

4 Modern technology

READING SKILLS Identifying the main message – topic sentences

WRITING SKILLS Organizing ideas (1) • Linking ideas (2) • Writing a discursive essay

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT Avoiding repetition (1)

READING Innovations

1 Skim the articles and letters on page 23. Answer the questions.

- 1 Where would you expect to find a page like this?
- 2 How many articles are there?
- 3 What is the topic of each article?
- 4 How many letters are there?
- 5 What piece of technology is each letter about?

2 **Read STUDY SKILL** Scan the text *The Silent Plane* and the readers' letters opposite. Pay attention to topic sentences only. Are the statements true (T) or false (F)?

- 1 Maybe one day planes won't make a noise. T
- 2 Noise is being reduced in two ways.
- 3 The project to build the plane hasn't begun yet.
- 4 Mr Campbell is happy with his computer.
- 5 The writer of the third letter wants help.
- 6 Paula Adams' opinion is the same as an earlier letter writers.

STUDY SKILL Identifying the main message – topic sentences

Students are often required to do a large amount of reading. To save time and to select the best text(s) for your needs, it is important to identify the main message as quickly as possible.

To do this:

- look at the title.
- quickly skim the text to find the topic sentences. They are usually the first sentence in each paragraph. They summarize what the paragraph is about.

3 Read the summaries a–d of the paragraphs in the article *The Car that Drives Itself*. Match them with topic sentences 1–4. Do not read the article.

Summaries

- a describing how the car works
- b predicting future developments
- c outlining some problems
- d introducing the subject

Topic sentences

- 1 A car manufacturer has designed and built a car that drives itself.
- 2 Despite these disadvantages, car manufacturers see driverless cars as the future.
- 3 However, there are still two main drawbacks.
- 4 The car works using two main devices.

4 Skim the article to match topic sentences from exercise 3 to paragraphs A–D. Use the summaries to help.

INNOVATIONS

THE SILENT PLANE

Annoyance from aeroplane noise could be a thing of the past as plans are announced to design a silent aircraft. The aim is to reduce the noise from a plane so that city-dwellers will no longer hear it passing overhead once it has left the airport.

This noise reduction will be achieved in three main ways. Firstly, the plane is being designed as a single, wide wing. Secondly, the engines will be placed above the wing, inside the plane, rather than under the wings and outside, and thirdly the airplane will be flown differently, for example at a reduced speed when it is near the airport.

The aircraft is just a design concept at the moment and many technological challenges will have to be met before we have silent planes overhead.



THE CAR THAT DRIVES ITSELF

A _____ It can steer itself and control its speed. This is the latest development in the long history of the automobile industry.

B _____ The first is a radar sensor in the front of the car. It scans the road in front of the car, looking for other vehicles. It then speeds the car up or slows it down according to the traffic conditions. The second device is a camera below the rear-view mirror which watches the white lines in the road. It uses these lines as a guide to steering the car.

C _____ Firstly, the system can only work on motorways, and secondly, cars still need a driver. If the driver doesn't touch the steering wheel every 10 seconds, the devices can stop working.

D _____ They are already working on new models that will be able to drive on city roads. So, perhaps one day soon, we will be able to jump into our cars and sleep or read a book as we are driven to work!



Google self-driving car.

Opinions and Questions: the Readers Write!

Sir,

Is anyone else fed up with their computer? I bought one to make my life easier and it has done exactly the opposite! Everyone told me that it would be easy to set up. 'A child could do it!' they said. So, I tried and it has been a disaster. It crashes constantly and instead of saving me time, I seem to spend all my free time trying to make it work. If this is an example of modern technology, give me an old-fashioned typewriter anytime!

Yours

W.F. Campbell (Mr)

Dear Sir,

I strongly disagree with the previous correspondent about CD players being better than MP3 players. For most of us, who are busy and on-the-move, an MP3 player is ideal. It is light, portable and convenient. You can store thousands of songs on it to listen to wherever you are. What's more, most MP3 players now allow you to watch videos, look at photographs and connect to the Internet. Brilliant!

