



SAMPLE COMPOSITIONS

American Download C1/C2 Workbook

1 All Change (page 11)

Many people would agree that young people today need to do more exercise and become physically fitter. The question is whether the best way forward is for schools to invest time and money in after-school sports clubs and exercise classes or for the government to offer incentives to schools that make good progress in this area.

I believe that the government should introduce some kind of incentive plan to reward schools that can prove that they are improving their sports and fitness programs. For example, schools that have more sports lessons and regular fitness and weight checks could be rewarded with brand-new sports equipment such as exercise bicycles, a treadmill, or sports clothing for students. It could be argued however, that by rewarding only the schools that make progress in this area that other schools and students will not benefit.

On the other hand, if schools ask students to stay after school to attend sports clubs and exercise classes, this would benefit students everywhere. After-school sports clubs could offer a greater variety of sports that would interest more students and encourage those who don't do much sport to become more physically active. In contrast, some people might argue that students already have a heavy schedule and that they need that extra time to study and do homework.

Taking all these points into consideration, I would argue that offering incentives to schools would be the most effective way to get students to do more sports and exercise.

2 Technological Times (page 18)

Dear Sir or Madam,

I have just read an article in your magazine about the ways in which modern technology is making us less mentally and physically able. I would like to tell your readers about a personal experience that relates to this.

A few months ago our physics teacher asked us to create a presentation about renewable energy. I spent weeks preparing notes and graphs and carefully organizing photographs. I decided to use PowerPoint to make my presentation, and it took me a while to learn how to use the software program. Finally, I was able to handle everything. I needed a laptop as well as a projector so that the whole class could see my work.

On the day of the presentation, I set up my equipment and began to talk. Suddenly, the screen went blank. I tried to restart the computer, but the hard disk had failed, and all my work was lost! My teacher was very understanding and gave me a week to redo things. When the day came to give my presentation, I didn't use a laptop or a projector; I made notes and used these to give my presentation. I was able to talk much more naturally and to explain my ideas without the use of technological gadgets, and I got the best mark in the class.

After this experience, I believe that I will not be so dependent on technology in the future. We need to rely on our own abilities and skills, instead of continually allowing computers to replace our minds and emotions, and we should be aware of the risks that technology brings with it.

Sincerely yours,

(Student's name)



SAMPLE COMPOSITIONS

3 Influential People (page 27)

There is no doubt that actors and actresses need to be talented in order to find fame and fortune. However, is it possible that there is also an element of sheer good luck in any successful movie career?

At first sight, talent seems to be the most important quality for an actor or actress to have. Actors need to have a range of performance skills if they wish to succeed in their chosen profession. As well as the ability to act, they may be required, for instance, to sing or to dance for a role in a musical production, and it is important that they hone these skills.

In addition, actors should be willing to work long hours because rehearsals and filming can go on until very late at night. Being extremely talent is not enough; actors need to be able to deal with the pressure of long and irregular working hours.

Lastly, in any successful movie career there tends to be an element of luck. Sometimes all the talent and hard work in the world are not as important as “being in the right place at the right time.”

On balance, it would seem that a combination of qualities is required in order to succeed in the competitive world of movie-making.

4 Ways of Working (page 35)

Introduction

This report aims to evaluate the success of the work-from-home plan introduced in our downtown office and to recommend additional ways of improving staff job satisfaction.

Productivity

Six months ago the company agreed to allow employees in our downtown office to work from home. A schedule was devised whereby each member of staff could work from home for two days per week if they wished. Schedules were organized so that different days were allocated to different staff members. On average, staff recorded saving 75 minutes a day that would normally have been spent traveling to work by car, bus, or train. As a result, productivity levels increased by 15% over the six-month period.

Staff Schedules

Before the introduction of the new plan, staff often took full days off work to attend to personal or health issues. Under the new plan, employees are able to arrange their working hours around family commitments and medical appointments. As a result, they are able to produce more rather than less work. They are consistently more focused and more self-motivated during their new working hours. In a recent survey, 85% of staff said they felt happier and produced more work since they have been able to combine working in the office and working from home.

Conclusion

The work-from-home plan has successfully increased productivity as well as improved staff well-being and job satisfaction. I recommend that we investigate the possibility of extending the scheme to the workforce in our other offices so that they can enjoy the same benefits.



SAMPLE COMPOSITIONS

5 Memories (page 45)

Tom's Midnight Garden

If you're looking for a book which combines magic, mystery, and beautiful writing, then you can't beat *Tom's Midnight Garden* by Philippa Pearce. This was my favorite bedtime story as a child, but I have since reread the book, and it is just as good as I remember it.

