

Look at the essay about life skills and do the exercises to improve your writing skills.

### Preparation

Match the two parts of the phrase and write a–f next to the numbers 1–6.

- |                           |               |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| 1..... life               | a. together   |
| 2..... traditional school | b. subjects   |
| 3..... real               | c. skills     |
| 4..... time               | d. world      |
| 5..... working            | e. finances   |
| 6..... managing           | f. management |

**Writing skills practice: Life skills essay – exercises**
**Exam question**

In your English class you have been talking about life skills: skills which are needed in everyday life. Now your teacher has asked you to write an essay.

*Life skills should be taught to teenagers at school together with traditional subjects like maths and science. Do you agree?*

Write about:

1. managing finances
2. cooking
3. .... (your own idea)

Nowadays, some schools are teaching life skills as well as traditional subjects. Some people say this prepares students better for life in the real world, whereas others say it is not necessary.

In my opinion, school should prepare students for adult life. Financial skills such as budget planning and saving money are essential to avoid falling into debt. It would also be a good idea to learn basic cooking, as this is fundamental for survival when you are living on your own.

On the other hand, some people argue that there is no time for extra subjects at school and that life skills should be learnt at home. Personally, I think we already learn many life skills while doing traditional subjects. For example, we learn teamworking by doing group projects, and organising our homework teaches us time management skills.

To sum up, I believe all schools should teach life skills. It would not require too much extra work because there is no need to teach them separately from conventional subjects. This will make sure that students leave school better prepared for university and work.

### Top Tips for writing

1. Organise your essay in paragraphs with an introduction, a conclusion and middle paragraphs. Use phrases like **Nowadays** and **To sum up** to start the first and last paragraphs.
2. Think about how to organise your middle paragraphs. This essay has two, discussing views for and against the topic. Alternatively, you can write three, one for each of the three points in the question.
3. Use a range of expressions for organising your ideas, showing contrast and giving examples.
4. Use phrases such as **Personally, ...** to show your personal opinion.
5. Use phrases like **Some people say ...** and **Others say ...** to present contrasting opinions.
6. Try to use synonyms to avoid repetition.

## 1. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Write the best option to complete the sentence.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ there is a lot of debate about how to teach life skills.  
a. Actually                                      b. This day                                      c. Nowadays
2. Some people say schools should teach life skills, \_\_\_\_\_ others argue that young people can learn these skills at home.  
a. on the other hand,                      b. whereas                                      c. as well as
3. \_\_\_\_\_, life skills are extremely important.  
a. I say                                              b. In my opinion                                      c. Personally
4. Group projects teach students skills \_\_\_\_\_ team working and time management.  
a. that are                                              b. as                                              c. such as
5. There are many opportunities at school to improve how we work with other people. Learning to cook, \_\_\_\_\_, needs more special resources and dedicated lessons.  
a. on the other hand                      b. although                                      c. but
6. \_\_\_\_\_ that there is not enough time to teach life skills at school.  
a. Some people argue                      b. Some people argues                      c. Some peoples argue
7. \_\_\_\_\_, there are arguments for and against teaching life skills in school, but I think on balance it is a good idea.  
a. Conclusion                                      b. To sum up                                      c. Lastly
8. \_\_\_\_\_ the benefits of learning life skills at school outweigh the disadvantages.  
a. I believe in                                      b. In my opinion                                      c. Personally, I think

## 2. Check your writing: reordering

Write a number (1–4) to put these paragraphs in order.

- |       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ..... | These days many schools are debating whether to include life skills as well as more traditional subjects. Some people say this will prepare students better for the real world, whereas others say it is not necessary.                                                                                                                                                  |
| ..... | On the other hand, some people say there is already a lot to do at school and teachers and students do not have any spare time. They argue that teaching cooking and other domestic tasks like ironing at school would need a lot of time and resources. However, I think that, in most cases, we can learn useful life skills at the same time as traditional subjects. |

- ..... In conclusion, I believe that schools should teach life skills at the same time as conventional subjects as much as possible. This would be very beneficial in preparing students for adult life.
- ..... Many people argue that teaching life skills at school is the best way to prepare students for adult life. Skills such as managing finances, teamwork and organising time are essential for the real world, and not everyone has the opportunity to learn these at home.

### 3. Check your writing: gap fill

Complete the sentences with a word to fill the gap.

1. Nowadays some schools are changing the timetables they offer to include life skills as well \_\_\_\_\_ more traditional subjects.
2. Some people say this will prepare students better for life in the real world, \_\_\_\_\_ others say it is not necessary.
3. In my \_\_\_\_\_, school should prepare students for adult life.
4. Skills \_\_\_\_\_ as managing finances, teamwork and organising time are essential for the real world.
5. Basic cooking is also fundamental when you are living \_\_\_\_\_ your own.
6. I think we already learn many life skills at school while doing traditional subjects. For \_\_\_\_\_, we learn teamworking skills by doing group projects.
7. On the \_\_\_\_\_ hand, some people argue that there is no time for extra subjects at school and that life skills should be learnt at home.
8. To \_\_\_\_\_ up, I believe that schools should teach life skills as well as conventional subjects.

#### Discussion

What do you think are the most useful things to learn at school? Does school prepare you well enough for the real world?