

Lesson 2a

For and Against Essay

Should we eat meat?

WARM-UP: In-class discussion

- Do you eat meat? Why/Why not?
- Should we eat a little of everything or are there some foods we should not eat? Justify your opinion.
- Do you believe that animals have rights? If so, what are some of these rights?
- What purposes are animals used or abused for?



WRITING TASK

One of the areas where today's high standard of living manifests itself in the Western World is our diet. Many people nowadays can afford to eat meat every day. Opponents of eating meat, however, claim that there are numerous negative aspects to consuming it. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of eating meat.

You **must** use at least **two points** from the box below to develop and support your opinion, but you can also add your own ideas.

Benefits of eating meat	Drawbacks of eating meat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • healthy, source of protein and essential nutrients • filling, replaces more fattening foods • delicious, hard to give it up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unhealthy - causes cholesterol and heart disease • life expectancy of meat eaters is reduced • unethical, animals are killed or raised in terrible conditions

TASK ANALYSIS

1. What is the topic you will be discussing?

- The negative aspects of eating meat
- Consuming meat
- The high standard of modern life

2. What are you asked to do in your essay?

- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of eating meat
- Express your opinion on eating meat
- Make suggestions to stop eating meat

3. How many main-body paragraphs will you need?

- 1 - for the main pro and the main con
- 3 - one for the pros, one for the cons and one for my opinion
- 2 - one for the pros and one for the cons

4. In which part of the essay will you mention your opinion?

- In the introduction
- In the main body
- In the conclusion

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- ☒ b. Consuming meat
- c. The high standard of modern life

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4. In which part of the essay will you mention your opinion?

- a. In the introduction
- b. In the main body
- ☒ c. In the conclusion

MODEL ESSAY STUDY

A. Read the model essay and fill in the gaps with the words below. Then, find and underline the intention statement.

contributes obesity considered indulge outweighed valuable obtain balanced

In recent years, there has been a great deal of discussion concerning the ideal diet. Many advocate that we should eat a(n) (1) _____ diet, including protein from meat. Proponents of vegetarianism, however, argue that eating meat is not as beneficial as was initially believed. Although it provides several benefits, eating meat also has some drawbacks, which will be (2) _____ below.

It is a fact that human beings are omnivores, and thus it would seem to make sense that meat should be an integral part of our diet. There is no denying that meat offers protein, iron and other (3) _____ nutrients which a healthy constitution requires, and which are much harder to (4) _____ through a vegetarian diet. Moreover, meat is considered to be very filling. This being the case, when on a meat-free diet, one tends to (5) _____ in more fattening and less nutritious foods, such as high-calorie carbohydrates.

On the other hand, there are considerable disadvantages to eating meat. First of all, eating it in large quantities (6) _____ to high cholesterol levels. Consequently, wealthier societies are plagued with a variety of ailments, such as heart disease and (7) _____. The most convincing argument in favor of a meat-free diet, however, is ethical rather than health-related. In order to satisfy our appetite for meat, thousands of animals are raised in appalling conditions and slaughtered every year. Animals have rights too, and no creature deserves such a life.

All things considered, it seems that the drawbacks of eating meat (8) _____ its benefits. Although becoming strict vegetarians may be impossible for most of us, we should at least strive to cut down on the amount of meat we eat and place emphasis on healthier foods.

B. Study the model above and fill in the essay plan below.

INTRODUCTION

- Acknowledge the debate regarding whether we should eat meat nowadays and the fact that there are both advantages and disadvantages to it.

MAIN BODY

- 1st paragraph
 - Mention first advantage, that meat offers valuable nutrients.
Elaborate and/or give example.
 - Mention second advantage, that meat is very filling.
Elaborate and/or give example.
- 2nd paragraph
 - Mention first disadvantage, that eating meat causes cholesterol and heart disease.
Elaborate and/or give example.
 - Mention second disadvantage, that it is unethical to kill animals for their meat.
Elaborate and/or give example.

