

What is a Problem-Solution Essay?

Worksheet

A problem-solution essay has two parts: explaining the problem clearly and offering realistic solutions. The structure typically follows: introduction → problem description → solution(s) → conclusion.

Questions

1. In a problem-solution essay, which comes first?
A) Solution
B) Problem
C) Conclusion
D) Recommendation
2. How many main ideas should the solution paragraph have?
A) One
B) Two to three
C) Five
D) Ten
3. What should the introduction include?
A) Your personal story
B) Hook, paraphrase, thesis
C) All solutions listed
D) Conclusion restatement
4. Is it okay to propose an impractical solution?
A) Yes, creativity is key
B) No, solutions must be realistic
C) Only if unique
D) Only if funny
5. Prompt: 'Many young people leave their hometowns for university or work. What problems does this cause and what solutions can you suggest?'
6. Prompt: 'Plastic pollution is damaging marine life. What are the causes and how can we fix it?'
7. Prompt: 'Traffic congestion in cities is worsening. Discuss the problem and solutions.'
8. Define: What is the main goal of a problem-solution essay?
9. Define: How many body paragraphs in a problem-solution essay?
10. Define: Should you critique your own solutions?

Answer Key

1. B) Problem — You must establish the problem before proposing solutions.
2. B) Two to three — Two to three well-explained ideas are better than many vague ones.
3. B) Hook, paraphrase, thesis — Hook readers, paraphrase the prompt, state your thesis.
4. B) No, solutions must be realistic — IELTS rewards feasible, implementable solutions.
5. Problem: Brain drain, family separation, ghost towns. Solution 1: Government incentives to hire locally. Solution 2: Online education to keep youth in hometowns. Conclusion: Both can reduce outmigration.
6. Problem: Single-use plastics, poor waste management. Cause: Consumer demand, lack of regulation. Solution 1: Ban single-use plastics, invest in biodegradable alternatives. Solution 2: Stricter factory discharge laws and education. Conclusion: Multi-pronged approach needed.
7. Problem: Rising cars, poor public transit, urban sprawl. Solution 1: Expand metro/bus networks with real-time tracking. Solution 2: Congestion tax, bike lanes, remote work incentives. Conclusion: Requires infrastructure + policy shift.
8. Identify a real problem and propose one or more practical, realistic solutions.
9. Minimum two: one for the problem, at least one for solutions.
10. Briefly acknowledge limitations, but focus on why solutions work.

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