

Writing Task Question

Try this opinion essay question about the cost of space exploration. It's best to state a clear opinion for or against in your introduction.

Space exploration is much too expensive and the money should be spent on more important things.

What is your opinion?

Model Answer

There is an argument that exploring space is a waste of money and that there are more urgent needs to be addressed on earth, such as reducing poverty and preventing environmental destruction. However, I completely disagree with this opinion for two reasons.

First of all, many of the technologies we take for granted today were originated thanks to space research. Take satellite technology, for example, which we depend on for broadcasting and weather forecasting. Without satellites, we would not be able to follow global events as they happen, nor give populations any warning of approaching storms. Space research has also led to the development of new lightweight materials that offer us heat protection and enable food preservation. Therefore, the challenge of sending human beings into space has often driven the development of new technologies that benefit our everyday lives.

Second, we cannot foresee the distant future, so we ought to develop the capability to escape from the earth. Gradually, we are learning how humans can survive for long periods in space and even travel to other planets in the future. If space exploration is halted, this valuable knowledge will never be acquired. It is true that environmental destruction is also a serious issue, but it is also true that we remain dependent on our environment if we never accept the challenge of exploring other worlds.

In conclusion, while we undoubtedly face serious problems on our own planet, it is imperative that we continue to explore space. This will promote further technological advances as well as provide a possible means of escape should earth become uninhabitable in future. Ideally, all nations should cooperate in the advancement of space research.

(278 words)

Task response: The introduction effectively paraphrases the question and presents a clear opinion. The writer's opinion is supported in the body of the essay. Concrete examples are given. The conclusion restates the writer's opinion and ends with a recommendation.

Coherence and cohesion: The model answer is divided into clear paragraphs and each body paragraph contains one main idea. There are cohesive links between all paragraphs and between most sentences.

Lexical resource: The key concept of *space exploration* is paraphrased several times. There are many words characteristic of academic writing such as *originated*, *imperative*, and *foresee*. Vocabulary is used with a strong awareness of collocation: *take for granted*, *develop the capability*, *accept the challenge*.

Grammatical range and accuracy: The model answer is free from grammatical errors. A good balance of simple and complex sentences is used to develop an argument. Verb tenses vary, and other grammatical devices such as conditionals and modals are used with high accuracy.

Teacher's Notes



This writing task simply asks you to give your opinion, which appears to be a very open question. If your time is limited, it is best to state a clear opinion in the first paragraph and stick to it, rather than try to deliver a more complex or nuanced answer. Use each body paragraph to add supporting points and restate your opinion in the final paragraph to provide a satisfying conclusion.