CONCLUSION

- Briefly mention your opinion while refuting the opposing view, and end with an appropriate comment/suggestion about eating meat in general.

TIP:

The reason you should try to stick to **two pros and two cons** in the main-body paragraphs is the **word limit**. It is difficult to explain and support three pros and three cons and stay within the limit of **250 words**.

MODEL ESSAY STUDY

A. Read the model essay and fill in the gaps with the words below. Then, find and underline the intention statement.

contributes obesity considered indulge outweighed valuable obtain balanced

In recent years, there has been a great deal of discussion concerning the ideal diet. Many advocate that we should eat a(n) (1) balanced diet, including protein from meat. Proponents of vegetarianism, however, argue that eating meat is not as beneficial as was initially believed. Although it provides several benefits, eating meat also has some drawbacks, which will be (2) considered below.

It is a fact that human beings are omnivores, and thus it would seem to make sense that meat should be an integral part of our diet. There is no denying that meat offers protein, iron and other (3) valuable nutrients which a healthy constitution requires, and which are much harder to (4) obtain through a vegetarian diet. Moreover, meat is considered to be very filling. This being the case, when on a meat-free diet, one tends to (5) indulge in more fattening and less nutritious foods, such as high-calorie carbohydrates.

On the other hand, there are considerable disadvantages to eating meat. First of all, eating it in large quantities (6) contributes to high cholesterol levels. Consequently, wealthier societies are plagued with a variety of ailments, such as heart disease and (7) obesity. The most convincing argument in favor of a meat-free diet, however, is ethical rather than health-related. In order to satisfy our appetite for meat, thousands of animals are raised in appalling conditions and slaughtered every year. Animals have rights too, and no creature deserves such a life.

All things considered, it seems that the drawbacks of eating meat (8) outweigh its benefits. Although becoming strict vegetarians may be impossible for most of us, we should at least strive to cut down on the amount of meat we eat and place emphasis on healthier foods.

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- 1st paragraph
 - Mention first advantage, that meat offers valuable nutrients.
 - Elaborate and/or give example.
 - Mention second advantage, that meat is very filling.
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 - Mention first disadvantage, that eating meat causes cholesterol and heart disease.
 - Elaborate and/or give example.
 - Mention second disadvantage, that it is unethical to kill animals for their meat.
 - Elaborate and/or give example.

CONCLUSION

- Briefly mention your opinion while refuting the opposing view, and end with an appropriate comment/suggestion about eating meat in general.

TIP:

The reason you should try to stick to **two pros and two cons** in the main-body paragraphs is the **word limit**. It is difficult to explain and support three pros and three cons and stay within the limit of **250 words**.

Introduction (thesis statement: *I am in favor of distance learning.*)

Main body para 1: *First of all, distance learning is convenient, since it allows you to complete your studies without leaving your home.*
para 2: *What is more, it provides you with the luxury of adjusting your study schedule to your needs.*
para 3: *Finally, it helps you save money during your studies, as you have no travel or accommodation expenses.*
OR para 3: *It must be conceded that you will not be able to use the college library and other campus facilities if you are not there in person. **

Conclusion (restate your opinion)

Here are some useful expressions to help you list similar points:

- First of all, ...
- To begin with, ...
- Secondly, ...
- What is more, ...
- Moreover, ...
- Furthermore, ...
- Finally, ...
- The main / greatest advantage/drawback of ... is ...
- Another / An additional advantage/drawback of ... is ...

TURNING POINTS INTO TOPIC SENTENCES - FOR & AGAINST ESSAY

In a for & against essay you are expected to write two main-body paragraphs, one for the pros and one for the cons. This means that you will need two topic sentences. They can be general, indicating that the pros or cons will follow, or you can start mentioning your pros / cons right away, writing a specific topic sentence.

Look at the following example for the topic of leaving home to go to college. Imagine it is phrased as a for & against essay: "Discuss the advantages and drawbacks of leaving home to go to college."

