

# AS-Level Use of English

## UE Writing

### Sample Lecture Notes

#### UE Writing Lecture 1

By

**Dr Paul Hill**

Ph. D., M. A., P. C. Ed., B. Soc. Sc. (Hons)

## Part 1: A Warm-up Exercise

Exercise 01 Fill in the blanks with the words given. Five of the words may not be used.

### Edison's Press-conference Speech (Part 1)

[1] Today I have come back to Hong Kong to stand before you and (1)\_\_\_\_\_ for myself. I've never escaped from my (2)\_\_\_\_\_. During the past few weeks, I've been with my mother, and my family and loved ones to show support and care. And at the same time, have them support and care for me. I (3)\_\_\_\_\_ that most of the photos being (4)\_\_\_\_\_ on the Internet were taken by me. But these photos were very (5)\_\_\_\_\_, and had not been shown to people, and were never intended to be shown to anyone. These photos were stolen from me (6)\_\_\_\_\_, and distributed without my (7)\_\_\_\_\_. There is no doubt whoever obtained these photos, had been uploading them on the internet with (8)\_\_\_\_\_ and deliberate intent.

[2] This matter has deteriorated to the (9)\_\_\_\_\_ that society as a whole has been affected by this. And in this regard, I am deeply saddened. I would like now to apologize to all the people for all the suffering that has caused, that has been caused, and the problems that have (10)\_\_\_\_\_ from this. I would like to apologize to all the ladies, and to all their families, for any harm or hurt that they have been feeling. I'm sorry. I would like to also (11)\_\_\_\_\_ to my mother and my father, for the pain and the suffering that I have caused them during the past few weeks.

[3] Most importantly, I would like to say sorry to all the people in Hong Kong. I give my (12)\_\_\_\_\_ sincerely to you all (13)\_\_\_\_\_ and with my heart. I know young people in Hong Kong look up to many figures in our society. And in this regard, I've failed as a (14)\_\_\_\_\_ model. However, I wish that this matter would teach everyone a lesson. To all the young people in our (15)\_\_\_\_\_, let this be a lesson for you all. This is not an example to be set for you.

Words given:

- |                |               |                 |             |                   |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1 unreservedly | 2 sincerely   | 3 suffering     | 4 apology   | 5 community       |
| 6 consent      | 7 role        | 8 extent        | 9 apologize | 10 malicious      |
| 11 deliberate  | 12 admit      | 13 illegally    | 14 intended | 15 responsibility |
| 16 account     | 17 circulated | 18 deteriorated | 19 arisen   | 20 private        |

## **Part 2: General advice on the structure of your piece of writing**

### **1 *Expository Writing***

Introduction (1 paragraph):

The importance of the issue

Content:

Reasons x 1-3 paragraphs +

Suggestions x 1-3 paragraphs

Conclusion:

Summary (repeat & re-phrased)

### **2 *Discussion Writing***

Introduction (1 paragraph):

The background / Why should we discuss this issue?

Content:

Disadvantages x 2 paragraphs

Advantages x 2 paragraphs

Suggestion of striking a balance (if possible) x 1 paragraph

Conclusion: (1 paragraph)

Stance

### **3 *Argumentative Writing***

Introduction: (1 paragraph)

The arguments

Content:

Stance x 1 paragraph

Reasons x 1-2 paragraph(s)

Counter-argument x 1 paragraph

Refutation x 1 paragraph

Conclusion: (1 paragraph)

Reiteration of one's stance

## Part 3: 7 Ways to Start Your Composition

### *I Introduction: To convey the idea that the issue being discussed is really important*

Frame sentences:

- 1 YouTube **is vital to our life.**
- 2 The invention of the Internet **made significant changes to our life.**
- 3 **More and more people around the world have become aware of** the importance of YouTube.
- 4 **Public attention is focused on** the abuse of YouTube.
- 5 The abuse of YouTube **is a global problem which arouses public concern.**

### *II Controversy: To highlight some different opinions from other people*

Frame sentences:

- 1 Some Hong Kongneses **hold diametrically opposite views about** the issue concerning Edison.
- 2 **In order to reach a fair and realistic conclusion to this issue, let us** take an in-depth look at both the advantages and disadvantages concerning the issue.
- 3 **In order to reach a fair and logical conclusion, let us consider** the following reasons for reference.
- 4 **Instead of turning a blind eye to the problem, we should** all try to understand the benefits as well as drawbacks of the present issue.

