

Social media & human relationships

A 'for and against' essay

1. Analyse the topic

Most people claim that social networking has a huge impact on our interpersonal relationships and has changed the way we communicate with people. Has social networking improved the quality of relationships in society? Discuss the positive as well as the negative aspects giving examples.

Write an essay (about 200 words) to express your view.

- ▶ Underline the key words in the topic.
 - ▶ What is the question you have to answer?
 - ▶ What are you going to write?
 - ▶ What register/style will you use?
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2. Plan a 'for and against' essay

- ▶ How many paragraphs are you going to write?
- ▶ What are you going to include in each paragraph?



PLAN – FOR and AGAINST ESSAY

Intro	Par 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• introduce the topic – present the facts• refer to controversial aspects
Main Body *reasons/ examples/ results	Par 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• topic sentence• advantage 1• justification *• advantage 2• justification
	Par 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• topic sentence• disadvantage 1• justification• disadvantage 2• justification
Conclusion	Par 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• give balanced view of the topic• state your opinion / make a suggestion

3. Find arguments 'for' and 'against'

- ▶ Think of two ways in which social media can **improve** relationships. Give examples.
- ▶ Think of two ways in which social media can **harm** relationships. Give examples.
- ▶ Matching activity: verb phrases
- ▶ Grouping pros and cons



4. Justify your arguments: give reasons / examples / results

- ▶ Match the arguments on the left with the justifications on the right.



Arguments (for/against)	Justifications (reasons/examples/results)
1. facilitate communication	a) offensive comments, hate language, spreading lies / embarrassing photos /videos – serious impact on someone's mental, emotional and physical state – may lead to suicide
2. develop new social skills	b) make new friends - get to know people from all around the world – share common interests
3. expand your social circle	c) can cause social isolation and mental problems (e.g. anxiety and depression)
4. become addictive	d) learn how to adjust one's behaviour to online communication - protect one's privacy
5. lose face-to-face communication skills	e) handling conversation in real time - using facial expressions and body language effectively
6. is linked to cyberbullying	f) keep in touch with friends or relatives at any time and place – reconnect with friends that you have lost contact



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5. Connect your ideas

- ▶ Use appropriate linking words/phrases to connect the ideas in a main body paragraph.
- ▶ Group useful linking words/phrases according to their function in an essay.



Useful linking words/phrases

Listing arguments/ points	One main advantage/disadvantage is, Another positive/negative aspect of... is, To start/begin with, First of all, What is more, Moreover, In addition,
Giving examples	For example/instance, such as,
Presenting results	As a result, This may lead to, Therefore, In this case,
Expressing contrast	On the other hand, Although, Despite/In spite of, However,
Concluding	Taking everything into account, All things considered, To conclude, To sum up,
Expressing opinion	It seems to me, The way I see it, I think/believe (that)

6. Write your essay

- ▶ Use the plan in section 2.
- ▶ Introduce the topic with a general statement. Present the two opposing sides.
- ▶ Use the ideas in sections 3,4 and/or your own to write the two main body paragraphs.
- ▶ Conclude with a balanced view of the issue and your personal opinion/suggestion.
- ▶ Use appropriate linking words/phrases to connect your ideas (see section 5)
- ▶ Avoid repetition – paraphrase the rubric and use synonyms.