Introduction (intention statement: *both advantages and disadvantages will be examined below*)

Main body para 1: *Living on your own when you are a college student can be a very positive experience. (general)*
OR *One of the main advantages of going away to college is the sense of independence it offers. (specific)*
para 2: *On the other hand, leaving home to go to college has some drawbacks as well. (general)*
OR *On the negative side, going to college and changing your living environment at the same time can be overwhelming. (specific)*

Conclusion (opinion directly / indirectly or balanced consideration)

Here are some useful expressions to help you introduce disadvantages:

- On the other hand, there are considerable disadvantages to ...
- Despite its benefits, ... also has several limitations / drawbacks.
- Despite these advantages, ... exhibits some limitations / drawbacks as well.
- On the negative side, ...
- ..., however, has its disadvantages.

EXERCISE: Look again at the topic on distance learning on the previous page. If the question reads "Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning", can you write an essay plan with appropriate topic sentences? Try to think of both general and specific topic sentences. Remember to use appropriate linking words.

Introduction (intention statement: *both advantages and disadvantages will be examined below*)

Main body para 1: *Distance learning can be the right study choice for many reasons.*
OR *One of the main advantages of studying over the Internet is the flexibility it allows for.*
para 2: *Distance learning, however, has its disadvantages.*
OR *On the negative side, the college degree one obtains through distance learning may lack academic validity. **

Conclusion (opinion directly / indirectly or balanced consideration)

Introduction to ESSAY Writing

ESSAY PLANS

An argumentative essay is typically either an opinion essay or a for & against essay. Here are the main essay plans you will need for each type.

Opinion essay

Introduction

Main body para 1: first reason supporting your opinion
para 2: second reason supporting your opinion
para 3: third reason supporting your opinion
OR
para 3: opposing view and refutation

Conclusion

For & against essay

Introduction

Main body para 1: advantages
para 2: disadvantages

Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

Your introduction is the first thing someone reads in your essay. It should do the following things:

- tell the readers what the topic you are writing about is
- tell the readers how you understand the topic

In order to do this, it is practical to divide your introduction into two parts:

- a) rephrasing the topic / acknowledging a situation
- b) your thesis statement OR intention statement

Introduction for opinion essays

- Rephrasing the topic
- Thesis statement

Introduction for for & against essays

- Rephrasing the topic
- Intention statement

You are expected to start your introduction with a **general comment** that lets your readers know what the topic is. **Rephrasing** the topic is a good way of doing this; that is, expressing the topic differently, using synonyms. You must be careful not to copy expressions from the rubric of your essay topic, but use your own words instead.

Your **thesis statement** is the sentence that gives the readers your opinion on the topic. It does not rephrase the topic, and it does not include explanations and examples. It is usually the last sentence of the introduction in an opinion essay.

An **intention statement** is usually used instead of a thesis statement in for and against essays. Since you have to be objective, an intention statement merely informs the reader of the fact that you will be discussing the pros and cons of the topic.

EXERCISE: Read the following introductions and identify the rephrasing of the topic, the thesis statements and the intention statements. Are they opinion essays or for and against? What is the topic of each essay?

1 Many students look forward to moving to a different city when they start university. Others prefer the safety and comfort of studying in their hometown and living in their parents' house. Studying away from home has both benefits and drawbacks, both of which will be examined below.

Topic: *Studying away from home*
Type: *For & Against essay*

2 Continuing education is a new reality in the contemporary workplace. As employers prefer staff who are familiar with the latest developments in their field, they offer regular training opportunities. Given the competitiveness of the job market today, continuous education is a beneficial process for the employee for many reasons.

Topic: *Continuing education*
Type: *Opinion essay*

3 Recent incidents in schools all over the world of children being murdered by their classmates have led to claims by educators and psychologists that the constant exposure of children to TV violence is responsible for these crimes. It seems to me that this generalization ignores the potential of television to educate and influence children in a positive manner.

