

## **Task 4 – Extended Writing: Role Models in the Media**

### **At a glance**

**Level:** ISE III

**Focus:** Task 4 – Extended writing

**Aims:** To practise discussion and debate skills and develop ideas in the context of role models, to consider structure of discursive essays which fulfil ISE III language functions

**Objectives:** To write an essay about role models in the media

**Skill:** Structuring written essays

**Topic:** Role models and the media

**Language functions:** Developing and justifying an argument, evaluating options and staging

**Lexis:** Discourse markers and signalling phrases

**Materials needed:** Role cards for discussion task and Essay Planning Worksheet.

**Timing:** 1 hour

### **Procedure**

#### **Preparation**

1. Print one copy of the role card sheet per group of six students or less and cut up. Leave the cut up pile face down on the desks ready for the groups to use. If numbers do not allow groups of six, leave out some of the role cards for smaller groups; however, make sure every group has the 'You are in disagreement' role card.
2. Print one copy of the essay planning worksheet per student.

#### **In class**

1. Inform learners that in today's lesson they are going to share ideas and write an essay on role models in the media. Make learners aware that this is a theme which may come up in the ISE III Reading & Writing exam and also that an essay is a common requirement for Task 4 - Extended writing.

Ask learners what they know about this topic:

Why might this be an important subject today?

In what other contexts would you need to write essays?

Then ask learners what they know about writing essays for the ISE III Reading & Writing exam:

How many words?

How many paragraphs

What kind of paragraphs do you need?

What style should it be written in?

What is the difference between main and supporting ideas?

2. Now, introduce the topic 'Mars'. Ask learners if they think humans will or can ever colonise Mars? What would it be like to live there?
3. Instruct learners that they are now going to take part in a role play and to imagine that humans have started living on Mars. Recently, groups of young people have been sent up and the Mars officials have said that they would like a role model to join them in order to inspire these young people; however, only a one-person spacecraft is available at present.
4. Ask learners to form groups of six. Ask each group of six (or less) to take the pile of role cards from a desk and to have one role card each.
5. Learners now have 15 minutes to debate why their role-card position should be the one to go up to Mars. Before starting, elicit a couple of reasons in open class as to why their role should go up. Ask learners what kind of vocabulary they might need to persuade for instance ungradeable adjectives; synonyms for 'important'.
6. Once time is up, draw mind-maps for the six roles on the board and elicit ideas that were discussed – both positive and negative – for what makes these people suitable role models. Make notes of these ideas on the board as you go.
7. Now instruct learners that they are going to use these ideas to write an essay on role models and the media. Write up on the board the prompt for the essay:  
*"A large proportion of young people look to famous media figures as role models. Are these famous figures appropriate role models or is it better to look to families and peers for inspiration?"*
8. Hand out the Essay Planning Worksheet. Instruct the learners to look at Task A and discuss the structure laid out on the left-hand column. Go through the different elements in open-class. Now give the students ten minutes to complete the planner using some of the ideas

previously discussed. Once they have finished, discuss the essay title and structure in open class. Highlight the importance of fully answering the question.

9. To help the students write the essay, ask them to complete Task B. Go through the answers in open class and if necessary, give example sentences.
10. Tell learners that they now have 30 minutes to write a 200-230 word essay using the structure on the worksheet, the phrases they have categorised and the ideas they have discussed.
11. Ask learners now to swap essays and give each other advice on the following criteria:
  - a. The quality of the ideas/arguments
  - b. Appropriate use of paragraphs
  - c. Use of linking words and phrases
  - d. Use of high level grammar
  - e. Range of formal vocabulary
  - f. Spelling and punctuation
12. While learners are checking each others' essays, monitor and note what learners have done well and identify some common areas for improvement. Feedback on these in open-class.

**Extension activity**

1. Higher level learners who have finished early could be asked to tutor other groups, checking their work.
2. Alternatively, higher level learners could swap essays after they have completed. They could then be asked to write one or two extra paragraphs for their partner's essay – developing the arguments they have presented further.

**Further support activity**

1. Students who don't feel confident to take part in discussion could take a note-taking role: making notes of key ideas that come up in the discussion.
2. Slower writers could be paired up, plan together and be given responsibility for writing half of the essay each.

