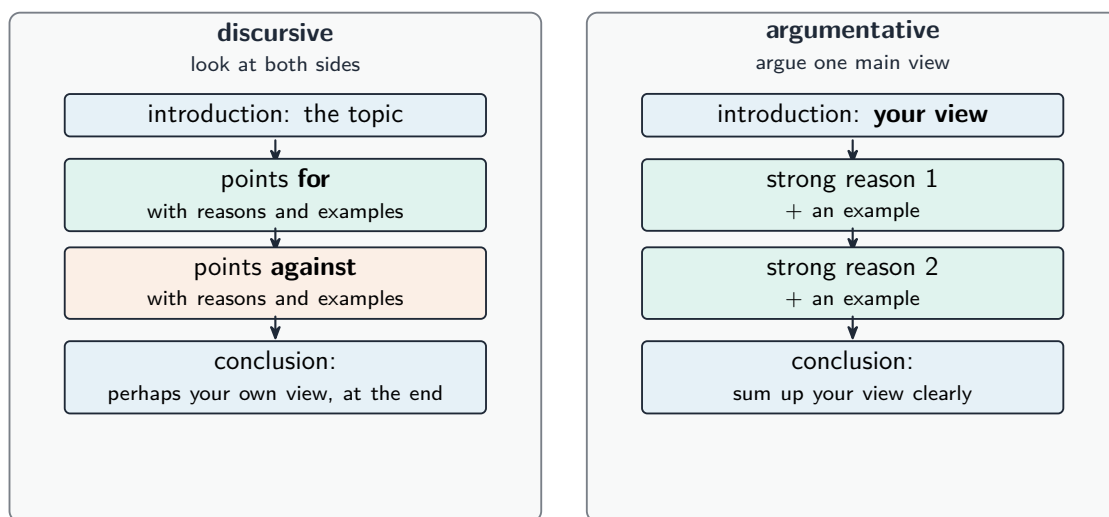


Writing an essay

IGCSE English

Two kinds of essay

An **essay** 议论文 gives your ideas about a topic in an organised way.



plan first: decide your main points before you write

Two essay shapes: discursive weighs both sides; argumentative argues one view

Discursive essays

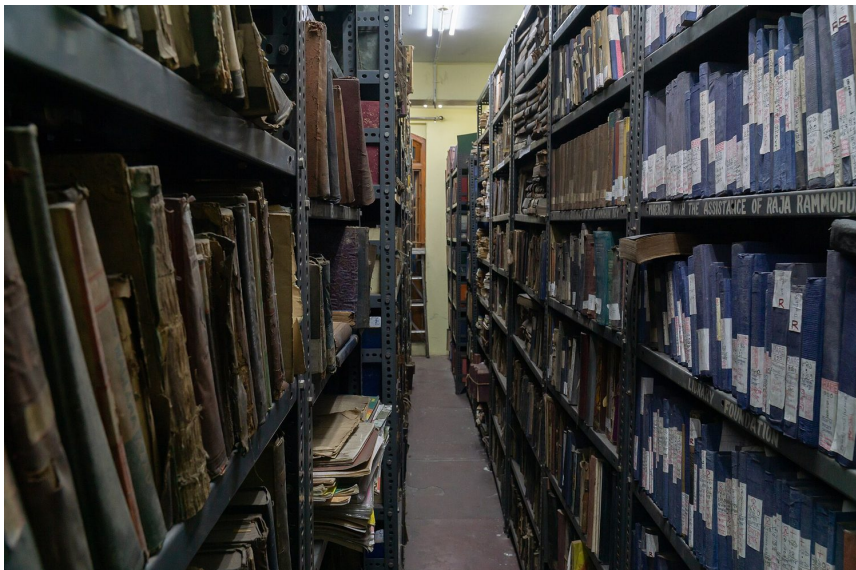
- A **discursive** 论述的 essay looks at both sides of a topic.
- You give the points for and against, and perhaps your own view at the end.

Argumentative essays

- An **argumentative** 议论的 essay argues for one main view.
- You give strong reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Plan first

- Decide your main points and the reasons for each, before you write.
- A short plan keeps your essay organised.



A reading room full of books: essays need careful reading, planning and structured argument

How to structure an essay

A clear shape makes your argument easy to follow.

Introduction

- The **introduction** 引言 names the topic and says how you will approach it.
- Keep it short — two or three sentences.

Body paragraphs

- Put one main idea in each **body** 主体 paragraph.
- Start the paragraph with the idea, then add reasons and examples.

one body paragraph

Firstly, school sport builds real friendships.

— **start with the idea**
(a topic sentence)

Playing in a team means you win and lose together, so you learn to trust each other.

— then the **reasons**
behind it

For example, my closest friends are the players I have trained with every week since Grade 8.

— then an **example**
that makes it real

A body paragraph: the idea first, then reasons, then an example

Conclusion

- The **conclusion** 结论 brings your ideas together.
- Do not add a new point here. Sum up your view clearly.

Useful language

Linking words 衔接词 signal your reader where the argument turns. They are the road signs of an essay.

- **To add a point:** *Firstly...* / *In addition...* / *Another reason is...*
- **To show the other side:** *However...* / *On the other hand...* / *Some people argue that...*
- **To give an example:** *For example...* / *For instance...* / *such as...*
- **To conclude:** *In conclusion...* / *Overall...* / *Weighing both sides...*

Use them at the *start* of a sentence, and do not overuse one. Two or three well-placed links are enough for a paragraph.

A model body paragraph

Watch the three moves: idea, then reason, then example.

Firstly, homework teaches students to work alone. In class, a teacher is always nearby to help. At home, a student must solve the problem by themselves — and that is where real learning happens. For example, a maths question that felt easy in the lesson can teach far more when you meet it again, alone, at your desk.

The first sentence is the idea. The next two explain *why*. The last one makes it real with an example. Every body paragraph can follow this simple shape.



Plan structure first: clear points, examples, and a firm conclusion

Exam tips

- Plan for three minutes before you write: your view, two reasons, one opposite view.
- First paragraph introduces the question; each middle paragraph carries exactly one argument.
- Signpost with linking words: First of all, However, On the other hand, In conclusion.
- Give the other side one fair paragraph, then answer it. Balance shows thinking and earns marks.
- The final paragraph states your opinion clearly. Do not sit on the fence.