Topic: *TV responsible for child violence*
Type: *Opinion essay*

Here are some useful expressions to help you start your introduction by rephrasing your topic:

- Nowadays, we are all becoming aware of (the fact that) ...
- In recent years the number of ... is on the increase.
- Recently, there is a tendency towards (+ing) ...
- ... has recently been a matter of debate between ... and ...
- Recently, there has been a great deal of controversy about ...
- It is a well-known fact that ...
- More and more (people / educators) today ...
- The trend of ... is gaining (in) popularity in recent years.

EXERCISE: Using expressions for rephrasing, start a new introduction for each of the topics on the previous page.

1. Recently, there is a tendency among university students towards studying away from home.

2. More and more employers today provide continuing education opportunities for their employees.

3. Nowadays, we are all becoming aware of the negative influence TV violence has on children.

THESIS STATEMENT

In an opinion essay, your thesis statement is your opinion on the essay topic. It is the last sentence of your introduction, after your rephrasing of the topic. It answers the question the topic poses but it does not contain lengthy explanations or examples. The general rule is that it cannot be too general or too specific.

EXERCISE: Look at the following sentences from an essay about wearing school uniforms. Which is the thesis statement and what makes you think so?

1. Wearing a school uniform emphasizes the child's capacity as a student and can have many positive effects.

2. Although wearing a school uniform is a reality in many schools today, most students object to it.

3. Wearing a school uniform can have many positive effects, such as promoting a sense of solidarity among students of the same school.

Number 1 is the thesis statement because it contains the writer's opinion without giving facts or examples.

It isn't necessary for a thesis statement to start with an expression conveying personal opinion. There are, however, several expressions you can use to express your opinion. Look at the following:

- To my mind, ...
- In my opinion / view, ...
- I am (not) convinced that / of ...
- It seems / appears (to me) that ...
- I am inclined to believe that ...
- As far as I am concerned, ...

INTENTION STATEMENT

In a for & against essay you cannot express your opinion until you reach the conclusion. Although writing a thesis statement is possible, it is a good idea to replace it with an intention statement after rephrasing the essay topic. An intention statement tells the readers what they will read in the main body of your essay.

EXERCISE: Look at the following sentences from an essay about the pros and cons of texting. Which is the intention statement and what makes you think so?

1. Using text messages to keep in touch with one's friends has many advantages compared to other ways of communication.

2. Most young people today consider texting an easy and affordable way of communicating with their peers.

3. Communicating via text messages has both advantages and drawbacks, both of which will be examined below.

Number 3 is the intention statement because it informs the readers about what will follow in the essay.

Here are some expressions you can use to express intention in your introduction:

- ... has both advantages and disadvantages, both of which will be examined below.
- ... provides several benefits, but it also has some drawbacks, many of which will be considered below.
- ... has both benefits and drawbacks, both of which will be considered below.
- ... has both benefits and drawbacks which should be taken into consideration / should not be ignored.

REFUTING THE OPPOSING VIEW

One of the alternatives to giving three separate reasons to support your views in an opinion essay is to use the third main-body paragraph to present and refute the opposing view. This way your essay will be more complete and well-rounded.

When should you present and refute the opposing view?

- when you feel confident you can do it
- when you only understand two of the points provided to support your opinion
- when you feel both sides of the essay question are equally strong and the opposing view should be mentioned (you know this is the case when you can't decide which opinion you should support to begin with)

When should you **not** present and refute the opposing view?

- when you are unsure about how to do it
- when you feel the opposing view is weak and not worth mentioning
- when you feel confident that presenting three paragraphs with reasons for your opinion is enough

These are some of the most common expressions used to introduce an opposing view:

- It must be admitted, however, that ...
- Opponents of ... argue / claim that ...
- It must be noted, however, that ...
- There are those who argue that ...
- It must be conceded that ...

