



Home and Local Area

Essay: improving public spaces

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you write.

1. Which public spaces do people use in your local area?
2. Why are parks, squares or community areas important?
3. Who should help to look after shared spaces?

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 local councils should spend more money improving public spaces. 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:

'Clean parks give people somewhere to relax.'

'Better public spaces can bring communities together.'

'Money should be spent on roads and housing first.'

'Some places are damaged again very quickly.'

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

Public spaces such as parks, squares and community areas can make a local area more pleasant. However, councils often have limited money and many different responsibilities. This means improvements must be considered carefully.

One argument in favour of spending money on public spaces is that they benefit many people. For example, clean parks give families somewhere to relax, exercise and meet others. Attractive shared spaces can also make residents feel proud of their neighbourhood. They are especially useful for people who do not have large homes or gardens.

On the other hand, some people may argue that basic services should come first. Roads, housing and safety can seem more urgent than benches, plants or play areas. There is also a risk that improved spaces may be damaged if they are not looked after.

In my view, councils should improve public spaces, but they should do this alongside essential services. Overall, well-planned public areas can support health, community life and local pride.

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 spaces matter?	
Content point 2	Where does the writer explain other local priorities?	
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 spaces matter	community benefit language	You are explaining how public spaces can help local people.	One argument in favour of spending money on public spaces is that they benefit many people / For example,...
other local priorities	priority and budget language	You are comparing public spaces with other local needs.	Roads, housing and safety can seem more urgent than benches, plants or play ar... / As a result,...
your own view	balanced civic opinion	You are giving a view that recognises council responsibilities.	In my view, councils should improve public spaces, but they should do this alongside essential services / 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 local area	public spaces / parks / community areas / neighbourhood	
describe benefits	somewhere to relax / meet others / local pride / shared spaces	
describe concerns	limited money / basic services / damaged quickly / essential services	
sound essay-like	This means... / On the other hand... / In my view...	
upgrade ideas	considered carefully / urgent / well-planned public areas	

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 <i>considered carefully</i> and <i>limited money</i> , improve the essay.		
Accuracy	Spelling, punctuation and sentence control are clear enough for the reader.		
WWW:			
EBI:			