



Getting Ready for the OSSLT

Writing the Opinion Piece: Some helpful tips

An **opinion piece** is a multi-paragraph response to a question which takes a specific stand on a topic.

On this section of the test, the personal opinion on a given topic needs to be written in the form of a short essay.

Tips for writing an opinion piece:

- Read the question and decide what position to take in the written response.
- Brainstorm for both “yes” and “no” before deciding which stance will be taken in the response. Often there may be more supporting ideas and examples for one side – and this will not always correspond to a personal opinion. Choose the stance with the most effective supporting ideas.
- Make sure that only **one** stance is taken in the opinion piece. Do NOT be neutral or undecided in the response.
- The stance must be stated clearly at the beginning and repeated at end of the opinion piece. Reword the question into a statement. For example, if the question is “Should students take gym throughout high school?” the response should start and end with “Students should take gym throughout high school” or “Students should not take gym throughout high school”.
- The opinion piece must support the stance with reasons, examples, or facts.
- The response must contain a minimum of three paragraphs: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.
- Make sure the divisions between paragraphs are clear (e.g. skip a line between paragraphs or indent).
- Additional paragraphs may be added to the body of the opinion piece as long as the response is no more than 2 pages.
- The response may be written using first person pronouns (i.e. “I”, “me”, “my”, etc.).
- Two pages will be provided for the response. Write as close to two pages as possible.
- The response will be assessed for **topic development, organization, and use of conventions (spelling, grammar, and punctuation)**, so be sure to write in complete sentences using formal English.

How to Write an Opinion Piece: Sample Outline

Question: *Are parents owed respect or should they have to earn it?*

INTRODUCTION

Topic Sentence: Respect is an attitude based on honouring and admiring someone.

Attention Getter Sentence: To respect positive role models is a good, but sometimes difficult choice.

Answer Sentence: Parents are owed respect.

Main Idea #1: Parents are generous.

Main Idea #2: Parents make sacrifices.

BODY PARAGRAPH #1

Main Idea # 1: Parents are generous

Supporting Detail #1): time

Supporting Detail #2): money

Supporting Detail #3): love

BODY PARAGRAPH #2

Main Idea #2: Parents make sacrifices

Supporting Detail #1): health

Supporting Detail #2): social life

Supporting Detail #3): dreams

CONCLUSION

Review Topic Sentence: Respect involves following and appreciating the advice of a legitimate authority figure.

Review Answer Sentence: Parents should receive respect without having to ask for it.

Main Idea #1 with 3 Supporting Details Sentence: Generous parents are owed respect because they give their time, money, and love.

Main Idea #2 with 3 Supporting Details Sentence: Parents sacrifice their health, their social life, and their dreams, so they should be respected.

Concluding Statement: Children should be encouraged to respect their parents because of the positive things parents do contribute to their children's future accomplishments.