

Issue Task

Easy Difficulty Level

Topic 1: “Should schools have a dress code for students? Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of having a dress code.”

Sample Response: *Having a dress code in schools can promote a sense of equality and reduce distractions related to fashion. It can also help create a more focused learning environment. However, some argue that dress codes may limit students' freedom of expression and individuality. Balancing the need for a uniform appearance with students' rights to express themselves can be challenging. In my opinion, a dress code can be beneficial if it is fair and flexible, allowing students to express themselves while maintaining a respectful learning environment.*

Topic 2: “Do you think that homework is beneficial for students? Why or why not?”

Sample Response: *Homework can be beneficial as it reinforces what students have learned in class and provides additional practice. It helps develop time management and study skills. However, too much homework can lead to stress and reduce time for other activities. In my opinion, a reasonable amount of homework can be useful for reinforcing learning, but it should be balanced with other aspects of students' lives to avoid overwhelming them.*

Medium Difficulty Level

Topic 1: “Is it better to study alone or in a group? Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both methods.”

Sample Response: *Studying alone allows for complete focus and control over one's study environment, which can be beneficial for self-discipline and personalized learning. However, studying in a group provides opportunities for discussion, collaboration, and diverse perspectives. While group study can enhance understanding through peer interaction, it may also lead to distractions and uneven participation. In my opinion, a combination of both methods can be most effective, depending on the subject and individual preferences.*

Topic 2: “Should people be encouraged to use public transportation more often? Discuss the benefits and challenges of increasing public transportation use.”

Sample Response: *Encouraging the use of public transportation can reduce traffic congestion and lower pollution levels, leading to environmental benefits. It can also provide a cost-effective alternative to driving. However, challenges include ensuring the reliability and coverage of public transit systems, as well as addressing concerns about overcrowding and safety. In my view, promoting public transportation is*

beneficial, but it requires improvements in service and infrastructure to be a viable option for more people.

Hard Difficulty Level

Topic 1: “The impact of technology on personal relationships is often debated. Some argue that technology enhances communication, while others believe it hinders meaningful connections. Analyze both perspectives and provide your view.”

Sample Response: *Technology has revolutionized communication by enabling instant connections through social media and messaging apps, which can enhance relationships by keeping people in touch across distances. However, there are concerns that technology may reduce the quality of interactions and create a sense of disconnection in face-to-face relationships. In my opinion, while technology offers tools for staying connected, it is important to balance online interactions with meaningful face-to-face engagement to maintain strong personal relationships.*

Topic 2: “Is the pursuit of economic growth more important than environmental conservation? Discuss both sides and present your opinion.”

Sample Response: *Economic growth can lead to increased living standards, job creation, and technological advancements. However, unchecked growth may result in environmental degradation, resource depletion, and long-term ecological harm. On the other hand, prioritizing environmental conservation helps protect natural resources and maintain ecological balance. In my view, sustainable development that integrates economic growth with environmental conservation is crucial for ensuring long-term prosperity and ecological health.*

Topic 3: “Some people believe that all students should receive a college education, while others think that vocational training can be equally valuable. Evaluate both viewpoints and provide your opinion.”

Sample Response: *College education provides a broad academic foundation and can open doors to various career opportunities. However, vocational training offers practical skills and direct pathways to specific careers, which can be equally valuable for many individuals. In my opinion, both college education and vocational training have their merits, and the choice between them should depend on individual career goals and interests. Providing options for both pathways allows students to pursue the path that best suits their strengths and aspirations.*

Argument Task

Easy Difficulty Level

1. Argument: “The city council is considering installing more streetlights to enhance public safety. Reports from other cities that have implemented similar measures indicate a reduction in crime rates. Therefore, we should proceed with the installation of additional streetlights.”

Response: To evaluate this argument, we need evidence on whether the reduction in crime rates in other cities was directly due to the streetlights or if other factors contributed. Additionally, data on the current crime rates and lighting conditions in our city would be helpful. If the evidence shows a direct correlation between streetlights and reduced crime, the argument is strengthened. Conversely, if other factors were involved or if the crime rates are influenced by different variables, the argument is weakened.

2. Argument: “The new employee wellness program at our company has resulted in fewer sick days taken by employees. Given this success, we recommend expanding the program to all branches.”

Response: Evidence needed includes detailed data on sick day reductions attributed to the wellness program and employee feedback on its effectiveness. Additionally, information on whether the program’s success is due to factors specific to the current branch or if it can be expected to have similar effects at all branches. If evidence supports a clear link between the wellness program and reduced sick days across various branches, the argument is strengthened. If the success was due to unique factors at the current branch, the argument is weakened.

Medium Difficulty Level

1. Argument: “The local bookstore has seen an increase in sales after hosting author events. The store manager suggests that expanding these events to include more genres could further boost sales. We recommend increasing the number of author events and diversifying the genres.”

Response: To evaluate this argument, evidence is needed on the specific impact of author events on sales and customer demographics. Data on the types of events that had the most significant effect and customer preferences regarding genres would be relevant. If evidence shows that expanding to more genres is likely to attract a broader audience and increase sales, the argument is strengthened. If the impact of events was not substantial or genre preferences are not well aligned with potential sales increases, the argument is weakened.

2. Argument: “Recent surveys indicate that customers prefer shopping online rather than in-store. The marketing team suggests that shifting our focus to online promotions will increase our sales. We recommend prioritizing online marketing strategies.”

Response: Evidence needed includes a comparison of sales data before and after implementing online promotions, customer feedback on their shopping preferences, and an analysis of online versus in-store shopping trends. If evidence shows a strong preference for online shopping and effective online promotions lead to increased sales, the argument is strengthened. Conversely, if customer preferences are not uniform or if online promotions do not result in significant sales increases, the argument is weakened.

Hard Difficulty Level

1. Argument: “A recent study suggests that implementing a flexible work-from-home policy increases employee productivity and job satisfaction. Given these findings, we recommend adopting a flexible work-from-home policy for all employees.”

Response: To evaluate this argument, evidence is needed on the specifics of the study, such as the sample size, the context of the work environment, and how productivity and job satisfaction were measured. Additionally, data on the current work-from-home practices and employee feedback within our organization would be relevant. If the study’s findings are robust and applicable to our work environment, and if similar benefits are expected in our organization, the argument is strengthened. If the study’s results are not generalizable or if there are potential negative effects not accounted for, the argument is weakened.

2. Argument: “The company has seen significant growth in profits after adopting a new production technology. The technology is expensive, but the increased profits justify the investment. We recommend continuing to use this technology and exploring further advancements.”

Response: Evidence needed includes a detailed financial analysis of the costs versus benefits of the new technology, including long-term maintenance costs and potential for future advancements. Data on how the technology specifically contributed to profit increases and comparisons with alternative technologies would be helpful. If evidence shows a clear, sustainable return on investment and opportunities for further advancements, the argument is strengthened. If the technology’s costs outweigh its benefits or if there are better alternatives, the argument is weakened.