



Food and Eating Habits

Essay: healthy food choices at school

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you write.

1. What makes a school lunch healthy?
2. Should schools limit unhealthy snacks?
3. How can schools encourage better eating habits?

Exercise 6 at a glance

Write an essay, often for a teacher.
Present an argument or point of view.
Support ideas with reasons and examples.
Use a formal or neutral register.

2. Exam-style task

Your class has recently discussed whether schools should do more to encourage students to eat healthy food. Your teacher has asked you to write an essay giving your opinion about this topic.

In your essay, you should discuss both sides of the argument and give your own view.

Here are some comments from students to help you:

'Healthy lunches help students concentrate.'
'There are too many sugary snacks at school.'

'Students should be free to choose what they eat.'
'Healthier food is sometimes more expensive.'

Now write an essay for your teacher.

The comments may give you some ideas, and you should also use some ideas of your own.

Write about 120 to 160 words.

3. Model essay

Food choices at school can affect students' health, energy and concentration. Some people believe schools should take a stronger role in encouraging healthy eating. This is a sensible idea, although it should not remove all personal choice.

One argument in favour of healthier school food is that students learn better when they have enough energy. For example, balanced lunches and fewer sugary snacks may help learners concentrate during afternoon lessons. Schools can also teach habits that students may continue at home.

On the other hand, students should not feel that every choice is controlled by adults. Healthy food can also cost more, and some learners may avoid school meals completely if the menu feels too limited. As a result, strict rules could create new problems.

In my view, schools should make healthy choices easier and more attractive, but they should still offer some variety. Overall, guidance is more useful than banning every snack or forcing one type of meal.

4. Explore the model: structure, argument and register

Work with the model essay. Underline, label or make short notes.

Focus	What to find	Done?
Essay structure	Find the introduction, argument for, argument against and conclusion.	
Content point 1	Where does the writer explain why healthy choices help?	
Content point 2	Where does the writer explain limits of strict rules?	
Own view	Where does the writer give a clear personal view in a formal or neutral way?	
Audience and register	Find two places where the essay sounds formal or neutral rather than chatty.	
Development	Find one reason, example or effect that improves the argument.	

5. Language from the task prompts

The task prompts can guide your grammar and content choices. Notice which language each prompt naturally needs.

Prompt	Useful language	Why it fits	Example from the model
why healthy choices help	cause/effect language	You are explaining how food choices may affect learning.	One argument in favour of healthier school food is that students learn better when they have enough energy / For example,...
limits of strict rules	choice and restriction language	You are considering whether rules could be too strict.	Healthy food can also cost more, and some learners may avoid school meals comp... / As a result,...
your own view	balanced recommendation language	You are giving a practical view about guidance and freedom.	In my view, schools should make healthy choices easier and more attractive, but they should still offer some variety / Overall,...

6. Build a clear essay

Notice how essay phrases help you organise arguments and make your viewpoint clear.

Job	Useful essay phrases
introduce the issue	This question is not simple. / Many people believe that... / It is important to consider both sides.
present one side	One argument in favour of... is that... / For example,... / This can help...
present the other side	On the other hand,... / However,... / This may cause...
show result	As a result,... / Therefore,... / This means that...
state your view	In my view,... / I believe that... / Overall,...
conclude clearly	The best solution is... / A balanced approach would... / ...without creating unnecessary problems

7. Vocabulary and useful essay phrases

Use chunks that sound natural for this task. You can also upgrade your writing with precise, formal or neutral phrases.

Purpose	Useful chunks / language	Add your own
describe food choices	balanced lunches / sugary snacks / school meals / healthier options	
describe benefits	concentrate better / enough energy / healthy habits / continue at home	
describe concerns	personal choice / cost more / limited menu / strict rules	
sound essay-like	This is a sensible idea... / On the other hand... / Overall...	
upgrade ideas	make choices easier / more attractive / guidance / variety	

8. Plan your own essay

Use the same task, or change the details to another school-life issue.

Section	My idea	Useful language
introduction / issue		This question is not simple. / Many people believe...
argument for		One argument in favour of... / For example...
argument against		On the other hand... / This can lead to...
my view		In my view... / I believe that...
conclusion		Overall... / The best solution is...

9. Write your own essay

Write a formal or neutral essay for the task. Discuss both sides, develop your ideas and make your view clear.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

10. Self-check and peer-check

Success criteria	What to check	Self	Peer
Content	The essay discusses both sides of the issue and gives a clear view.		
Essay structure	The answer has an introduction, organised argument paragraphs and a conclusion.		
Audience and register	It sounds formal or neutral and suitable for a teacher.		
Prompt-led language	The writing uses opinion language, contrast linkers and cause/effect language accurately.		
Cohesion	Ideas connect naturally with formal linking phrases such as <i>One argument in favour of...</i> , <i>On the other hand,...</i> , <i>As a result,...</i> and <i>Overall...</i>		
Vocabulary	Topic words and precise phrases, such as make choices easier and personal choice, improve the essay.		
Accuracy	Spelling, punctuation and sentence control are clear enough for the reader.		
WWW:			
EBI:			