Here’s a clear structure for writing a personal opinion essay at the C1 level:

**1. Introduction**

* **General statement**: Start with a general introduction to the topic, providing context or background information.
* **Opinion statement**: Clearly state your personal opinion or position on the issue.
* **Outline of main points**: Briefly mention the key points you will discuss in the body paragraphs.

Example:
"The decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to Barack Obama in 2009 sparked worldwide debate. While some saw it as a recognition of his diplomatic efforts, others believed it was premature. In this essay, I will argue that although Obama’s potential for positive change was evident, the award was given too early."

**2. Body Paragraph 1: Argument Supporting Your Opinion**

* **Topic sentence**: Start with a clear topic sentence that introduces the main idea of the paragraph.
* **Explanation and details**: Support your argument with explanations, examples, or evidence.
* **Concluding sentence**: End with a sentence that reinforces your point.

Example:
"One reason Obama deserved the Nobel Peace Prize is his commitment to diplomacy and international cooperation. His outreach to the Muslim world through his speech in Cairo in 2009 demonstrated a willingness to engage with countries previously at odds with the United States. This emphasis on dialogue over military action was in line with the ideals of the Nobel Committee."

**3. Body Paragraph 2: Counterargument or Opposing View**

* **Topic sentence**: Introduce the opposing viewpoint or counterargument.
* **Explanation and rebuttal**: Acknowledge the opposing viewpoint, then provide a rebuttal or explanation to show why your opinion still holds.
* **Evidence**: Use facts or examples to support your rebuttal.

Example:
"However, some critics argued that awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to a president who had not yet achieved significant peace-related results was premature. Obama had been in office for less than a year, and he had not made measurable progress on issues such as Middle East peace or nuclear disarmament. While these concerns are valid, the Nobel Committee’s decision may have been based on his potential to bring about change, not just his past accomplishments."

**4. Body Paragraph 3: Further Argument Supporting Your Opinion**

* **Topic sentence**: Present another reason why you hold your opinion.
* **Explanation and details**: Provide further support for your viewpoint.
* **Examples**: Illustrate your point with relevant examples or evidence.

Example:
"Another key reason why Obama’s award was justified is his commitment to reducing nuclear arms. His administration took significant steps towards nuclear disarmament, including working with Russia to extend the New START treaty. This focus on reducing nuclear weapons aligned with the Nobel Peace Prize’s longstanding emphasis on peace and security."

**5. Conclusion**

* **Restate your opinion**: Summarize your opinion in a different way, emphasizing your position.
* **Summarize key arguments**: Briefly recap the main points discussed in the body paragraphs.
* **Final thought**: End with a concluding statement, which could be a suggestion, reflection, or broader statement about the topic.

Example:
"In conclusion, while the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Barack Obama may have been controversial due to the lack of immediate results, it was based on his vision for global diplomacy and his potential for long-term change. His efforts to reshape international relations and pursue disarmament made the award a forward-thinking recognition of his goals for peace."

This structure will help you present a well-organized, coherent opinion essay. Be sure to maintain a balanced argument and support your opinions with relevant facts or examples.

**BRITISH COUNCILTop of Form**

**Tips**

1. **Introduce your essay by restating the question in your own words.**
2. **If the essay asks you *to what extent do you agree,***make your opinion clear throughout. You can either agree, partially agree or disagree with the statement, explaining and justifying your opinion.
3. **The structure should be:**
	* Introduction
	* The first reason why you agree/disagree
	* The second reason why you agree/disagree
	* The third reason why you agree/disagree (if you have one)
	* Conclusion
4. **Use phrases to organise and link your ideas,** e.g. *Owing to …* , *One justification for …* , *The first thing to consider is …* , *A further reason …* , *In conclusion ...* .
5. **If you do not have solid evidence** **for your ideas**, use modal verbs such as *might*, *may* or *could* (e.g. *they could develop more empathy and care*) or other tentative phrases (e.g. *it does not appear to be an effective punishment*).
6. **Conclude by** restating your opinion and summarising your two or three main arguments.