AS-Level Use of English

UE Writing

Sample Lecture Notes
UE Writing Lecture 1

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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.
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.
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 form 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)
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.

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).

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.
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.
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)__________.

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.

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.
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
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.

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

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.

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

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. To give 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 reputation of graduates from that institution, but also their competitiveness in society.

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 future of our society. As a result, students in a new institution have to work much harder in order to catch up with their peers.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words given:</th>
<th>1 prospects</th>
<th>2 versatile</th>
<th>3 initiative</th>
<th>4 crucial</th>
<th>5 cite</th>
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<tr>
<td>6 elites</td>
<td>7 appeals</td>
<td>8 counterparts</td>
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<td>11 status</td>
<td>12 fascinating</td>
<td>13 facilities</td>
<td>14 spectacular</td>
<td>15 reputation</td>
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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.