

**English Language for Competitive Exams**  
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**Week - 01**  
**Lecture- 04**  
**Analyze a task – 1**

Good morning. We will talk about writing essays today, particularly how to analyze an issue. So, you all understand the importance of writing well for competitive exams. Any essay worth it is name or any competitive exam worth it is name is comprised of an essay writing task. It could be analyzing an issue, discussing an issue giving your own opinion for and against, so variety of task. But writing is an integral part of every competitive exam in English that is the key factor that decides that goes in making a decision for you.

So, you will be needing writing in every field of life academic writing, but let us now talk about writing for competitive exams. So, generally you are given for competitive exams you are given a particular or a specific time, and specific number of words; let us say 30 minutes- 500 words, 40 minutes- 1000 words something like that. So, read that well that is most important, never write your work in or your work should never be under length that is the key feature for most competitive exam.

So, always see that you are counting your words well, you should know your own speed and many a times students find it very difficult to write 1000 words in 40 minutes, or 800 words in 40 minutes so something like that; whatever is the requirement of the exam practice before going you should be able to handle the minimum number of words required for an essay, that does not mean that you repeat yourself that is the main point that that does not mean that is starting the question copying the question in exact language, those are the key features that you should remember.

Now, for analyzing an issue you are generally presented with the topic, these topics are usually straight forward there is nothing ambiguous about that. So, they are very straightforward, can be attempted without any great preparation in special fields of

enquire; so, do not you do not need to have a sociologist to write something about the condition of schools in India, you do not need to be an anthropologist to understand about people and that is. So, uneducated read someone who has read well and that is what is expected, to show some kind of knowledge about or some kind have some kind of a global view worldview about a given topic.

Now, topic of general interest may include something on environment; write with increasing amount of pollution in the environment, do you think that more and more people should a government should force people to use public transport instead of personal vehicles, or should carpooling be imposed strictly in most countries or metro cities something like that, you do not have to be an environmental scientist to understand this. Another question could be like let us let me give you an example, communication right and social media.

So, most of you are doing that. So, with increasing amount of communication via or so through social media, the quality of conversation is changing in what way? Is it reducing is improving you have to talk about that. It to take a stand technology and it is side effects do you thing in the future people will depend more on technology, would not do more harm than good that is the kind of questions at generally competitive exams right.

Now, or ask sorry the topic sentence will be followed by a set of a specific instructions for example, you are question maybe write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree. So, to the extent to which you agree or disagree or discuss both points of view where you have to talk the both you have to talk about the two sides of the same issue; you may not agree with for or against, but anyway you have to discuss that because that is what is asked, at the end of it you have to give your own position. So, you have to take a position remember in developing and supporting your position you should consider ways in which the statement, might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position. So, that is important you have to talk about both sides, if it is discursive kind discussion kind of a question.

In a question like a write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the claim and the reason, on which that claim is based you can give you

can agree or disagree. So, you can take a position, but when it is discussion you have or specifically ask discuss both sides or discuss both points for an again then you have talk about both points. Remember your score will be based not on whether your opinion is right or wrong, remember there is no right question you may take there is no write response in essay type question you may take a position which is contrary to the popular beliefs, should more and more people send their aging parents to old age homes; do you agree or disagree?

Now, it is a very cultural specific question, most people in specific cultures may say may not agree, but even if you agree that yes parents aging parents should be sent away to old age homes; do not think that just because this is not very popular kind of a response you will be mark down it, it is all about the way you develop your response, there is no correct position. Remember the marking the assessment the evaluation is completely based on the skill with which you address the specific issue, justify your position, and you have to be articulate grammatically correct to use a variety of language, range of language of course, you should organize your question your response in a logically coherent manner.

Remember the issue task is intended to test your persuasive writing, how can you how strongly can you persuade a writer or reader to come around to your position, to see your position. You must may compelling arguments, it is not a text on your mind set or your or on your social perception; writing a skills are needed, but make a compelling argument as well. Responses should ideally include a few examples. So, if you are well read you will be able to a include a couple of examples, if the question indicates that technology causes more harm than good and you are arguing against the topic, then you can give examples of bio medicine or convenience of moving to cashless transaction things like that, whether they are causing more harm than benefit or otherwise.

Remember your essay must not be confused or ambiguous, you should not try to say that you are equally convenience on both sides of the issue, you should have a stand of position, you should provide a compelling argument on your position and then go on to use qualifiers like however, but, still, although, yet, these are the kinds of you know markers that indicate a shift to from one position to another that this is my position; so a

brief discussion of the opposite case followed by your position. Now let us talk about the kinds of topic. So, analyze an issue kind of task usually falls within some categories a few categories, that I will discuss with you and that way we would look at in detail.