And these are some expressions used to refute an opposing view:

- This can be easily averted / rectified, however, by ...
- Although this is possible / true for some people / to some extent ...
- In some rare cases ... / Fortunately, (these cases are rare)
- ... but it is worth mentioning that ...

Refutation techniques

The general idea when refuting an opposing opinion is to show that it is not valid by:

- a) mentioning that it only happens to some extent and it is not the rule
- b) showing it is already happening, so it won't make much difference
- c) claiming that the benefits outweigh the disadvantages
- d) admitting that, to some extent, the opposing argument might be beneficial but too much of it is harmful
- e) proposing a solution
- f) claiming that it is only temporary

This list is not exhaustive, only indicative of the most common refutation types encountered. Remember that you can refute an argument any other way you wish, as long as you have valid reasoning.

EXERCISE: Read the following opposing arguments and refutations and identify which of the refutation techniques above has been used in each.

1

Opponents of the Internet claim that it is not safe, as there is the risk of credit card fraud. Although this is possible, this risk can be averted by using secure pages for your transactions.

(e)

2

On the other hand, it must be admitted that most children often need a gentle push from their parents in order to do their best. There is, however, a huge difference between guidance, which builds self-esteem, and pressure, which destroys it.

(d)

3

Admittedly, the presence of different ethnic groups in the classroom may delay the teaching pace, but this would only be a problem until foreign students learn the language. In fact, there are special entry-level language classes in most schools.

(f)

4

Opponents of the Internet argue that people may become addicted to surfing the net and have no social life. Fortunately, these cases are very rare, as the majority of Internet users use it for work and recreation and not as a substitute for their social life.

(a)

CONCLUSION

In the conclusion of your essay you are expected to summarize your views and end with an appropriate comment. Given the word limit, your conclusion should be brief and to the point. 1-2 sentences are usually enough, as long as they fulfill their function. Make sure you read your introduction again before you write your conclusion, so as to avoid repetition. Different types of essays require different conclusions. Look at the tables below.

Conclusion for opinion essays

- Summarize your views
- Restate your opinion
- End with a comment / warning / condition / wish / rhetorical question

Conclusion for for & against essays

- Summarize your arguments
- State your opinion directly or indirectly OR give a balanced judgement
- End with a comment / warning / condition / hope / rhetorical question

EXERCISE: Read the conclusions below and identify each part as described above.

1

All in all, I believe that alternative medicine has a lot of potential, and although it cannot substitute conventional medicine, it certainly deserves a prominent place in our health system. After all, why not try a natural non-invasive solution first, before turning to potentially harmful drugs and procedures?

summary / restating opinion + rhetorical question

2

In conclusion, I feel that alternative medicine is a viable alternative to the potentially damaging procedures of conventional medicine. Let us hope that the government will allocate more funds to proper research that will help promote alternative medicine practices.

restating opinion + wish

Below are some expressions to start your conclusion. You can express your opinion directly or indirectly or give a balanced judgement.

- All in all, ...
- On balance, ...
- All things considered, ...

- To sum up, ...
- In conclusion, / To conclude, ...
- Taking everything into account / consideration, ...

Expressing opinion directly

- I feel / believe / think that ...
- I am inclined to believe that ...
- I (do not) agree that / with ...
- I am (not) convinced that ...
- It is my opinion / belief that ...

Opinion indirectly / Balanced judgement

- It seems / appears that ...
- It may be concluded that ...
- It is clear / obvious that ...
- ... has many benefits but its limitations should be taken into account (before/if) ...
- Although it cannot be denied that one should also bear in mind that ...

EXERCISE: Read the conclusions below and decide whether they express a balanced consideration or the writer's opinion directly/indirectly.

1

balanced consideration

To conclude, although it must be said that a sense of responsibility is one of the most important qualities which can be instilled in young people, it should not be forgotten that there are other, equally important qualities.