### *III Current affair: To arouse the readers' interest by quoting a current affair*

Frame sentences:

- 1 Recently, some ... have suggested ...
- 2 **Recent reports have stated that** the English standard of the students in Hong Kong is declining.
- 3 **A recent survey has indicated that** the English standard of the students in Hong Kong is declining.
- 4 **Recently, the government has decided to** initiate a change for the medium of instruction at schools, was this decision sensible or foolish?

#### ***IV Taking sides: To show your stance by using rhetorical device***

Frame sentences:

- 1 Does it mean we have no choice but to accept it as a necessary evil? **Of course not!**
  - 2 What does this trend have to do with us? **A lot!**
  - 3 How many tragedies must happen before the authorities do something to prevent this from happening again? **Countless, I think!**
  - 4 How many innocent lives must be lost before stricter regulations are introduced? **Too many!**
  - 5 The Government's reclamation projects over the years substantially diminished the size of the Harbour. What is left of the existing Harbour should be treasured. **Not much!**
- V Brainstorming: To brainstorm the reader about the issue being discussed***

Frame sentences:

- 1 What can we gain from doing this?
- 2 Does the coverage by Mandatory Provident Fund mean that we need not worry about our old age?
- 3 It is convenient... But what is the price one has to pay for this convenience?

#### ***VI General remarks: To state why you are qualified to comment or make contribution***

Frame sentences:

- 1 **I think I am in a position to comment on this because** I am an experienced journalist.
- 2 Although I am not a social worker, **I do have plenty of practical experience in settling family disputes** and would like to share with you my experience in temperament control.

#### ***VII Giving definition:***

Frame sentences:

- 1 **Euthanasia is** nothing but a glorified name of homicide or suicide.
- 2 **A war is** a merciless massacre which can never be justifiable.

## **Part 4: Writing Skills**

### ***I How to give supporting details & elaboration?***

- 1 Using discourse markers
- 2 Writing transitional sentences / paragraphs
- 3 Giving examples
- 4 Citing personal experience
- 5 Stating arguments & counter-arguments
- 6 Making concession

### ***II How to add spice to your work?***

- 1 Resorting to experts
- 2 Using rhetorical devices
- 3 Using emphasizing patterns
- 4 Comparing & contrasting

## **Part 5: Application (1), YouTube**

### **Writing Skills for AS Level Students**

#### **Writing topic:**

YouTube, a free video sharing website, has become an instant hit among youngsters since its launch in 2005. Despite its growing popularity, some people are critical of its effect on youngsters. Write an essay to discuss its adverse influence on youngsters. You should discuss three areas of its influence.

Justify your views by providing examples, cases or your observation.

YouTube -- A Blessing Or A Disaster (Part 1)

[1] YouTube, a website that enables free video-sharing, has attracted the attention of a lot of users and the press. Its instant and (1)\_\_\_\_\_ popularity has become the talk of the town, with plenty of users saying that it has (2)\_\_\_\_\_ the level of cyber communication. However, YouTube may not be (3)\_\_\_\_\_ for all ages.

[2] One of the worst influences that YouTube has created is its impact on (4)\_\_\_\_\_ cases in schools, some of which have even given rise to (5)\_\_\_\_\_ coverage by newspapers. In one incident that took place in Australia, the police had taken action against a group of teenage boys for (6)\_\_\_\_\_ a 17-year-old girl after they were alerted that the attack was filmed and uploaded onto YouTube. This sick behaviour has been widely covered by the press, thus, creating even more (7)\_\_\_\_\_ to the victim. Broadcasting the whole process of the victim being bullied, assaulted or even raped is just like adding (8)\_\_\_\_\_ to the wounds. Worse still, the video may even (9)\_\_\_\_\_ other impressionable teenagers to follow (10)\_\_\_\_\_.

[3] The convenience of uploading videos onto YouTube has not only encouraged violence and bullying in schools but also led to a (11)\_\_\_\_\_ commonly known as cyber-bullying. Youngsters who experience times of confusion may be easily (12)\_\_\_\_\_ to commit violence. They may even film what they have done with their mobile phones and upload these disturbing clips to video-sharing websites, such as YouTube, to (13)\_\_\_\_\_ their so-called heroism and courage. With the introduction of YouTube, bullying in schools has been encouraged because taping and posting these acts on the Internet seem to be common and popular. Some youngsters have failed to realize that filming violence without helping the victim is the same as participating in the actual act of violence.

[4] In addition, YouTube has led irresponsible users to invade other people's (14)\_\_\_\_\_. With the existence of handy devices such as digital cameras and mobile phones, filming daily-life incidents has never been easier. In a lot of incidents, the people involved have been filmed without their notice because of that tiny camera hidden in small (15)\_\_\_\_\_. And with the coming of YouTube, it only takes a few minutes before a footage reaches every corner of the cyber world.