**After class**

Learners could survey friends and family on who their role models are and what they admire about them.

**Role card: Cut out and give to groups of learners**

You are a famous footballer who is idolised by countless people around the country and front a range of fitness campaigns. However, you are frequently in the papers for your scandalous behaviour on nights out.

You are an international pop star. You are particularly popular with children and teenagers; however, a lot of parents are worried about whether your style and videos are appropriate for a young audience.

You are a great scientist who has been in the papers a lot recently as you have made a series of important medical discoveries. You are very awkward in front of the cameras and find public speaking difficult.

You are a campaigner for human rights. Your speeches and appearances on TV programmes have raised awareness on a number of social issues. Recently, though, you have been accused of treating staff who work for you poorly.

You are in disagreement with the whole project. You don't think we need to send the spaceship up as young people should look to parents, peers and/or themselves as role-models.

You are a top businessman. You are always on the front page of magazines with your fancy yachts and cars. You have made millions of dollars from a humble background and believe others can too. Some have questioned your business's ethics.



**Student Worksheet**

**Essay Planning Worksheet**

**Essay title:** "A large proportion of young people look to famous media figures as role models. Are these famous figures appropriate role models or is it better to look to families and peers for inspiration?"

**Task A – Complete the following essay planning template.**

Introduction Paragraph	Introduce the topic	
	Outline the structure	

Are these famous figures appropriate role models or is it better to look to families and peers for inspiration? – **Answer this question in paragraph 1**  
**Yes/No and arguments**

Main Body Paragraph 1	Topic sentence	
	First main idea	
	Supporting ideas	
	Contrasting main idea	
	Supporting ideas	

Are these famous figures appropriate role models or is it better to look to families and peers for inspiration? – **Answer this question in paragraph 2**  
**Yes/No and arguments**

Main Body Paragraph 2	Topic sentence	
	First main idea	
	Supporting ideas	
	Contrasting main idea	
	Supporting ideas	

Conclusion Paragraph	Summarise main points	
	Answer the essay title	

**Task B: Put the signalling phrases in the table below into an appropriate section in your essay planner:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To sum up, ....</li><li>• For instance, ....</li><li>• First, to discuss the value of....</li><li>• Some media figures can be seen to....</li><li>• In contrast, other famous people...</li><li>• A counter consideration is that....</li><li>• Finally, my recommendation is that....</li><li>• A reason to make this claim is....</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some have argued that it is better....</li><li>• In today's world, many young people... yet some have claimed that....</li><li>• Turning now to the question of...</li><li>• This essay will discuss... and conclude that...</li><li>• A good example of this is....</li><li>• To look at this further....</li><li>• This can be seen in the case of....</li></ul>
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## Answer Key:

(Suggestions for Essay Planner Worksheet – note that this is **not** the only possible structure/answer)

Example student notes



Introduction Paragraph	In today's world, many young people... yet some have claimed that....	<i>idolise celebrity culture, not appropriate role models</i>
	This essay will discuss... and conclude that...	<i>issue of media role models, need to get a balance</i>

Main Body Paragraph 1	Topic sentence	First, to discuss the value of....	<i>different figures media presents as role models</i>
	First main idea	Some media figures can be seen to....	<i>good influence</i>
	Supporting ideas	A good example of this is....	<i>female pioneers in science, etc. - inspiration</i>
	Contrasting main idea	In contrast, other famous people...	<i>encourage selfish or vacuous behaviour</i>
	Supporting ideas	This can be seen in the case of....	<i>celebrity for celebrity's sake</i>

Main Body Paragraph 2	Topic sentence	Turning now to the question of...	<i>whether immediate family and friends can be role-models</i>
	First main idea	Some have argued that it is better....	<i>look to family members, not media figures</i>
	Supporting ideas	A reason to make this claim is....	<i>more realistic target, have best interests at heart</i>
	Contrasting main idea	A counter consideration is that....	<i>peer groups always look to outside influence</i>
	Supporting ideas	To look at this further....	<i>consider process of becoming independent, forming own tastes and views</i>

Conclusion Paragraph	To sum up, ....	<i>worries about some media role models, can't expect young people not to look to them</i>
	Finally, my recommendation is that...	<i>give people independence but encourage to follow more positive role models</i>