When his brother catches an infectious disease, thirteen-year-old Tom goes to stay with his aunt and uncle. They live in a tiny apartment at the top of an old house that belongs to an old lady. One night Tom is amazed to hear an old clock strike thirteen. Following the sound of the clock, Tom goes through a magical door and finds himself in a beautiful garden. He discovers that he has gone back in time to the Victorian era. There he meets a girl called Hatty and they become playmates.

Tom visits the garden, and he and Hatty play together throughout the summer. However, something strange is happening. Although time seems to be passing normally for Tom, Hatty is growing up fast and by the end of the summer, she is a young woman. Finally, the magical door disappears, and Tom can't get back into the garden to say goodbye to Hatty. Sad that he must go home, Tom goes to say goodbye to the old lady who owns the house. He discovers that the old lady is actually ... Hatty!

I would recommend this beautifully-written story to both children and adults. Children will be enchanted by the magical fantasy world, and adults will appreciate the excellent writing.

6 Is that for real? (page 53)

Can we believe what we read?

Do newspaper and magazine stories always tell the truth? Or do journalists sometimes manipulate the facts in order to mislead their readers and create a false impression? In my view, journalists are often far from honest and, as readers, we need to bear that in mind when reading news stories.

A good example of this is a recent article about immigrants and crime that appeared in a local newspaper. The article focuses on areas of the city where crime rates have risen. The journalist gives statistics about the increase in the number of thefts and muggings in the area. In the same article, he describes the opening of a camp for 200 refugees from war-torn Syria. He implies that the refugees are responsible for the recent increase in crime. His conclusion is deliberately misleading.

According to police statistics, 14 robberies have been committed in our city in the last six months. Of these, only one was committed by a recently-arrived immigrant. Police have arrested six young men, who were born and brought up in our city and who were responsible for the other thefts. As for the muggings, police have discovered that a gang of youths from a neighboring town committed almost all of them. So the journalist has used two separate events to give a false impression about immigrants.

To sum up, journalists often manipulate the truth or present facts in a way which doesn't always reflect the real situation. We must be aware of this, and use our judgment when reading news stories.



SAMPLE COMPOSITIONS

7 Lifestyle (page 63)

There is no doubt that today's teenagers are under a lot of pressure and suffer from far more stress than their parents' generation did. Today's young people have to find a way to balance their school work, social life, and after-school clubs and activities while preserving their own mental well-being.

Teachers claim that young people are far too dependent on their electronic gadgets, such as smartphones, and the apps they can't seem to do without. While they don't deny that teenagers suffer from stress, they attribute it to social media. Furthermore, they believe that if youngsters spent time interacting with real-life friends instead of virtual ones, then they would be happier and less anxious.

Teenagers would argue that the situation is far more complicated. Their parents are often guilty of putting pressure on them to succeed, and many teenagers today are worried about their future in this uncertain world. Speaking from experience, it seems that while qualities such as kindness and decency are supposed to be valued highly in our society, in reality it is academic and economic success that counts.

As far as I'm concerned, adults should trust young people to make decisions that are right for their lives. Parents and teachers may complain that teenagers spend too much time on social media, but maybe this is a way for young people to relax and get away from the stress of their everyday lives. In my opinion, everyone should try and achieve a balance of work, friendships, and family and only in this way will they feel happy and valued.

8 Making a Difference (page 71)

Dear Mrs. Davies,

I am writing to express my appreciation for all the work that you and your staff did to make the sponsored Fun Run such a success. Thanks to everyone involved, we raised a fantastic sum of \$7,500 for Animal Aware.

The Fun Run was the most popular event of the day, and those who participated told us how much they had enjoyed taking part. Everyone agreed that it was an opportunity for local people to train for a serious fitness challenge, and that it brought them a lot of enjoyment, too. Thanks to your taking steps to close the town center to traffic, we were able to organize an interesting and challenging route through the town, which also allowed spectators to see the action.

The fair we organized after the Fun Run was perhaps not quite as successful. Not many runners, or indeed visitors, seemed to know that the fair was taking place, and many people simply went home after watching the runners cross the finish line. Although the fair was advertised on the town's website, few people were aware of it. Would it be possible to distribute leaflets to the visitors at the finish line next year? I am sure you will agree that this would attract more people, and of course, raise more money.

Thank you once again for all your help and support. I look forward to working with you again when we organize next year's charity concert to raise money for Animal Aware.

Respectfully,

(Student's name)



SAMPLE COMPOSITIONS

9 You are what you eat! (page 81)

For many young people the consumption of carbonated soft drinks and fattening snacks is completely normal and in many cases, they are a regular part of young people's diets.

