



The Natural World

Essay: learning outdoors

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you write.

1. What can students learn outside the classroom?
2. Should schools include more outdoor lessons?
3. What problems can outdoor learning create?

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 students should have more lessons outdoors. 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:

'Outdoor lessons make learning more memorable.'
'Students understand nature better by seeing it.'

'Bad weather can make lessons difficult.'
'Classrooms are easier to organise and control.'

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

Most school lessons take place indoors, but some subjects can be more meaningful when students learn outside. Outdoor lessons may help learners connect ideas with real examples. However, they also require careful organisation.

One argument in favour of outdoor lessons is that they can make learning more memorable. For example, students studying plants, weather or local habitats may understand the natural world better when they see it directly. Outdoor activities can also make lessons feel more active and engaging.

On the other hand, outdoor learning is not always practical. Bad weather, safety concerns and limited time can make lessons difficult to manage. Teachers may also find it harder to keep students focused outside the classroom.

In my view, outdoor lessons should be used more often, but only when they clearly support learning. Overall, they are most useful as a planned addition to classroom work, not as a replacement for it.

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 outdoor lessons help?	
Content point 2	Where does the writer explain practical difficulties?	
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 outdoor lessons help	real-world learning language	You are explaining why outdoor examples may improve understanding.	One argument in favour of outdoor lessons is that they can make learning more memorable / For example,...
practical difficulties	practical limitation language	You are showing why outdoor lessons can be difficult to manage.	Bad weather, safety concerns and limited time can make lessons difficult to ma... / As a result,...
your own view	purposeful use language	You are giving a view about using outdoor lessons only when useful.	In my view, outdoor lessons should be used more often, but only when they clearly support learning / 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 learning	outdoor lessons / real examples / local habitats / classroom work	
describe benefits	more memorable / understand nature / active and engaging	
describe concerns	bad weather / safety concerns / limited time / keep focused	
sound essay-like	However... / On the other hand... / Overall...	
upgrade ideas	meaningful / require careful organisation / planned addition	

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.

[illegible]

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 meaningful and bad weather, improve the essay.		
Accuracy	Spelling, punctuation and sentence control are clear enough for the reader.		
WWW:			
EBI:			