

The background features a gradient from light green at the top to dark blue at the bottom. On the left side, there is a large, semi-circular scale with numerical markings from 140 to 260 in increments of 10. Several circular and semi-circular patterns, some solid and some dashed, are scattered across the background, some with arrows indicating direction. The overall aesthetic is technical and modern.

INDEPENDENT TOEFL WRITING

SHAYESTEH.IR

2021

SECTIONS

1. General & Vocabulary
2. Note Taking
3. Reading
4. Listening
5. Speaking
6. Writing
 1. General Writing
 2. Integrated
 3. Independent

7. General writing
 1. Writing Ideas
 2. Cohesion & Coherence
 3. Writing Sentence variety
 4. Grammar
 5. Punctuation
 6. The magic of 3

ANALYTICAL WRITING

Task	Time Allowed	Answer Format
Integrated	20 Minutes	Short essay on an issue of general interest that clearly and carefully addresses the prompt (250-300 words)
Independent	30 Minutes	Short essay that analyzes another person's argument for validity, soundness and supporting evidence (+350 words)

ETS Integrated: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sv0xWV-5u0&list=PL499345C34BF71B4C&index=1>

ETS Independent: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64tsnvg-B5M&list=PL499345C34BF71B4C&index=2>

TOEFL INDEPENDENT WRITING

Here's how the TOEFL Independent writing question works:

- It is the second writing question on the TOEFL
- You will be asked a question and be given 30 minutes to write about it.
- According to a recent survey, the questions are usually about **education** (40% of the time), **work** (30% of the time) and **lifestyle** (30% of the time).
- There is no minimum or maximum word count, but I think you should write between 380 and 400 words.

STYLES OF QUESTIONS

- Agree/Disagree Style (65% of the time)
- Multiple Choice Style (15% of the time)
- Preference Style (15 % of the time)
- Good Idea Style (very rare)

<https://www.toeflresources.com/sample-toefl-essays/>

INDEPENDENT WRITING RUBRICS

Scoring Guides (Rubrics) for Writing Responses

[Download Scoring Guides \(Rubrics\) for Writing Responses \(PDF\)](#) | File size: 131 kb



HOW TO STRUCTURE THE ESSAY (AN ESSAY TEMPLATE)

- Writing an Introduction
- Writing Body Paragraphs (2)
- Writing a Conclusion

WRITING AN INTRODUCTION

The first part of your TOEFL independent essay must always be the introductory paragraph. Follow this template:

- **Sentence One: The “Hook”**

This is an interesting sentence that introduces the general theme or topic of the essay. I recommend stating something that **we should do in our life**: “**It is critically important that we VERB...**”

- **Sentence Two: The Main Point**

This is your main argument and direct answer to the question. Start with “**Personally, I believe...**”

- **Sentence Three: The Transition**

Just use: “**I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.**”

THERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND AS YOU WRITE YOUR INTRODUCTION

- Don't waste time on the opening hook. It isn't that important.
- Don't copy and paste from the prompt.
- Write about **50 words**.

WRITING BODY PARAGRAPHS

Next you must write two body paragraphs that support your thesis. Use this template for your first body paragraph:

- **Sentence One: Transition + A Topic Sentence (Controlling Idea) (look at writing idea video clip) (Dimensions, Idea Matrix, Stakeholders)**
This summarizes your first supporting reason. Begin with **“To begin with...”**.
- **Sentences Two and Three: The Explanation (Supporting Ideas - Fishbone) (look at writing idea video clip)**
Explain what you mean, without talking directly about a personal experience.
- **Sentence Four: The Transition**
Just use: **“My personal experience is a compelling illustration of this.”**
- **Sentence Six to End: The Personal Example**
An example from your life that illustrates this argument. It should make up about 60% of the body paragraph.
- **Link Back (optional)** – Sometimes before Sentence 4

THERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND AS YOU WRITE THE BODY OF YOUR TOEFL INDEPENDENT ESSAY

- Use a mix of simple, compound and complex sentences.
- Emphasize the examples. They are easy to write, so they should make up about 60% (or more) of each body paragraph.
- Avoid very short sentences (less than seven words) and very long sentences (more than 60 words)
- Don't start sentences with coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS)
- Use a variety of discourse phrases and transitions (like: therefore, moreover, as a result, in addition)
- Write about **150 words** in each body paragraph.

