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## IELTS writing task 2: linking words

- ▶ 250 words
- ▶ 40 minutes
- ▶ Must include: ideas, opinions, evidence and examples

For task 2 you have to write an essay giving your opinions on a topic of general interest, e.g., education, environmental issues, crime or globalisation.

### Linking words

A good writer will link ideas together logically in a paragraph. You can use linking words or phrases to do this in different ways. Some examples are:

Addition:	as well as
Cause/result:	therefore
Contrast:	whereas
Concession:	despite
Purpose:	in order to
Time:	when

The following clauses are from a paragraph about the problems of living in a city, but they are in the wrong order. Put them in the right order, paying particular attention to the linking words and phrases.

- in order to live in a city, people must make a lot of money
- therefore people can feel very insecure
- despite often being very comfortable places
- whereas in the countryside people don't need to have such a high income
- people face many problems when living in a modern city
- as well as this crime rates are higher in the city

### Key Language

In IELTS it is important to vary your language. Some other links you could use are:

Addition:	and, in addition
Cause/result:	since, due to, because
Contrast:	while, on the other hand
Concession:	but, however
Purpose:	so, so as to, to
Time:	before, while, during



Now use the following linking words or phrases to fill the gaps in this paragraph.

because      in addition      despite

Many people think children today watch too much television and that this is having an adverse effect on their lives. \_\_\_1\_\_\_ this activity is often done alone, children miss out on many opportunities to develop social skills. \_\_\_2\_\_\_ to this, there are health concerns connected with not getting enough exercise. \_\_\_3\_\_\_ being concerned, most parents are simply too busy to do much to relieve these problems.



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## ESSAY SAMPLES

Look at the following two examples of a task 2 essay. Decide which is the better example and why. In the better example underline all of the linking words and phrases. In the other example, find two mistakes made with linking words and underline them.

Many people believe that the Earth is becoming a worse place to live because of effects caused by human activity. How far do you agree or disagree with this statement?

### Sample answer one

The world is changing more rapidly than ever before; therefore, the way we live is very different from the way our grandparents lived. Moreover, we can also be sure that for future descendents it will be as different again.

In many ways our world is now a much better place to live than ever before. For instance, medicine is now so developed that many dangerous diseases of the past no longer threaten us. Besides this, better food and healthcare have extended the average lifespan.

In addition, technology has provided us with many consumer goods which make our lives easier. Take the washing machine, telephone and home computer as just a few examples. Society has also changed; consequently, there is more equality and more freedom of speech than before.

Nevertheless, there are also some very bad aspects to our lives today. Pollution and global warming are worldwide problems causing changes in the biosphere that are often negative and difficult to predict or understand. Furthermore, humanity now possesses the ability to completely destroy the planet with weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear missiles and man-made diseases. Although it is true that many people enjoy more freedom, some political regimes are becoming harsher.

In conclusion, I think that for most people the world is becoming a better place to live. It is, however, important for us to make sure that while enjoying greater prosperity and quality of life, we are not harming others or exploiting the environment. This means that we need to do our best to use our increasing knowledge to live in the world responsibly and to take care of the planet.

273 words

### Sample answer two

The world is changing more rapidly than ever before. The way we live is very different from our grandparents. We can be sure that for future descendents it will be as different again.

In many ways our world is now a much better place to live than ever before. Medicine is now so developed that many dangerous diseases of the past no longer threaten us. Better food and healthcare have extended the average lifespan. Technology has provided us with many consumer goods which make our lives easier. Take the washing machine, telephone and home computer as just a few examples. Society has changed, there is better equality and more freedom of speech than before.

There are some very bad aspects to our lives today. Pollution and global warming are worldwide problems causing changes in the biosphere that are often negative and difficult to predict or understand. Humanity possesses the ability to completely destroy the planet with weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear missiles and man-made diseases. Although it is true that many people enjoy more freedom than ever before, but some political regimes are becoming harsher.

I think that for most people the world is becoming a better place to live. Despite the fact that people are enjoying greater prosperity and a better quality of life. It is important not to harm others or exploit the environment. We need to do our best to use our increasing knowledge to live in the world responsibly and to take care of the planet.

252 words



Beachgoers walk along a polluted beach in 2006 on Gulang Yu in Xiamen, China.

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#### Answer one is better because:

- ▶ It uses linking words and phrases to connect ideas in different ways.
- ▶ It uses a variety of linking words and phrases even when the same kind of link is required. In this way, there is variation in the vocabulary. For example: *moreover*, *furthermore* and *in addition*.
- ▶ In the last paragraph the phrase *in conclusion* makes it obvious the essay is drawing to a close.
- ▶ The linking words and phrases include: *therefore*, *moreover*, *because*, *besides*, *in addition*, *consequently*, *nevertheless*, *and*, *furthermore*, *although*, *in conclusion*, *however* and *this means that*.

#### Answer two contains a lot of ideas, but they are not linked together. The two mistakes in answer two are:

*Although it is true that many people enjoy more freedom than ever before, but some political regimes are becoming harsher.*

Be careful! Try not to let rules of Chinese grammar influence your use of English. In this sentence the word *but* is repetitive because *although* already serves the same purpose.

*Despite the fact that people are enjoying greater prosperity and a better quality of life.*

This is a very common error. The sentence is not finished because the word *despite* introduces a contrast which the sentence fails to provide.

Answers  
 Linking words  
 C.F.A.E.G.B  
 Key Language  
 1. Because 2. In addition 3. Despite