



Writing an essay in an examination.

The function of an essay is to find out how much a person knows and understands about a topic and to determine how well that knowledge can be expressed. With a normal essay (not in an examination), it would be possible to check information and take some time writing and checking the essay. The examination essay is total recall of facts, plus the depth of knowledge and comprehension of a topic.

Before writing, read the question and think about what is being asked. Are there any clues or indications for this answer? Make a plan for the essay by quickly noting in the answer book any key factors or information relevant to the question. These need not be in any order. When that is done (a few minutes), re-order them so that they have a natural flow. There are three basic sections to the essay:

- **Introduction:** Provides a brief background to the topic. Do not re-write the question (or take care not to rewrite the question)
- **Middle piece:** This is where the main points of the essay are written in a logical order from the plan and may be in paragraphs
- **Conclusion:** This can be short and should draw together the key points in relation to the original question in summary.

There are no rules about length of essays in examinations, but bullet points do not form an essay. It is important that when the draft plan is finished, cross it out with a single line. That way the examiner knows it is not the answer to the question.

Reasons for poor examination essays

- Not answering the question that has been set, but providing other information
- Running out of time – this is where practice before the examination is helpful
- Only answering part of the question
- Failing to use factual information to support the answer
- Incomplete knowledge i.e., lack of knowledge on the topic
- Waffle
- Illegible handwriting
- Poor English
- Poor recall of factual information
- Failing to correct obvious mistakes. Re-reading before the end of the examination helps overcome this problem
- Lack of practice at writing examination question essays.

Example essay question

Question:

In essay format, describe the main cause and consequences of climate change and discuss the actions required to address this issue.

Example Essay Answer

Introduction:

(NOTE: This outlines the general lead into the main body of the essay)

Climate change, a complex phenomenon driven by human activities, has emerged as one of the most critical challenges facing our planet today. As the Earth's climate system undergoes rapid and unprecedented alterations,

it is imperative that we recognise the gravity of this issue and take collective action to mitigate its impacts. This essay explores the causes, consequences, and potential solutions to climate change, emphasising the need for global cooperation and immediate action.

Middle piece of the essay:

(NOTE: This is where all the relevant information should be to answer the question. It should be in paragraphs)

The **main cause** of climate change is the excessive emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) into the atmosphere. The burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, industrial processes, and agricultural practices release carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide – gases that trap heat within the Earth's atmosphere. The concentration of these gases has increased significantly since the Industrial Revolution, leading to a phenomenon known as the greenhouse effect. This enhanced greenhouse effect is causing the planet's average temperature to rise, resulting in global warming.

The **consequences** of climate change are diverse and far-reaching, affecting ecosystems, weather patterns, sea levels, and human societies. Melting ice caps and glaciers contribute to rising sea levels, posing a threat to coastal communities. Extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, droughts, and heatwaves, are becoming more frequent and intense, causing widespread damage to infrastructure and economies. Biodiversity loss and habitat destruction also escalate as ecosystems struggle to adapt to rapid changes. The livelihoods of vulnerable communities, particularly in developing countries, are at risk due to reduced agricultural productivity and resource scarcity.

Actions to address the issue of climate change require a multi-faceted approach involving policy changes, technological innovations, and individual behavioural shifts. Governments, international organisations and society, must adopt ambitious emissions reduction targets and transition to cleaner energy sources like solar, wind, and hydroelectric power. The promotion of energy efficiency, sustainable transportation, and reforestation can significantly contribute to lowering carbon emissions. Moreover, fostering international cooperation through agreements such as the Paris Agreement is vital to coordinate global efforts.

Individual actions also play a pivotal role in mitigating climate change. Reducing personal carbon footprints by conserving energy, using public transportation, and practicing sustainable consumption can collectively make a substantial impact. Raising awareness and advocating for policy changes further empowers citizens to contribute to the global fight against climate change. Educational initiatives can foster a deeper understanding of the issue and promote responsible environmental stewardship among future generations.

Overcoming these challenges necessitates transparent communication, innovative financing mechanisms, and robust international cooperation.

Conclusion:

(NOTE: This draws together the main or key points or facts of the essay as a summary)

Despite growing awareness, several challenges hinder effective climate change mitigation. Climate change represents a clear and present danger to the planet's well-being, demanding urgent attention from individuals, communities, governments, and international organisations alike. We stand at a crossroads where our choices today will profoundly shape the world we leave for future generations. By recognising the causes, consequences, and solutions to climate change, we can take meaningful steps toward a sustainable and resilient future. Through collaborative efforts, visionary policies, and responsible actions, it must be possible that working together will address this global crisis and secure a thriving planet for generations to come.