So, let us talk about technology and society; now there could be a question like the increasingly rapid phase of life today causes more problems that it solves? You have to analyse it like technological inventions such as apps can never be as effective as real time learning in the class room, now we are talking about education and technology, apps and technology. Another example could be the human mind will always be superior to machines, right because after all human minds control machines, but then sometime science fiction films and books tellers that things can go machines can go out of control, situations can go out of control. So, then what happens and then is human mind strong enough to come back when machines of situation when machines go a wire.

So, another topic would be like cities and urbanizations. So, cities are cultural markers of society, cities are cultural markers of society and what do they stand for? So, is not small towns or rural areas, but cities indicate what a city what a country what a nation is like; a question could be it is primarily in cities that nations cultural traditions are generated and preserve which is quite low, you may take a stand for an against question could be for example, the best way to solve an environmental problems caused by consumer generated ways is for big towns and cities to impose strict rules and regulations on the amount of trash, they except from each household. Questions can also come from the domain of arts for example, artists have a deep social responsibility, or should it be art for art sake, so you should be it is an age old conflict.

So, social responsibility of artist or it should be art for art sake; question could be significantly poor third world nation should suspend funding for the arts, now for an against because art of course, many people may argue that art does not lead to anything, it does not really contribute towards society, so funding should not be there. Art courses also art base courses also people often say that it is only those kinds of courses in education that provide some that yield to some social benefit, what does art do what does literature do? So, for an against.

In education against formula education a person could be that formula education tends to constraint restrict or restrainer minds, rather than said them free. So, we know really education does not take place in classrooms somewhere. So, for an against nature of language should there be because with increasing globalization, should it be compulsory that every child should be taught at least 4 languages at school level for or against. Another important question or very frequent question could be exams and their roles in assessing a candidate's caliber; questions can also come for instance related to the field of government, and the way things are governed and administered.

So, government should not fund any scientific research, whose consequences are to vague or unclear. In other words you again which as no enormous social benefits; again the well being of a societies enhanced when many people are taught or train to question authority. There are societies where free press for instance is controlled; people do not write people cannot express themselves freely; should there be some kind of restriction on freedom of speech.

Again an ideal government should cater to the general well being that causes great happiness to the greatest number of people that is per suit of happiness should it be is it valid, is it acceptable. (Refer Time: 15:25) can also be related to the domain of human mind and intellect for example, the best ideas arise from interest in common place things not in great or grand ideas, but common things and best ideas can be generated from common place things or for example, a question could be in any field of enquiry, the beginner is more likely than the expert to make important contributions this is again debatable, but in class room again another question that can be that could be framed is in classroom it is practical to encourage intellectual odors over creative abilities, for or against. Questions can also come from philosophical or the area of philosophy.

So, for example, a question like; as we acquire more knowledge things do not become more comprehensible, but more complex and mysterious. Now this is a very higher order this is as this is not the way that you are going to tackle the technology or arts kinds of a question; as we acquire more knowledge things become more complex, this is something that you can expect only for higher order questions or exams. Again people who are the most deeply commuted to an idea or policy are also the most critical of it; this is also

something you need to know something about philosophy about sociology about anthropology to in order to crack this kind of these kinds of questions. In the high light of modern technology, and the growth of internet for example, I am giving you a question it is no longer possible for an idea to be truly original, what happens to the concept of originality the notion of originality? You will have to think of all this, you will have to do some reading. So, you have to be very clear about what questions can be asked in your exams. So, it all depends on the kind of question or in a kind of on the kind of exam that you are appearing for; it is important to have some idea of the previous question papers.

So, talk to people who have appeared for those exams, and ask them what is the pattern; for example, if I give you a question like formal education tends to restrain a minds and spirits rather than set them free, you have to discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree, with this statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. Now how to crack a question like this? The task is to agree or disagree with the given statement and provide your reasons for the same. So, how do we go about writing the essay? Now I can give you a couple of tips, I will repeat the question formal education tends to restrict or restrain a minds and spirits rather than set them free; this is your question how are you going to connect, how are you going to solve this essay what are the points.

Now, remember that there are lots of common sensical arguments available for the statement, that is against the formal education system, if you are going against then you should agree with this statement, and some of this arguments are that formal education system restrain or restrains creativity, they do not prepare you for real life problems schools are capitalistic institutions. So, they you need to organize your thoughts accordingly in terms of importance, and how they can link or flow into one another. Remember that you are expected to outline a position by giving it a 3 act structure, or 3 part structure; introduction, developing the body, and conclusion. So, that is a 3 part structure, organize your thoughts into different paragraphs and use the 3 arguments you have decided upon within this structure. Remember before you start writing, think of some quotation or excerpt that can add value to your essay.