Words given:

- |                |             |               |                |              |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1 lure         | 2 privacy   | 3 phenomenon  | 4 gadgets      | 5 assaulting |
| 6 showcase     | 7 bullying  | 8 humiliation | 9 escalating   | 10 salt      |
| 11 sensational | 12 enhanced | 13 tempted    | 14 appropriate | 15 suit      |

## YouTube -- A Blessing Or A Disaster (Part 2)

[5] It is commonly agreed that nowadays the only place where you can have some privacy is your home. Once you leave your home and step into the street, anyone is (1)\_\_\_\_\_ to being filmed and shown on YouTube. It was not long ago when only (2)\_\_\_\_\_ such as movie stars, singers or politicians appeared in the media. With YouTube as one of the media outlets now, everyone, including an average citizen, faces the risk of being filmed and seen on the Internet by the huge cyber population. In other words, YouTube has encouraged people to (3)\_\_\_\_\_ on other people's privacy more than just a chance to broadcast yourself as the website (4)\_\_\_\_\_.

[6] Some may argue that YouTube may help the police find evidence to (5)\_\_\_\_\_ the offender. However, this is like putting the (6)\_\_\_\_\_ before the horse. The urge and race to post shocking footage on YouTube may have prompted witnesses of crimes to pick up their video recorders instead of alerting the police. The desire to capture (7)\_\_\_\_\_ footage has blinded young people's social consciousness and moral values. The footage may provide (8)\_\_\_\_\_ evidence against criminals. However, it does not justify a person's unwillingness to lend a hand because running to help could have stopped the crime from happening in the first place. Indeed, YouTube has given rise to an (9)\_\_\_\_\_ and self-centred population which tends to believe shooting is more important than really rescuing the victim.

[7] Yet, a lot of youngsters do not seem to care about how (10)\_\_\_\_\_ everyone else has become; they keep viewing such footage on YouTube, as if the (11)\_\_\_\_\_ scenes happened on another planet. Over time, more and more people will start to lost concern for their surroundings. Even worse, they may start to believe that there is nothing wrong without any (12)\_\_\_\_\_ for other people. After all, it is the footage that really matters.

[8] There are always two sides to every story. Despite the entertainment and convenience it has brought to users, YouTube does not (13)\_\_\_\_\_ as an appropriate website for youngsters. If it is not used carefully, its (14)\_\_\_\_\_ impact on our society, especially youngsters, is going to (15)\_\_\_\_\_ its fun and amusing features.

Words given:

- |              |                |               |               |               |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1 adverse    | 2 infringe     | 3 indifferent | 4 substantial | 5 disturbing  |
| 6 outweigh   | 7 apathetic    | 8 stand       | 9 cart        | 10 prone      |
| 11 prosecute | 12 celebrities | 13 empathy    | 14 advocates  | 15 scandalous |

## **Part 5: Application (2), Choosing Universities**

Essay Topic

The City University and The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology have been established recently in Hong Kong. Write an article to be published in the 'Young Post' supplement of the South China Morning Post or the 'Education' supplement of The Standard. Give your views about the advantages and disadvantages of studying at a very new institution, rather than at one of the older institutions, such as The University of Hong Kong or The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

### **The 5 essential elements of writing a good essay:**

- 1 Vocabulary
- 2 Grammar & usage
- 3 Writing skills\*
- 4 Ideas
- 5 Confidence

Examples of writing skills:

- discourse markers,
- formats,
- frame sentences,
- rhetorical devices,
- skills for putting forward arguments, etc

[1] Nowadays, the Advanced Level students are becoming more and more grateful to see the chances of tertiary education increasing. However, 'which institution should be chosen?' has recently become another (1)\_\_\_\_\_ question. Different people hold different points of view.

[2] Actually, what are the advantages and disadvantages of studying at a very new institution? They need to be deeply analysed and discussed.

[3] To begin with, an obvious advantage, which most people must have thought of, is definitely the possessing of the most advanced equipment by these institutions. Take the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology as an example, it contains the world's most high-tech equipment for both the development of new technology and doing (2)\_\_\_\_\_ experiments. Therefore, it provides better (3)\_\_\_\_\_ for both under-graduate and post-graduate students to learn. On top of this, it also provides an excellent study environment for all the students. As everyone knows, using an old-fashioned computer to learn is very inefficient. On the contrary, you can learn efficiently if you use a highly (4)\_\_\_\_\_ computer. So, it is clear that a new institution should have some advantages over others.

