**University of Guelma Level: First year**

**Department of English AIOUNI L**

**Written Expression S2**

**Writing Opinion Paragraphs**

1. **How to distinguish between facts and opinions:**

A factis a piece of information that is true, eg. **That film is three hours long**. A fact is a statement that can be proven true or false. An opinion is an idea or belief about a particular subject, **eg. That film was boring.** Writers use facts to support their opinions and to show why they hold their beliefs. An

opinion is an expression of a person’s feelings that cannot be proven. Opinions can be based on facts or emotions and sometimes they are meant to deliberately mislead others. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the author’s purpose and choice of language. Sometimes, the author lets the facts speak for themselves.

**The following is an example of a fact:**

• With fewer cars on the road, there would be less air pollution and traffic noise; therefore, the use of mass transportation should be encouraged.

Sometimes the author may use descriptive language to appeal to your emotions and sway your thinking**.**

**The following is an example of an opinion:**

• Do you like looking at a smoggy view from a congested highway? How do you feel about fighting road hugs and bumper to bumper traffic everyday? Mass

transportation is the solution to all these problems.

Emotional language is neither right nor wrong, but the way in which it is used can be positive or negative; it is up to you to make reasonable judgement about the material you are reading and to draw your own conclusion.

Therefore, when you read, it is important to judge facts and opinions carefully in order to come to the right conclusion. Ask yourself, “are the facts reliable?” or “are the opinions based on the facts?”

**2** **/ An opinion paragraph** : It is a type of persuasive writing.

1. ***A study example :***

|  |
| --- |
| **Dear Editor,**  **More people should ride bicycles into town. Last year, seventy-three percent of all workers drove their own car to work. Car traffic in town is terrible ; parking places are hard to find, and pollution from cars is a real problem. Citizens who want a cleaner, nicer place to live ought to try this non-polluting form of transport. Cycling is good exercise, tool ! The city must not allow this problem to get worse. Instead, people should ride bicycles to work and school\_ and enjoy the health benefits of daily exercise.**  **Bill Adams**  **Bellingham** |

1. What is the main idea of this paragraph ? circle the sentence.
2. What is the writer’s purpose ? why did he write this letter ?
3. Underline the sentences or parts of sentences that show an opinion.
4. Why do you think the writer included a fact in this paragraph ?

**b/ Why do people create opinion paragraph ?**

These paragraphs are used to convince people to believe something or to do something.

\*advertisers want you to beleive that you need their product so that you will buy it.

\*politicians want to persuade you to vote for them.

\*people who write letters to the editor may want others to read their ideas, and then joint hem in changing something about their communities.

c/ Writing a Supported Opinion Paragraph :

Example : What is your favourite 1 television show ? Explain3 Why.

Comment (1) : This word explains that the answer must focus on one show that you ENJOY.

Comment (2) :This word indicates that you are only to talk about ONE show rather than compare your favourite to others.

Comment (3) This is the phrase that asks you to provide details to support your answer. As a suggested rule, choose three reasons.

-when writing a Supported Opinion Paragraph, the keys to success are as follows :

1. Make sure that you understand the question that is being asked, and what you have to provide in your answer.

2. Make sure that you jot down your opinion and your support in the Rough Notes section on the paper to organize this information before you start writing.

3.Make sure that you follow the Suggested Opinion Paragraph when writing your answer.

4. Make sure that you edit your paragraph, so that there are no errors that prevent your reader from understanding what you are saying. Use an internal checklist to do so like this one.

Example Answer :

My favourite TV show is CSL show. I like CSL because it creates a lot of suspense. You are always wondering what will happen next. CSL is also good because it makes you think and it is also educational. It teaches you a lot about forensic science. CSL is also my favourite TV show because it is creative. Every week they come up with another strange and unheard method of murder. CSL is my favourite TV show because it is so well-done.