Yours faithfully,

Paula Adams

Sir,

I am writing to ask for some advice about memory sticks. I use mine to keep a copy of my data, in case something goes wrong with my computer. However, I was told that memory sticks are unreliable and are easily damaged by anything magnetic, or by going through scanners, at airports, for example. Could you please clarify for me whether this is true? I have a new job that requires me to travel regularly, and I have to take my memory stick on trips.

Yours,

A. Jefcoate

WRITING Technology – good or bad?

1 Brainstorm arguments *for* and *against* mobile phones.

Read STUDY SKILL

| for | against |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Can make a call at any time, anywhere.</i> | <i>Annoying in a public place, e.g. in a restaurant.</i> |

2 Read the essay. Did you have the same ideas?

Mobile phones

A Mobile phones are now part of our everyday lives. Most people find them essential and could not manage without them. However, there are also some drawbacks to owning and using a mobile phone.

B There are three main advantages to having mobile phones. Firstly, there is the convenience of being able to make or receive a phone call at any time and in any place. Secondly, they are essential for keeping in touch with family and friends. Parents worried about their children can always ring them to check they are safe, and children can let their family know if they are going to be late home. Finally, mobile phones can save lives. For example, if there is an accident, help can be called immediately, wherever the accident takes place.

C On the other hand, there are significant problems with the use of mobile phones. In the first place, using mobile phones can cause accidents, for instance, when people are driving and using their phone at the same time. In addition, the loud use of mobile phones in public places such as restaurants and cinemas is rude and can be very irritating for other people. Lastly, there has been an increase in street crime directly related to mobile phones. People have been attacked and their phones stolen from them.

D In conclusion, I believe that, despite the disadvantages, mobile phones are essential to modern life and that the advantages of owning one are far greater than the disadvantages.



STUDY SKILL Organizing ideas (1)

When writing an essay where you have to give two sides of an argument:

- organize your ideas into arguments *for* and arguments *against*, and give some examples.
- write a paragraph *for*, and a paragraph *against*, giving your ideas in a logical order.
- write an introduction and a conclusion. Give your personal opinion in the conclusion.

3 Consider the purpose of each paragraph. Which paragraph A, B, C, or D ...?

- says why mobile phone use can be a good thing
- introduces the subject
- concludes and gives the writer's opinion
- says why mobile phone use can be a bad thing

4 Read STUDY SKILL Go back through the essay. Underline 12 more linking words and phrases. Write them in the table.

| | | | |
|----------|--------------------|-------|-------|
| sequence | <u>firstly</u> | _____ | _____ |
| | | _____ | _____ |
| | | _____ | _____ |
| contrast | <u>in spite of</u> | _____ | _____ |
| | | _____ | _____ |
| | | _____ | _____ |
| examples | <u>e.g.</u> | _____ | _____ |
| | | _____ | _____ |
| endings | <u>to conclude</u> | _____ | _____ |

STUDY SKILL Linking ideas (2)

To help the reader understand your writing and follow your ideas, link short, simple ideas. Use:

- *firstly, secondly, ...*
for more than one argument or idea
- *however* (see Study Skill p13), *on the other hand, despite ...*
for a contrast between two ideas
- *for instance, for example, ...*
for an example to illustrate an idea
- *in conclusion, to sum up, ...*
for the final comment

- 5 Read the essay title. Do you agree or disagree with it?
Discuss with a partner.

Access to satellite and Internet television does more harm than good.



- 6 Divide arguments 1–6 into those that support the essay title (*against* satellite /Internet TV), and those that disagree with it (*for* satellite/Internet TV). Add one more argument to each list.

- 1 People (especially children) have access to programmes with unsuitable content.
- 2 It gives people access to programmes around the world – the opportunity to learn about other cultures.
- 3 A huge choice of programmes is available – something for every interest, for example sport, music, film, documentary channels.
- 4 More access to TV encourages people (especially children) to watch more TV, so there is less time for hobbies or family.
- 5 Programmes in other languages, for example English, can support language learning.
- 6 The programmes available may not be culturally appropriate.

| for satellite TV | against satellite TV |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <i>The programmes available may not be culturally appropriate.</i> |

Writing a discursive essay

- 7 Complete the essay using the arguments from exercise 6. Link ideas with words and phrases from exercise 4. Follow the organization in the box. Write about 200 words.