For instance, you can use a well known proverb knowledge is power. So, these are the kinds of things that some quotation or excerpt can always be use; a child is not was to be filled, but a fire to be let though the stuff knowledge or information, but ignite fashion for learning. So, try to think of where you can use these excerpt or quotations to and answer your essay, do not just insert anywhere where you want them where you feel that they are it is not like many a time I have come across essays, where quotations are just inserted because the writer known those quotations, but they do not really fit.

And sometime they sound extremely clashed, clashed you know which everyone else would be writing; everyone would be using; you are the person sitting next to you would also be using the same kind of language or proverbs, try to bring some variety. Another tip is you should pay special attention to the instructions while formulating your essay out line and position, digressing will cost you your scores. What matter is stick to the length, but also always be very coherent and cogent about your ideas, tackle the issue clearly and forcefully with clarity.

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**"Formal education tends to restrain our minds and spirits rather than set them free."**

Discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement above and explain your reasoning for the position you take.

It is oft quoted that a child is not a vase to be filled, but a fire to be lit. [QUOTE 1] While the principal objective of an ideal education is to kindle this quest for truth, formal education tends to restrain our minds and spirits rather than set them free. [THESIS STATEMENT AND TOPIC CONCLUSION] The primary fault with formal education is that, despite providing practical benefits, it poses a huge problem in its disregard for individual taste and talent. [REASON 1] In a capitalist society, this system takes the form of wholly monotonous industry, whose sole benefactors are those who own educational institutions and continue building them. [REASON 2] Most importantly, the formal education system prepare children for a job, while it should prepare children for living life. [REASON 3] The literal and metaphorical baggage of countless notebooks, inhuman hours, and the disciplining dictatorship of teachers provide testimony to the fact of an overtly mechanistic education system. [TRANSITION SENTENCE]

A formal education system tends to focus on uniform schedules and interests, thereby imposing several subjects on a student despite his/her individual abilities. [TOPIC SENTENCE FOR REASON 1] The following quotation, popularly attributed to Albert Einstein, captures this sentiment, "Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will lives it whole life believing that it is stupid." [QUOTE 2] The overwhelming bias for natural sciences and the popular disregard for creative pursuits is also characteristic of a formal education, further marginalizing the interests of several participants in the process. A one-size-fits-all methodology is not only inadequate to develop young minds, it actively restrains them to a process which creates mere clones of one another. [3-4 SENTENCES THAT DEVELOP AND SUPPORT REASON 1]

Look at this particular example, look at the slide here. It is a solved essay example formal education tends to restrain our minds and spirits, rather than set them free discuss the extent; please read the essay here discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree

with the statement above and explain your reasoning for the position you take. Look at the way it has been done for you, it is oft quoted that as that a child is not a vase to be filled, but a fire to be lit.

So, this is a quotation why, but you do not have to write I am I am just using it to give you an example, you do not do this for your actual exam, do not write in bracket that is the proverb or quotation so just an example. While the principal objective of an ideal education is to kindle this quest for truth, formal education tends to restrain our minds and spirits rather than set them free. So, this is your thesis statement and topic conclusion, this is the position you are going to take. So, that is thesis statement. The primary fault with formal education is that, despite providing practical benefits, it poses a huge problem in it is disregard for individual taste and talent.

This is a reason. In a capitalist society, this system takes the form of wholly monotonous industry, whose sole benefactors are those who own educational institutions and continue building them. Most importantly, the formal education systems prepare children for a job, while it should prepare children for living life. The literal and metaphorical baggage of countless notebooks, inhuman hours, and the disciplining dictatorship of teachers provide testimony to the fact of an overtly mechanistic education system.

A formal education system tends to focus on uniform schedule and interests, thereby imposing several subjects on a student despite his or her individual abilities. So, this is the topic sentence for reason one. The following quotation, popularly attributed to Einstein Albert Einstein, captures this sentiment, “Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid”. That is quote 2; the overwhelming bias for natural sciences and the popular disregard for creative pursuits is also characteristic of a formal education, further marginalizing the interests of several participants in the process. A one-size-fits-all methodology is not only inadequate to develop young minds; it actively restrains them to process or to a process which creates more clones of one another. So, they these are sentences you are giving them enough material to develop and support reason one.