2

opinion indirectly

To sum up, it would seem that, once young people know how to take responsibility for their actions, they are better equipped to learn about life. While there are other important qualities, a high sense of responsibility provides the ideal foundation for personal development.

3

opinion directly

Taking everything into account, I firmly believe that if people are taught a keen sense of responsibility towards themselves and others, they will have the best possible start in life. The way I see it, taking full responsibility for one's own actions is central to leading an honest life.

4

opinion indirectly

On balance, it seems that a sense of responsibility has a role to play in a young person's development. Nevertheless, when placed alongside other qualities, such as honesty and integrity, it is by no means the most useful.

TURNING POINTS INTO TOPIC SENTENCES - OPINION ESSAY

Looking at the essay plan for an opinion essay, you will see that you are expected to write three main-body paragraphs providing reasons to support your opinion, or two plus a third one to present and refute an opposing view. Each main-body paragraph starts with a topic sentence, that is, a sentence which summarizes what the paragraph is about. The topic sentence presents the point you want to make and it is followed by supporting sentences, which explain and illustrate your point.

This is what a typical main-body paragraph should look

- like:
1. Topic sentence
 2. Supporting sentences
 - a. explanation and / or
 - b. example / result

EXERCISE: In the following paragraph, underline the topic sentence in red and the supporting sentences in blue:

To begin with, living on your own allows for a greater sense of freedom. You can come and go as you please without disturbing your parents or having to explain yourself for things such as staying out late or having a friend over.

Where do you get the ideas for your topic sentences?

You get them from the points provided with your essay topic. All you have to do is decide whether you are in favor of or against the issue to be discussed, and choose the ideas you can support best.

Remember not to copy the exact phrasing of the points. Look at the topic below and the points given.

ESSAY TOPIC

More and more young people choose to go to a college far away from their parents' home. Although this provides greater independence, they lose many of the comforts they would have if they went to a college closer to home and stayed with their parents. What is your opinion on leaving home to go to college?

In favor of leaving home to go to college

- you are more independent
- you become more responsible
- you learn to take care of yourself and your house

Against leaving home to go to college

- college is a big enough change without leaving home as well
- you miss the support of your parents and friends
- you have to do the housework as well as study hard

Suppose you decide to write an essay in favor of leaving home for college. You can turn all three in favor points into topic sentences or use two and add an against point as an opposing view for the third paragraph. This is what your essay will look like:

Introduction

(thesis statement: *I am in favor of leaving home to go to college.*)

Main body

- para 1: *To begin with, studying away from home helps young people become more independent.*
para 2: *Secondly, the experience of going away to college makes one more responsible as a person.*
para 3: *Finally, when you live away from your parents' home, you learn to take care of yourself.*

OR

- para 3: *It must be admitted, however, that by leaving home to go to college, you will miss your support network of family and friends.*

Conclusion

(restate your opinion)

EXERCISE: Look at the topic below on distance learning. Following the process discussed above, can you write an essay plan with your own topic sentences? Remember to decide if you are in favor of distance learning or against it first. Look at the next page for appropriate linking words you can use.

ESSAY TOPIC

Many people nowadays turn to distance learning in order to obtain a college degree. Although convenient, these courses have received criticism for their quality and academic standards. What is your opinion of distance learning in education?

In favor of distance learning

- it is convenient - you can study from home
- it is flexible - you can make your own schedule
- it is economical - no travel or renting costs

Against distance learning

- degrees are not equal to regular college degrees
- it is difficult to have access to libraries and other resources
- no personal relationship with other students or professors

SUPPORTING TOPIC SENTENCES

As already mentioned, a typical main-body paragraph for an opinion essay looks like model A. Remember that each point is developed in a separate paragraph. Note that the supporting sentences needn't contain both explanations and examples / results; their structure may vary according to your reasoning.

MODEL A

1. Topic sentence
2. Supporting sentences
 - a. explanation and / or
 - b. example / result

A typical main-body paragraph for a for & against essay, since it contains all pros in one paragraph and all cons in the second, looks like model B or C. B starts with a general topic sentence, whereas C starts with a specific one. After that, each new point, pro or con, has its own supporting sentences.

