
CENTRE FOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE

C*f*AP

02 WRITING SKILLS

W6 ESSAY WRITING FOR SUBJECTS

Getting Started?

Example 2

So how do you make a selection of material for an essay? Think of the next essay you must write, and then take five minutes to note any ideas that occur to you which might be used in it. If you do not have any essay title in mind, and wish to practise generating ideas, use the following title:

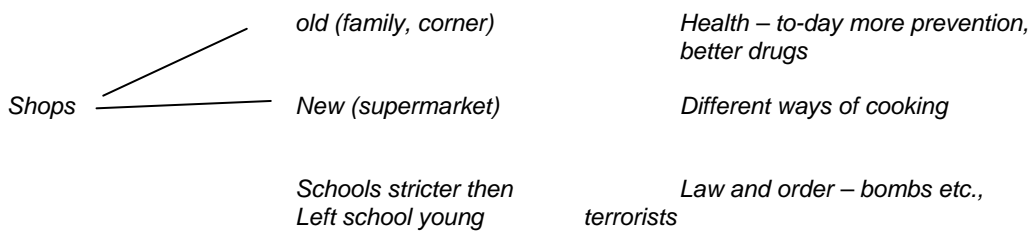
‘Society to-day is totally different from society in 1900. ‘Evaluate this statement.

Note your ideas here:

Response

There is no single way of gathering initial ideas. Here are three different methods:

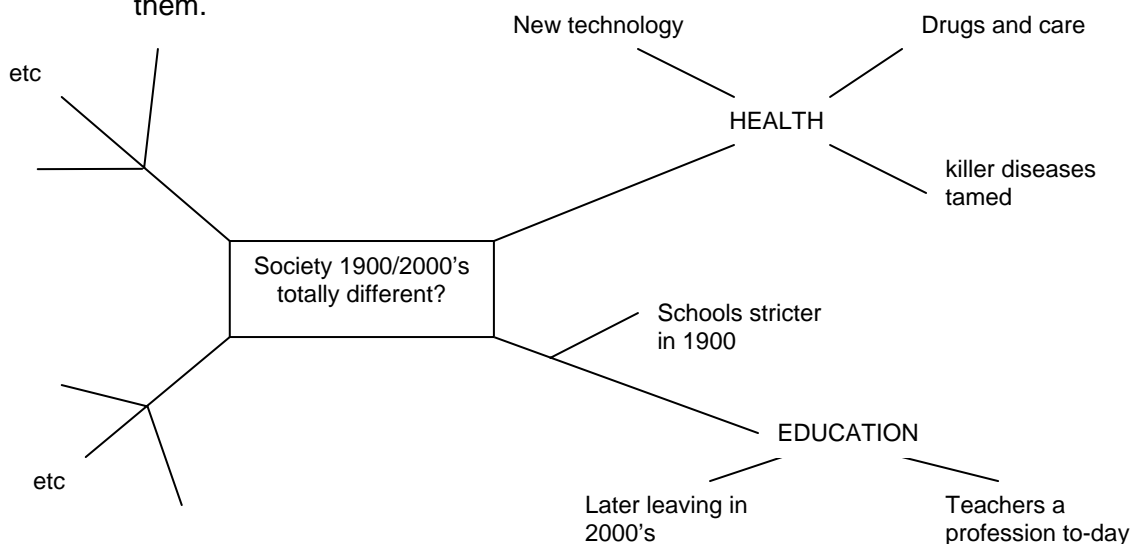
1. You could brainstorm the subject. Jot down all the ideas that come to you on the subject in any order. You might come up with something like this:



2. Another way is to write a list:

- more marriage problems to-day
- working wives
- families spilt up – working away from home
- less family care for the elderly.

3. A third method is to use spray notes. The abbreviated title is recorded in the centre, with main points on the first stalks and examples branching out from them.



The purpose of the 'getting started' activity, whichever method you use, is to get down on paper the ideas and knowledge which you have with the minimum delay. Now for the next step.

Refining and developing ideas

Your next tasks are to

- decide which of the initial ideas you are going to use
- check their relevance to the question
- develop the points you retain

For example, if you decided that differences in the position of women between 1900 and the 2000's was an essential issue, you might develop that idea something like this:

1900

- larger families
- limited choice of occupations
- most women lived at home until married
- women organised the household
- few women in further/higher education
- no women in Parliament

To-day (21st century)

- women can enter almost any occupation
- first British woman P.M.
- many go into further/higher education
- many live alone or away from home
- many still do most household chores despite having other employment
- small families – birth control

Example 3

Look at your own notes made in *Example 2* and develop your original ideas similarly.

Response

Check that:

- all your points are relevant
- you have covered all the key points
- you have considered the main points of view

When you have done all this, the next stage involves organising and expanding your notes.

Action Plan

For your next essay, note down the following things:

How you will generate your initial ideas:

How you will develop your initial ideas:

Note down the points you will look for in editing:

What else?

Other packs related to this one are: W4, W5, E5 & E6.