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The capitalist turn in education can be easily marked by the emergence of the term “education industry”.  
[REASON 2] Formal education has become a lucrative business, where learning and creativity are subsumed in a pursuit for greater profits. Recently, the Bala Vidya Mandir School, Chennai (India) invited much controversy after the management informed parents that they had to choose between two options – opt for the nominal fee as prescribed by the official fee determination committee or pay the fees as fixed by the school (which amounts to double the amount set by the committee). In case of choosing nominal fees, the students would be denied all co-curricular activities offered by the school and working time would be restricted to about four hours. [EXAMPLE 1] Several students opt to drop out of school, or work after hours in order to cope with the increasing financial demands of the education industry. This is probably one of the most significant flaws in the system, and unfortunately, one that cannot be easily rectified in a decidedly capitalist order. [3-4 SENTENCES THAT DEVELOP AND SUPPORT REASON 2]

Thirdly, and most importantly, schools prepare children for a job, while it should prepare our children for life.  
[REASON 3] The supposedly “practical” concern with landing a good career outweighs the necessary issues one encounters in life such as managing money, relationships, stress and depression, and so on. An uncritical amassment of information hardly covers the goal of real education, which is to provide a direction and purpose to young minds at an impressionable age. The fact that 10% of middle-aged Europeans are on antidepressants might very well be caused by this failure of our education system to prepare people for dealing with everyday life. [EXAMPLE 2] [3-4 SENTENCES THAT DEVELOP AND SUPPORT REASON 3]

Clearly, a formal education system has been responsible for mass-manufactured crowds of students who remain unaffected, at best, from the fallibilities of the system. Rather than inculcating an environment that fosters free thinking, it only tends to restrain our minds further, producing narrow manners of thought and action. [RECAP THESIS] A more sophisticated system is needed which nurtures every person's unique strengths instead of the one-size-fits-all methodology of the present curriculums. [EXPANDS POSITION] It is evident that only with a swift and necessary change in formal education can we expect our future generations to acquire a truly intelligent and creative outlook. [CONCLUSION]

Now, moving on to the next slide; the capitalist turn in education can be easily marked by the emergence of the term “education industry”. This is another reason to go against right. So, formal education has become a lucrative business, where learning and creativity are subsumed in a pursuit for greater profits. So, there is an example given from a local school and then we go on. So, it is always good to give examples now moving on to the next para. Thirdly and most importantly, schools prepare children for a job, while it should prepare our children for life.

The supposedly “practical” concern with landing a good career outweighs the necessary issue one encounters in life such as managing money, relationships, stress and depression and so on. An uncritical amassment of information hardly covers the goal of real education, which is to provide a direction and purpose to young minds at an impressionable age. The fact that 10 percent of middle-aged Europeans are on antidepressants might very well be caused by this failure of our education system to prepare people for dealing with everyday life. Clearly a next paragraph; so remember paragraphing is extremely important, you cannot go in one block or a mass and breathless style of writing, there as to be indication that you are changing ideas or giving more ideas.

So, clearly a formal education system has been responsible for mass manufactured crowds of a students who remain unaffected at best from the fallibilities of the system; rather than inculcating an environment that fosters free thinking, it only tends to restrain our minds further producing narrow manners of thought and action. So, what is now you are going to you are moving to words your conclusion. It is evident that only with a swift and necessary change in formal education, can we expect our future generations to acquire a truly intelligent and creative outlook. So, everything is moving towards a green with the thesis the question the statement, that is formal education stiling or a stifling people creative grows and the entire essay is in support of the statement, it does not it does not talk to it, it does not need to talk about the merits of formulae education.

So, the writer can the response can go on giving several examples, and it is a very well articulate or very well written essay about the pearls of formal education. So, remember you need to have a check list, and essay should have a valid argument backed up by evidence it employees varied sentence structure and demonstrates appreciable facility with language. It has to be all these things have to be practiced then cultivated, it would not happen overnight.

Remember the organization of the essay should be very perceptible like you have just seen this essay it effectively argues in favor of it is position; it uses good examples that is what you are supposed to do; quotation and excerpts to support the argument that it puts forward. Remember that elements of a standard language, English language should be effectively used vocabulary usage grammar, punctuation you are not suppose to coin new words here, but use them very wisely judiciously.

So, how was the essay framed; you have to have a thesis statement and topic conclusion, you have to have summary para of reasons, so you have given 3 reasons. On reason one: you 6 to 7 sentences, reason two: 6 to 7 sentence and same for reason 3. So, every reason should be well extended with examples and good arguments. Concluding paragraphs should be their recapping whatever you have said throughout, and there should be a conclusion. Conclusion should be related to what you have stated explicitly in your topic sentence and of course, include quotations and relevant examples where ever needed, but use them appropriately and not just like a Xerox, do not be a Xerox of other people the

way other people think and write. So, practice the lot we will do more such exercises in our subsequent classes.

Thank you very much.