



Health and Wellbeing

Essay: mental health lessons

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you write.

1. Why might students need to learn about mental health?
2. Should schools discuss stress and anxiety openly?
3. What could make these lessons difficult to teach?

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 teach more lessons about mental health and wellbeing. 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:

'Students need ways to manage stress.'

'Talking openly can reduce embarrassment.'

'These topics can be sensitive.'

'Teachers may need special training.'

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

Mental health and wellbeing are important parts of young people's lives. Many students face pressure from exams, friendships and online life. For this reason, some people think schools should teach more lessons about mental health.

One argument in favour of these lessons is that students could learn practical ways to manage stress. For example, they might discuss sleep, organisation and when to ask for help. Talking about mental health can also reduce embarrassment and make support easier to find. This may make support feel normal rather than unusual.

On the other hand, these topics must be taught carefully. Some students may find them personal or sensitive, and teachers may need training before leading such discussions. If lessons are handled badly, they could make learners uncomfortable.

In my view, schools should include mental health education, but it should be planned by trained staff. Overall, careful lessons can help students feel more informed, supported and confident.

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 lessons could help?	
Content point 2	Where does the writer explain sensitive topics?	
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 lessons could help	benefit language + examples	You are explaining how lessons could support students.	One argument in favour of these lessons is that students could learn practical ways to manage stress / For example,...
sensitive topics	caution and sensitivity language	You are showing why the topic needs careful teaching.	Some students may find them personal or sensitive, and teachers may need train... / As a result,...
your own view	conditional recommendation language	You are recommending the idea only with suitable support.	In my view, schools should include mental health education, but it should be planned by trained staff / 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 wellbeing	mental health / wellbeing / stress / online life	
describe benefits	manage stress / ask for help / reduce embarrassment / find support	
describe concerns	sensitive topics / personal / trained staff / uncomfortable	
sound essay-like	For this reason... / On the other hand... / Overall...	
upgrade ideas	taught carefully / practical ways / informed and supported	

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.

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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 taught carefully and sensitive topics, improve the essay.		
Accuracy	Spelling, punctuation and sentence control are clear enough for the reader.		
WWW:			
EBI:			