Sentence #1 Introductory Sentence\_ This sentence contains part of the question ( e.g. « My favourite TV show is ») and answers the question (e.g.  « CSL ») being asked. **A topic sentence which states your opinion.**

**Sentence** #2 Sentence Support: this sentence contains the first support for the opinion given in the introductory sentence ( “…because it creates a lot of suspense”)

**Sentence** #3 sentence of Clarification\_ this sentence provides clarification by explaining the first support given ( e.g. how is CSL suspenseful? “you are always wondering what will happen next”)

**Sentence** #4 sentence of support\_ this sentence contains the second support for the opinion given in the introductory sentence (e.g …because it is educational”)

**Sentence #5** sentence of clarification\_ this sentence provides clarification by explaining the second support given( e.g. How is CSL educational?” It teaches you a lot about forensic science”

**Sentence #6 sentence of support:** Thissentence contains the third support for the opinion given in the introductory sentence( e.g. “..because it is creative”)

**Sentence#7** sentence of clarification\_ this sentence provides clarification by explaining the third support given( e.g. How is CSL creative? “Every week they come up with another strange and unheard -of method of murder.”

**At least 3 sentences with supporting details and explanations that back up your main reason.**

**Sentence #8 Concluding sentence:** This sentence ends the paragraph by summing up the details within the rest of the paragraph, and may even create unity by repeating a phrase from the introductory sentence( e.g. CSL is well done”, which is a description that describes all of the other details in the paragraph.)

**A concluding sentence that restates your opinion using different wording, and summarizes the main ideas in the supporting sentences**.

1. General pattern of an opinion paragraph organization

Opinion paragraphs usually follow this pattern :

1. Statement of opinion
2. Evidence : A reason why the opinion is correct. Usually includes one or more of the following :

\*facts or statistics

\*Events

\*Anecdotes( references to personal experience)

\*Statements from experts.

1. Concluding comment :A restatement of the opinion and (sometimes) a recommendation for action.

**Paragraph Outline**

**Topic Sentence** (state your **opinion** related to the topic

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ***Second***…+ **main reason** + **2nd supporting detail with explanation**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ***Third***…+ **main reason** + **3rd supporting detail with explanation**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**Concluding sentence** (restate your topic sentence in a different way and summarize supporting details.(*In conclusion…)*

Exercises :

1. Read the following paragraph, and label its parts : topic Sentence, evidence, concluding statement or recommendations.

Teenagers today are lazy, dishonest and uninterested in anything that involves hard work or personal sacrifice. For example, a recent study in Great Britain found that teens today are more obese, drink more alcohol and do more drugs than any generation before. Diabetes in adolescents, and other illnesses related to lack of physical fitness, are much more common today than ever before. In addition, today’s teens are less honest, as 65 of Canadian teenagers do not believe that downloading music illegally from the internet was wrong. Finally, most teens today would rather be given an allowance by their parents so they can spend the weekend in front of the X-Box, rather than use some of their free time actually earning their own money at a job. In conclusion, I think that most teenagers do not appreciate the comfortable lives they live\_and I think their parents should force them off the couch, and out into the workplace to find out what real life is like !

**Exercise2 Read the paragraph. why does the author want to move?**

**Get Me Out of Here**  
 Although many people say there are great opportunities in a big  
city, the life here is not good for me. First, people do not have enough  
free time because they are too busy with work and appointments.  
Parents and their children do not come home to eat lunch together.  
Some employees go to work before the sun comes up and return  
home after dark. Because of their schedules, families only spend time  
together on the weekend. Second, driving is necessary. Everyone  
must use a car to go to school or work or the store. I have to drive  
my children to school, and after school we go to soccer practice or  
to other activities. Because there is usually a lot of traffic, I have a lot of anxiety. Third, the cost of living is very expensive. Like many  
families, my family lives in an apartment because we cannot buy a  
house here. Also, people must spend a lot of money for entertainment. A visit to the aquarium costs twenty dollars for each ticket. In the future, I hope that I can live in a small town with friendly people. I want a house, a garden and a peaceful life. Maybe if I am lucky, my dream will come true, and I will move to a small town.