FACTUAL QUESTIONS & NORMATIVE QUESTIONS

Factual (Topic 1, Topic 3, Topic 5 ...)

- You can not use Normative reasons in topic sentences

Normative (هنجاری، باید و نباید) (Topic 2, Topic 9, ...) (Prefer, Better, Should, Must, ...)

- You can use Normative and factual reasons in topic sentences

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Ex: “Nowadays more marriages end in divorce than the past. Agree or disagree?” ---- it is a factual question

- ✗ It is really good to get a divorce because it leads to freedom.
- ✗ People should be free to determine their life.
- ✓ Today’s couples are experiencing more financial difficulties
- ✓ Today’s couples have developed higher expectations from their partners

IDEAS FOR TOPIC SENTENCE

Dimensions:

1. Family
2. Economy
3. Politics (Government)
4. Environment
5. Psychology (Feeling)
6. Society (Culture)
7. Education
8. Media
9. Past (History)
10. Future (Consequences, Plans)
11. Health (Sanitation)

Idea Matrix:

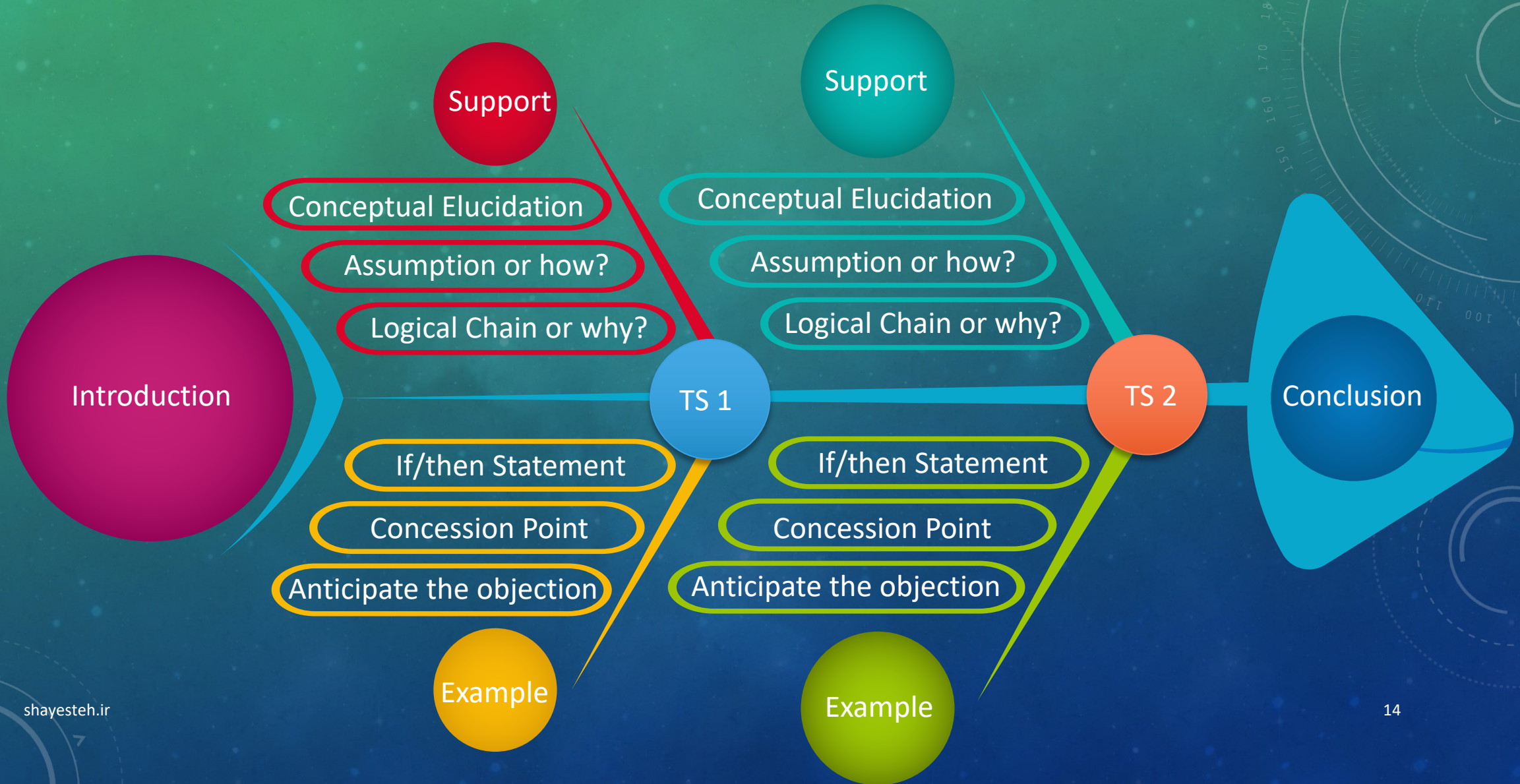
Ex: Accident	1	2
Cause		
Effect		
Advantage		
Disadvantage		
Problem		
Solution		

