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Analysis of questions means breaking down the question to look at the different words in the question and what they mean. Some of these words are important keywords, which mean that if you do not understand these words well, you cannot write a relevant composition. In other words, you may go out of point.

As you read the compositions in this book, study how the analysis of the question is done first (in the box) before reading.

Structure of the composition

Structure means the way the ideas are organised in a composition.

You must write an **introductory paragraph** first. In an introduction, you start off by signaling to the reader as to what you understand by the different keywords in the question as well as the focus of the question. An introduction is very important for setting the direction you want to take for the composition.

After the short introduction of three to four lines, you write three or four more paragraphs. These paragraphs are called **body paragraphs**. It is like the body of a person. The introduction is like the head of a person. **In each body paragraph, you include a different idea and develop or explain that idea clearly.**

At the end, you write a **conclusion** which is the final paragraph. Here, you **sum up everything** you have written so far. You can do a quick summary of your main points you covered earlier in the body paragraphs. The conclusion should be short- just two to three lines would be sufficient.

Some basic information and tips on the three types of compositions that are covered in this book

➤ The expository type question

This type of composition usually requires students to explain reasons for something or to explain how something happens. 'What', 'how', 'why' and 'discuss' are some of the common question words that appear in such questions. For such questions, students generally have to list the different reasons or factors or steps involved. Some examples of these questions are provided below.

various crimes that warrant different types of punishment. These punishments, minor or major, serve different purposes. Some are more effective than others too. In my opinion, punishments are necessary especially if they help to deter people from committing wrong.

The student starts off by discussing the difference between rewards and punishments, especially since young. The student also considers 'minor' and 'major' punishments though these could have been explained clearly. The student ends the introduction by stating his stand that punishments are necessary. This stand helps to set the direction for this composition.

Firstly, punishments serve the purpose of teaching someone. If a child is caught by his or her parents for lying or doing something wrong, a severe scolding or even a caning would follow. This minor punishment aims to teach the child that he or she should not repeat this mistake. However, if the child is not punished and continues this wrong behaviour, he or she may grow up into a criminal who may cheat people or steal from them. Such crimes would attract more severe punishment. The person could be jailed or even caned by prison authorities and this could create a black mark in his life.

This is the topic sentence or the main idea.

The point is developed with some examples.

Secondly, a major punishment like the death penalty is needed to prevent people from committing serious crimes. For example, most drug dealers who are caught in Singapore will be hanged. It may seem very harsh to take someone's life but this punishment may be necessary as drugs destroy peoples' lives, especially the lives of young people. If such serious crimes are taken lightly, more people may commit them. It is therefore important to stem such crimes.

This is the topic sentence.

A specific example is provided here to support the main point clearly.

Some people may argue that punishments are not effective in changing a person. They point out that some criminals continue committing crimes after they are released from jail. Yet, others may argue that criminals should

The student provides a counter argument here. This means that the student tries to provide a perspective that others may have.

Factories that dispose industrial waste indiscriminately contribute to air and water pollution and they do not seem to care about protecting the environment. For example, many factories in China spew large amounts of pollutants into the air and water. The fumes choke people and worsen the health conditions of the ill, the elderly and children. The waste that is disposed into the rivers and seas affect the marine life too. It is therefore clear that the companies that own these factories do not put in enough effort to protect the environment.

This topic sentence focuses on how factories are not doing enough to conserve the environment.

An example is provided and explained to support the point made in the topic sentence.



Moreover, governments do not seem to be playing their part to protect the environment too. Despite warnings of rising temperatures, global warming is getting worse day by day. The problem of massive burning of forests in some countries like Indonesia cannot be stopped by the government even though they

This topic sentence focuses on governments' lack of effort. Note the use of the connector 'Moreover'. Such connecting words make the composition more cohesive.

4. Social media brings more disadvantages than advantages to teenagers. What do you think?

Let's
Analyse this question



- ▶ 'Social media' refers to platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs and online chat programmes.
- ▶ 'Disadvantages' refer to the negative effects of social media while 'advantages' refer to the positive aspects or benefits.
- ▶ 'Teenagers' is the group that should be focused in this essay. Students must ensure that their points and examples relate to teenagers only.
- ▶ **To score well for this question, students should consider different types of social media and do a good analysis of the effects these platforms have on teenagers.**

It is a common sight to see many teenagers these days glued to their smartphones. Teenagers have stopped talking to one another—they either chat online or message each other. Some only “talk” to their phones. Going on Facebook to post and check the number of likes they have, having a twitter account, posting pictures on Instagram and even blogging about different issues are some of the activities teenagers are involved in on social media. While it is true that social media allows us to be connected to many more people, such connections are superficial and social media addiction is becoming a huge problem. I believe that social media is more harmful than beneficial.

This introduction reveals the student's knowledge of the topic of social media. The student ends the introduction by taking a clear stand that social media is more harmful.

Firstly, social media does not allow one to have deep connections with others. It encourages superficial contact only. How

This is the first topic sentence. Note the use of the connector 'Firstly'.