The main reason for the popularity of such drinks and snacks is their high sugar content. Would you ever put eight spoons of sugar into your tea or coffee? Probably not! But that's how much sugar there is in a can of cola. Doctors now believe that sugar is more addictive than even alcohol or cigarettes. Furthermore, many carbonated drinks also contain additives like artificial flavoring and coloring. However, it is the sugar that makes us eat and drink more and more of these unhealthy products.

Most people probably know that sugary products are bad for them, but are they aware of just how bad? Too much sugar is responsible for obesity, diabetes, tooth decay, skin damage, and even mental disorders such as depression. In addition, chemicals in them can also cause heart and liver damage.

All things considered, I believe that the government's plan to increase the price of sugar-added products is a very good idea. If the drinks and snacks are more expensive, it may discourage some people from consuming so many of them. Nonetheless, any raise in price should be accompanied by an educational campaign warning people of the dangers of carbonated drinks and other products with a high sugar content.

10 Going Green (page 89)

Proposal for Improving Trash Collection in Our Town

Introduction

The aim of this proposal is to outline ways in which the council can improve our town's trash collection service, which has become infrequent and inadequate in recent months.

Current Situation

Up until last year, the town council collected garbage three times a week, but for some time now, bins are only emptied once a week. This means that we often see discarded trash overflowing onto the street, which is unpleasant. More importantly, the overflowing bins are a health hazard, and tourists are discouraged from visiting because of the mess.

More Staff

In the past, the council employed thirty people to provide trash pick-up and street-cleaning services. Six months ago, in an attempt to save money, fifteen workers were laid off. Consequently, the council no longer has enough staff. New staff should be employed to provide more frequent service.

Recycling

The council's recycling program is extremely limited and hundreds of tons of recyclable material are simply being thrown into landfills each year. This could be reduced dramatically if the council implemented a more efficient recycling program. Such a program would also mean that the council would not have to pick up trash so often as recyclables would not be put in normal trash bins.

Recommendations

It is vital that these proposals are put into action as soon as possible in order to safeguard residents' health and to bring tourists back to the town. I recommend that the town council acts immediately to halt the damage to our health and our environment.



SAMPLE COMPOSITIONS

11 The Arts (page 99)

There is no doubt in my mind that music should be part of secondary school education. Every school should adopt a music program in order to encourage and inspire students' creativity and personal development. However, can schools actually be persuaded to introduce and support music education?

The main advantage of introducing music into the school curriculum is that it brings students together in a way that is very different from a formal learning situation. As well as learning the skills and techniques required to play or sing well, students interact on a level that encourages both creative self-expression and teamwork. Nonetheless, some people argue that time spent learning and playing music is time not spent acquiring the basic literacy and numeracy skills necessary for students' future careers. However, this is a criticism that simply does not hold up. The skills learned through music education can also be applied to other areas of life, and employers often view musical training in a very positive light.

Another advantage is that playing a musical instrument or singing can have emotional as well as intellectual benefits. Students who play music often report that they feel more relaxed and less worried about exams, written and oral reports, and schoolwork in general. This advantage helps students do their best in all school subjects.

On balance, it seems that the advantages of introducing a music program far outweigh any possible disadvantages. Music education helps students develop into well-rounded individuals with a range of skills and with a more confident approach to their studies and to life in general.

12 The "In" Thing (page 106)

Hi, Emily!

It was great to hear your news. Congratulations on your promotion! I'm sure you'll be great in your new job.

Thanks for the compliment! I'll try and give you some good advice. If I were you, I'd definitely consider buying one or two quality designer pieces, rather than going for lots of cheaper items. A classic little black dress can be accessorized so that it takes you from a morning meeting through a business lunch and on to an informal evening meal. Add a formal jacket, an unusual scarf or a colorful necklace to change your look throughout the day.

Don't forget that you're probably going to be on your feet for a long time each day, so comfortable footwear is essential. You will probably want to wear heels on some days, but you can also find stylish flats that look great, but that are also comfortable for those long days.

Finally, good grooming is as important as the clothes you wear. Make sure your hair is always clean and well cut, and that your nails are clean and nicely manicured: for example, it's best to avoid bright colors and any ostentatious (bejeweled) nail accessories! Keep your nails short and natural-colored. Keep your make-up natural and fresh.

I can't wait to hear more about your new job and to find out if my advice has helped. If you want, we could go shopping together. I'm free this weekend, and I'd be happy to help you pick out a few basic but beautiful outfits and fashionable accessories.

Bye for now,

Kate