Essay

The compulsory task at B2, C1 and C2. Give a clear opinion, back it up and stay neutral in tone.

Plantilla para escribir un essay en los exámenes Cambridge: estructura, conectores, criterios y modelo.

1 Where will you write it?

En qué examen aparece

A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
A2 Key	B1 Preliminary	B2 First	C1 Advanced	C2 Proficiency
Not in this exam	Not in this exam	140–190	220–260	240–280
		Part 1 · compulsory · 2 ideas + 1 of your own	Part 1 · compulsory · discuss 2 of 3 points	Part 1 · compulsory · summarise 2 texts

The essay is always compulsory (Part 1) from B2 First upwards.

2 Know your reader

Lector, registro y objetivo

WHO READS IT?
Your teacher or an educated reader.

REGISTER
Formal and neutral: no contractions, no slang, no "I think" in every line.

YOUR GOAL
Discuss an issue, present arguments and reach a clear conclusion.

3 Structure

Estructura párrafo a párrafo

Introduction Introducción	Introduce the topic in your own words. Say what the essay will discuss.	**30** words
Point 1 Párrafo 2	First idea from the task + reason + example.	**45** words
Point 2 Párrafo 3	Second idea from the task + reason + example.	**45** words
Your own idea Párrafo 4	B2: a third idea of your own (or the other side).	**35** words
Conclusion Conclusión	Sum up and give your opinion clearly. No new ideas.	**25** words

Word guide based on a B2 First essay (140–190 words). Adjust for your level.

4 Plan your time

Cómo repartir el tiempo

2–3 min	5 min	25–30 min	5 min
Read	**Plan**	**Write**	**Check**
Underline every point.	Paragraphs + key phrases.	Follow your plan.	Use the checklist.

One task at B2–C2 ≈ 40–45 minutes. B1 Preliminary ≈ 20 minutes per task: same four steps, shorter.

5 Useful language

Frases útiles por nivel

Function	B1 B2 Good	C1 C2 Even better
Introducing Introducir	Nowadays, ... · Many people believe that...	It is often argued that... · There is much debate about...
Adding Añadir	Firstly, ... · In addition, ... · Moreover, ...	Furthermore, ... · Not only... but also...
Contrasting Contrastar	However, ... · On the other hand, ... · Although...	Nevertheless, ... · Whereas... · Despite the fact that...
Examples Ejemplos	For example, ... · For instance, ... · such as...	A case in point is... · This is particularly true of...
Concluding Concluir	In conclusion, ... · To sum up, ... · In my opinion, ...	On balance, ... · All things considered, ... · I firmly believe...

6 What the examiner checks

Los 4 criterios de corrección

Content
Contenido
Use **both** ideas given in the task (B2) and add your own. Answer the question.

Communicative Achievement
Registro y efecto
Formal, neutral tone. Your opinion should be clear, especially in the conclusion.

Organisation
Organización
One idea per paragraph, each with a topic sentence. Good linkers.

Language
Lengua
Complex sentences, some passives, precise vocabulary. Avoid repetition.

B1 Preliminary to C2 Proficiency writing is marked on these four criteria, each out of 5.

7 Spanish speakers' traps

Errores típicos

✗ ~~In my opinion, I think...~~
✓ **In my opinion, ...**
don't double up

✗ ~~Actually, people use cars more.~~
✓ **Nowadays, people use cars more.**
actually = **en realidad**

✗ ~~The technology is important.~~
✓ **Technology is important.**
no "the" for general ideas

✗ ~~People is...~~
✓ **People are...**
plural

✗ ~~In the other hand...~~
✓ **On the other hand...**
on

✗ ~~It's a good idea, but it's expensive.~~
✓ **It is a good idea, but it is expensive.**
no contractions

8 Level up a sentence

Sube de nivel

B1	Cars are bad because they make pollution.	Basic opinion + reason.
B2	Cars are harmful **because they produce a great deal of** pollution.	Precise verb + quantity phrase.
C1	**Not only do cars** produce harmful emissions, **but they also** make our cities noisier.	Inversion for emphasis.
C2	**While** cars undeniably offer convenience, their environmental cost is **becoming increasingly difficult to justify**.	Concession + nuanced evaluation.

9 Model answer

Respuesta modelo · B2 First

169 words

Task: "Is it better to live in a city or in the countryside?" Write about: 1. jobs · 2. quality of life · 3. your own idea.

1 Nowadays, more and more people are moving to big cities. However, many still prefer the peace of the countryside. So, which is the better option?

2 The main advantage of city life is the number of jobs available. Large companies, universities and hospitals are usually based in cities, so it is much easier to build a career there. Salaries also tend to be higher.

3 On the other hand, the quality of life in the countryside is often higher. The air is cleaner, houses are cheaper and people tend to have less stress, as life moves at a slower pace. For instance, families can enjoy a garden and quiet streets.

4 Another point to consider is transport. In rural areas, buses are infrequent, which means that people depend on their cars, which is both expensive and bad for the environment.

5 In conclusion, although the countryside offers a calmer lifestyle, I believe cities are a better choice for young people, because of the opportunities they offer and the variety of things to do.

1. Introduce the topic — don't copy the question.
2. Idea 1 from the task + reason.
3. Idea 2 + example.
4. Your own idea (transport).
5. Clear opinion in the conclusion.

10 Before you hand it in

Revisa antes de entregar

- [ ] I used both ideas from the task (B2) + my own.
- [ ] No contractions, no slang.
- [ ] I used a range of linkers (not only "and" / "but").
- [ ] No new ideas in the conclusion.
- [ ] My opinion is clear in the conclusion.
- [ ] Each paragraph has one main idea.
- [ ] I didn't copy the question word for word.
- [ ] I checked the word count.

11 Now you try

Ahora te toca a ti

B2 "Young people today have an easier life than their parents did." Do you agree? Write about: 1. technology · 2. work · 3. your own idea.

Introduction

Point 1

Point 2

Your own idea

Conclusion

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