[4] Besides, the beautiful environment with (5)\_\_\_\_\_ design in the university campus delights students very much. Experts (6)\_\_\_\_\_ that people studying in a beautiful campus usually feel more relaxed, hence, the effectiveness of study greatly increases. Last year, I visited several institutions for interviews. From my visits, I felt that the beautiful campus of University of Science and Technology was more comfortable than that of Hong Kong University. Likewise, the (7)\_\_\_\_\_ design at the City University (8)\_\_\_\_\_ to me very much.

[5] So much for the good sides of a very new institution, now let's move on to the bad sides of it.

[6] Being a new university, there is an extremely important point to be considered ---- its

(9)\_\_\_\_\_. However, it can only be achieved and proved by history. To

(10)\_\_\_\_\_ an example, University of Cambridge in England is undoubtedly a well-known institution. But why is it so? It is because of its good reputation around the world.

How was it made? Long history and continuous achievement are the only answer. Thus, as a new institution, the lack of good reputation becomes a great disadvantage for people to study there.

It will not only affect the (11)\_\_\_\_\_ of graduates from that institution, but also their

(12)\_\_\_\_\_ because they are less competitive in society.

[7] Last but not least, the tutors and lecturers of a new institution may not be very experienced in teaching. The University of Science and Technology is a case in point. Although I believe that

lecturers in universities are not merely for teaching, but for doing research, teaching experience is still very important in terms of educating the (13)\_\_\_\_\_ of our society. As a result,

students in a new institution have to work much harder in order to catch up with their (14)\_\_\_\_\_.

[8] In short, there are advantages and disadvantages wherever you study. Therefore, in my opinion, your (15)\_\_\_\_\_ for learning is much more important than which institution you attend. If you are willing to learn, you will be fine whether you are in an old or new institution.

**Words given:**

1 prospects	2 versatile	3 initiative	4 crucial	5 cite
6 elites	7 appeals	8 counterparts	9 controversial	10 reveal
11 status	12 fascinating	13 facilities	14 spectacular	15 reputation

**Introduction:**

1 Nowadays, the Advanced Level students are becoming more and more grateful to see the chances of tertiary education increasing. However, 'which institution should be chosen?' has recently become another controversial question. Different people hold different points of view.

**Argument for studying in a new university:**

- 2 **To begin with**, an obvious advantage, which most people must have thought of, is definitely the possessing of the most advanced equipment by these institutions.
- 3 **Take the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology as an example**, it contains the world's most high-tech equipment for both the development of new technology and doing crucial experiments. Therefore, it provides better facilities for both under-graduate and post-graduate students to learn.
- 4 **On top of this**, it also provides an excellent study environment for all the students. As everyone knows, using an old-fashioned computer to learn is very inefficient.
- 5 **On the contrary**, you can learn efficiently if you use a highly versatile computer. So, it is clear that a new institution should have some advantages over others.
- 6 **Besides**, the beautiful environment with fascinating design in the university campus delights students very much.
- 7 **Experts reveal that** people studying in a beautiful campus usually feel more relaxed, hence, the effectiveness of study greatly increases.
- 8 **Last year, I visited several institutions for interviews.** From my visits, I felt that the

beautiful campus of University of Science and Technology was more comfortable than that of Hong Kong University. Likewise, the spectacular design at the City University appeals to me very much.

***Transitional sentence:***

9 ***So much for the good sides of a very new institution, now let's move on to the bad sides of it.***

***Argument against studying in a new university:***

10 Being a new university, there is an extremely important point to be considered -- its reputation. ***However***, it can only be achieved and proved by history.

11 ***To cite an example***, University of Cambridge in England is undoubtedly a well-known institution. ***But why is it so?*** It is because of its good reputation around the world. ***How was it made?*** Long history and continuous achievement are the only answer.

12 Thus, as a new institution, the lack of good reputation becomes a great disadvantage for people to study there. It will ***not only*** affect the status of graduates from that institution, ***but also*** their prospects because they are less competitive in society.

13 ***Last but not least***, the tutors and lecturers of a new institution may not be very experienced in teaching. The University of Science and Technology is a case in point. Although I believe that lecturers in universities are not merely for teaching, but for doing research, teaching experience is still very important in terms of educating the elites of our society. As a result, students in a new institution have to work much harder in order to catch up with their counterparts.

***Conclusion:***

14 ***In short***, there are advantages and disadvantages wherever you study. Therefore, in my opinion, your initiative for learning is much more important than which institution you attend. If you are willing to learn, you will be fine whether you are in an old or new institution.

End