

Warm up

Start by writing the following statement on the board:

English is a useful subject to learn.

Ask individual students to tell you if they agree. Then ask:

Why is it useful?

Elicit a variety of explanations from different students. Point out that the points they have come up with could be used to make a sentence with an idea and a reason. For example:

English is a useful subject to learn because many people around the world speak it.

Equally, the ideas could be turned into a basic paragraph with a topic sentence supported by a reason or reasons:

English is a useful subject to learn. This is thanks to the fact that many people around the world speak it. In addition ...

Explain that these are the most frequent ways in which we use reasons to support our writing.

Using the Factsheet

There are three possible ways to use the Factsheet:

- 1 Give students the Factsheet before the lesson, so they can read it at home and come to the lesson prepared to do the Worksheet. If you use this approach, start the lesson by checking that all students have read and understood the Factsheet, and answer any questions.
- 2 Give students the Factsheet at the beginning of the lesson and start by working through it with the students.
- 3 Focus on the Worksheet in the lesson, then give students the Factsheet at the end of the lesson, so they can take it home and keep it as a reference or revision tool.

Theory to practice

Suggested answers

- 1 This is because we need people to train to become electricians, plumbers and mechanics.
- 2 Research has shown that people can be more productive working in this way. They also save time on travelling.
- 3 The main reason for this is the damage fossil fuels do to the environment when they are burnt.
- 4 Studies indicate that it can cause stress, headaches and poor-quality sleep.
- 5 The main reason for this is to give them some experience of the world.

Using the Worksheet

Practice

1 Choose the correct phrase to complete the sentences.

- Begin by pointing out that the first two exercises on the Worksheet focus on using reasons to support a point within a single sentence. Explain that sometimes this is what students need to do. (The other exercises will focus more on producing paragraphs.)
- You might like to do the first item with the class. Ask students why the answer is correct (*because of* is followed by a noun, whereas *because* is followed by a clause).
- For the remainder of the items, tell students to work alone, at least at first. If you wish, you can let them compare notes with a partner after they have attempted the task.

Answers

- a because of
- b as
- c thanks to
- d for
- e Since
- f as a result of
- g to
- h Because

2  **Complete the sentences with ideas of your own. Then compare your sentences with a partner.**

- Keep students focused on the idea of using reasons to support writing within a single sentence. Explain that students need to first come up with ideas, and then support them.
- Allow plenty of time for this, and ask students to work alone initially to fill in as many gaps as they can. They can then compare notes with a partner.

Students' own answers

3  **Work with a partner to complete the reasons below. Can you suggest alternatives for the link phrases?**

- Begin by pointing out that students are now going to look at constructing a simple paragraph containing a point supported by a reason.
- Students could work on all three paragraphs in their pairs. Alternatively, you may wish to do the first paragraph with the class, allow students to do the second one in pairs, and then do the third alone. However you approach this, be prepared to help any students who might have difficulty.

Possible answers

Alternative link phrases are given in brackets.

- a** (This is thanks to the fact that) many jobs could be done by computers instead of people.
- b** (This is because) we need people with specific skills – not just knowledge.
- c** (Statistics indicate that) people who work from home have difficulty organizing their working day around their home life.

4  **Read the topic sentences and complete them by choosing the option that best matches your opinion. Then write 1–3 sentences giving your reason(s). When you have finished, compare your answers with a partner. Who has the best reasons?**

- Students continue working at paragraph level. This time, however, remind them that there is often more than one good reason to support a point.
- Ask them to complete the task alone. They should introduce their reason(s) with a suitable linking phrase. Any extra reasons can be added with *Additionally, In addition, Furthermore, etc.*
- When they finish, students can compare answers with a partner. As they do this, you should encourage them to tell you what makes a good supporting reason. Bear in mind that students often have difficulty supporting their arguments with good reasons. Here is a perfect opportunity to look at what works and what doesn't.

Students' own answers

5 **Write your own paragraph, similar to the ones in Exercises 3 and 4 but on a subject you know about – perhaps something related to your studies. Aim to include a topic sentence and 2–3 sentences of explanation.**

- Ask your students what they study, if they are pursuing various different courses. Encourage them to come up with one topic sentence about their subject (you should be prepared to help them if necessary by asking questions, as it may be difficult for them to narrow their subject down to one single point – ask them what books they've studied recently, or if they've been to any memorable lectures).
- If English is the only thing they are currently studying, you could prompt them to think of topic sentences about that. Examples could include:
Being able to speak English is more important than knowing all the grammar rules.
The ability to speak English is more important than the ability to read it.
The most important thing in English is communication.
- Students need to come up with a topic sentence which they believe is true. You might want to make sure they've done this before they go on to write the rest of the paragraph, which can be set for homework if time is short.
- When they have written one reason, remind them that they can add a second (and possibly a third) reason.

- Depending on the size of your class, you can go around, asking each student to show you their paragraph. In a very big class, get students to discuss it with a partner, while you go around offering help where necessary and looking at as many paragraphs as possible.

Reflect

6  Use phrases from the Worksheet and the Factsheet to link each main point with its reason. Then, with a partner, try to think of other reasons you could add.

- Point out that some of the reasons can be linked to the main point in a single sentence, while others are better suited to being kept separate. Remind students that they could also begin a sentence with the reason.
- Allow a few minutes for students to attempt the task alone. Ask them to use a variety of linking structures. (You could tell them they are only allowed to use *because* once!)
- When they finish, tell them to compare with a partner.
- While students are doing pairwork, they should discuss other reasons. Remind the class that it can often be hard to think of good reasons, so the work they do together is a useful way to add to their ideas.
- After you have checked their answers and heard their additional reasons, remind students to use the things they have learnt in the lesson when they do their own academic writing.

Possible answers

- a** Most people will end up leaving their home town because it cannot offer them the work or study opportunities they need.
- b** We will always need people who know about computers, so studying computer programming is always a good idea.
- c** Medical students spend several years learning their subject very well. The main reason for this is that other people's lives are in their hands.
- d** Companies should provide facilities, such as gyms, for their employees. This is because it is in the interest of the company to keep their workers fit and healthy.
- e** We should encourage businesses to move out of the cities. One reason for this is that cities are too crowded, and if they keep growing, they will become impossible places to live and work.
- f** Studying online is a great solution for a lot of people for the simple reason that students can work or be with their families and study at the same time.