A. Respond to the paragraph by answering the questions in  
full sentences.

1.What is the author's opinion of city life ?

………………………………………………………………..

2. What three main reasons does the author give to support her opinion?................................................................................................................................................................................................................

3. What are some things that the author must do that she does not like to do? ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

4. Where does the author want to live? ………………………………………………………………………

5. Would you prefer to live in the city or the country? Why?

B. Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.  
Underline the topic sentence.  
How many main reasons does the writer give?

……………………………………………………………  
Underline the concluding sentence twice. Does it restate the idea in the topic sentence?  
4. Do you agree with any of the points the writer makes? Explain.

Ex : (3) Do these types of wriitng use mostly facts, mostly opinions, or an event mixture of both ? Write F for fact, O for opinion, or B for both. Justify your choices.

A………..film review e……..news report

b………… book report for a university literature class

c………….police report of a crime f……….magazine advertisement

d…………personal e-mail to a friend

Ex (4) read these sentences. Write F if the sentences is a fact, and O if the sentences is an opinion.

a……..Airfares have become too expensive.

b……..English is an easier langauge to learn than Arabic.

c…….Owls are birds that haunt at night.

d…….I was born in New York City.

e…….Exercise is the best way to stay healthy.

f…….Internet use has increased every year since its beginning.

g……Engineering is the best career choice.

h……Big cities are dangerous at night.

i…….Acid rain is a result of air pollution mostly from factories and motor vehicles.

j…..Human activities may speed up the rising of the global temperature.

k…..Men can be more competent than women.

l….Flower can cause allergy

m…..Cat have nine lives.

Using Modal Auxiliaries :

When you speak, you introduce opinions with phrases like : I think, in my opinion, and I believe. In general, these introductory phrases are not needed in writing. They can even make you sound less sure of your ideas. Instead, writers use grammatical methods such as modal auxiliary verbs and transition words to express their opinions. Modal auxiliary verbs show the strength of a writer’s opinion or argument.

Affirmative :

The city could add more cycle paths weakest

Should

Ought to

Has to/ must strongest

Negatives : The city does not have allow more cars weakest

Shouldn’t

Can’t/ must not strongest

**Ex (01)** : read the paragraph below. Circle the most appropriate modal auxiliary in each sentence :

|  |
| --- |
| Dear Editor.  I agree with Bill Adams’s opinion in his recent letter saying that people should/ don’t have to ride their bicycles into town. However, there is one problem with this idea. The roads in town are so narrow and full of cars that you can’t/ ought to ride safely on them. If people are going to ride bicycles into town, the city could/ must make some cycle paths for people to use. May be the city could/ mustn’t charge a small additional tax on fuel to pay for the cycle paths. Motorists have created the problem, so motorists could/ should pay for the solutions. The city ought to / doesn’t have to support cyclists like Bill Adams by making more cycle-paths.  Melissa Green  Greatford |

**Ex 2** : Write a paragraph about the following opinion  **« Smoking must be banned in all restaurants and schools ».**Brainstorm ideas, narrow down your topic, and then write. Remember to use auxiliaries.

**Using Connectors of cause and effect to express opinions :Because, since, and so are** connectors of cause and effect. They join two ideas when one idea causes or explains the other. Because and since introduce the cause or reason, and so and therefore introduce the effect or result.

**Cause/reason effect/result**

**Petrol** is becoming scarce and expensive We should develop electric cars

For example, because petrol is becoming scarce and expensive, we should

develop electric cars.

We should develop electric cars since petro lis becoming scarce and

Expensive.

Petrol is becoming scarce and expensive, so we should develop electric cars.

\*therefore is slightly different. It joins the ideas in two sentences : Petrol is

Becoming scarce and expensive. Therefore, we should develop electric cars.