Title Access to satellite and Internet television does more harm than good.

Introduction

Many people have strong feelings about the value of television, especially now that programmes are available through satellite and over the Internet. There are those who suggest that increased access to these programmes does more harm than good. However, there are those who insist that it is a good thing.

Paragraph 2 satellite and Internet TV does harm + examples

Paragraph 3 satellite and Internet TV is good + examples

Paragraph 4 conclusion and your opinion

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT Varying vocabulary (1)

1 Match the linking words or phrases with their synonyms.

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> finally | a but |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> firstly | b for instance |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> for example | c in contrast |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> however | d in the first place |
| 5 <input type="checkbox"/> in conclusion | e lastly |
| 6 <input type="checkbox"/> on the other hand | f to conclude |

2 Replace the word(s) in bold in each sentence with a synonym from the box.

drawbacks essential immediately made illegal rise

- 1 There are three **disadvantages** to your suggestion.
- 2 Smoking at work has been **outlawed** in many countries.
- 3 Most car owners believe their car is **necessary** for their work and leisure.
- 4 If there has been a car accident, you should call the police **straight away**.
- 5 There has been a huge **increase** in mobile phone ownership.

3 **Read STUDY SKILL** Use your dictionary to find synonyms for these words from the unit.

STUDY SKILL Avoiding repetition (1)

To avoid sounding repetitive in your writing, try not to use the same words too often. Where possible, use a synonym. A good dictionary will often give you a synonym within the definition of a word, or the symbol SYN next to a word with the same meaning. This entry is from the *Oxford Student's Dictionary*.

finally /'fʌməli/ *adv.* **1** after a long time or delay: *It was getting dark when the plane finally took off.*
[SYN] eventually 2 used to introduce the last in a list of things: *Finally, I would like to say how much we have all enjoyed this evening.* **[SYN] lastly 3** in a definite way so that sth will not be changed: *We haven't decided finally who will get the job yet.*

ideal wonderful manufacture automobile
accelerate steal rude discover

4 Replace the words in bold in the paragraph with synonyms. Use your dictionary to help.

Smart cards, that is, credit cards, mobile phone SIM cards, and so on, which contain a **very small** computer microprocessor, have their origins in the 1970s. A Frenchman, Roland Moreno, **manufactured** a circuit that could **store** electronic **data**. Since then, this idea has **grown** into a multi-billion-dollar **business**.



REVIEW

- 1 Look at the essay titles. Brainstorm and write down three arguments *for* and three arguments *against* each title.

Using computers saves a lot of time.

Cars should be banned from city centres.

Young people spend too much time playing computer games.

People have become too dependent on modern technology.

- 2 Write a topic sentence which states the main idea for each paragraph below.

Laptop computers

Many people now travel the world on business and they need to be able to use a computer at all times. Firstly, it is important that they can write and answer important emails when they are away from their offices. Secondly, having a laptop means that people don't waste time when they are travelling, as they can work while they are on a plane or train, for example. Lastly, a laptop can also help busy businessmen and women to relax. They can listen to music or watch their favourite movie while they are hundreds of kilometres from home!



Voice-controlled technology

Already some people have installed voice-controlled technology in their homes. They use their mobile phones to 'tell' their lights to switch on, or to 'order' their television to turn off. However, in the future more and more of us will be using this technology to control our heating, our lighting, and security in our homes. Perhaps one day we will be able to 'tell' our ovens to cook our dinners!



- 3 Divide the vocabulary from Unit 4 into two topics: cars and aeroplanes.

airport fly motorways plane rear-view mirror
steering wheel traffic wing

- 4 Add four of the words in the box to the two topics. Use your dictionary to help. Record these words in groups using a method from the Study Skill box on page 14.

accelerator brakes clutch cockpit
emergency exit pilot take off tyres