MODEL B

1. General topic sentence

- 1st Point + Supporting sentences
(a. explanation, b. example / result)
- 2nd Point + Supporting sentences
(a. explanation, b. example / result)
- 3rd Point + Supporting sentences (if word limit allows)
(a. explanation, b. example / result)

MODEL C

- 1st Point: **Specific** topic sentence + Supporting sentences
(a. explanation, b. example / result)
- 2nd Point + Supporting sentences
(a. explanation, b. example / result)
- 3rd Point + Supporting sentences (if word limit allows)
(a. explanation, b. example / result)

EXERCISE: Look at the paragraphs below. Which one is from an opinion essay and which from a for & against essay? Can you identify the specific paragraph parts in each?

1

The main reason why women start working is in order to become financially independent. Clearly, being able to support yourself and your family is of paramount importance in order to enjoy any quality of life. What is more, having a job can be very fulfilling, in that it offers one a sense of achievement.

*for & against: 1st advantage, explanation,
2nd advantage with explanation*

2

First of all, the resources used by developing countries are entirely renewable. This means that people can reuse them without causing irreparable damage to the environment. For example, trees, which have been cut down, will eventually grow back, if deforestation is carried out properly.

*opinion essay: 1st point,
explanation, example*

EXERCISE: Match the following topic sentences with the supporting sentences.

1
(a)

On the other hand, cooking at home can be very time-consuming.

2
(c)

First of all, cooking at home is more economical than eating out.

3
(b)

Finally, when you prepare your own meals you can cook according to your taste and preferences.

a

It is a fact that preparing a meal may take a considerable amount of time, not to mention the time you need to plan your menu and do your shopping.

b

In other words, you can cater for your specific dietary needs. For example, you might be a vegetarian or you might decide to fast. In such cases, you have the flexibility to cook foods that suit your needs.

c

If you compare the cost of buying produce to the cost of eating out, it becomes clear that preparing your own meals helps save a lot of money, especially if you are on a tight budget.

COMMON GRAMMAR MISTAKES

Many students confuse the following words and structures. Have a look and see if you can complete the examples.

• BOTH

When two things or people have something in common, we can use **both** to refer to them. **Both** requires a plural verb form.

example: Alison lives in New York. Susan lives in New York.
 Both Alison and Susan live in New York.
OR Alison and Susan both **live** in New York.

• AS ... AS

When we compare two things that are the same in a way, we can use **as ... as**.

example: Some argue that freelancing can be **as profitable as** having a regular job. (profitable)

• THE + comparative ... THE + comparative

When two things have a direct cause and effect relationship, we can use **the + comparative ... the + comparative**.

example: The more science advances, **the more** diseases are eradicated. (much)
 The faster you drive, **the sooner** you will reach your destination. (fast, soon)

• LIKewise / SIMILARly

When two sentences or paragraphs refer to similar things, we can use **likewise** and **similarly** to introduce the second one. They are followed by a comma.

example: Watching too much TV is harmful. **Similarly / Likewise**, playing video games for hours can have a negative effect.

• IN SPITE OF / DESPITE

When we want to show contrast, we can use **in spite of + noun phrase** or **despite + noun phrase**. Note their position in a sentence.

example: **Despite / In spite of** the high crime rate, many people prefer living in big cities.
Many people prefer living in big cities **in spite of / despite** the high crime rate.

• INVERSION

Inversion is an excellent way to show your writing skills, as long as you don't overdo it. The most common phrases used with inversion are:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| • Under no circumstances | • Little | • Hardly ever |
| • On no account | • Not until ... | • In very few cases |
| • No sooner ... than | • Never | • Only when / if |

example: Rarely **do** people nowadays use bicycles.
 Not until they have been tested can new drugs be released for sale.