Stakeholders:

1. Owners
2. Customers
3. Employees
4. Suppliers
5. Government
6. Neighbors
7. ...

Fishbone Concept

How develop Support Sentences?

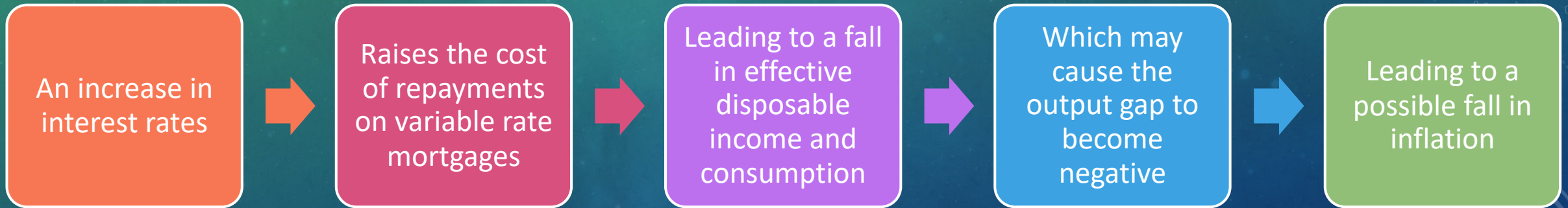


LOGICAL CHAIN OR WHY? (MULTIPLE WHY)

Why is Z good?

connect it to a Z' and Z''!

Sometimes reverse chain is possible (Result of (stem from) / Result in (lead in))



Ex: Topic 1, Topic 2, Topic 8, Topic 21, Topic 29 (not only)

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MULTIPLE WHY

- **Why** is having space program a good thing?
 - **Reason:** It makes people feel proud of their country
 - **Why** does the space program make people feel proud of their country?
 - **Reason:** It shows technical skill
 - **Why** do people care about technical skill?
 - **Reason:** It shows development of a nation
 - **Why** is developing a nation important?
 - **Reason:** It helps make the nation more politically and economically secure
 - And so on...
 - **Link Back:** That's why nations prefer to make progress in space programs.

WRITING A CONCLUSION

Conclusions are easy. You just need to repeat your thesis and your two supporting arguments. Try this short template:

- **Sentence One: Restate the Thesis**
Paraphrase your thesis. Begin with “**In conclusion, I strongly feel that...**”.
- **Sentence Two: Restate the Two Reasons**
Just use: “**This is because _____, and _____.**”

HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD KEEP IN MIND

- Paraphrase yourself. Don't copy and paste from either the thesis or the topic sentences when you restate your ideas
- Don't introduce new arguments in the conclusion
- Write about **40 words** in the conclusion

FINAL THOUGHTS

That's how you write a strong TOEFL independent essay. There are a final few points that are worth mentioning here, of course:

- There is no word limit.
- You can ignore the opposite argument, and you can ignore the other options in a multiple choice prompt.
- The template works for all of the styles
- Practice does not make perfect. Proper practice makes perfect.
- You will not get punished too much for using the template but try **Do NOT overuse templates**

DO NOT USE MEMORIZED EXAMPLES!

The warning to “not use memorized examples” refers to ETS’s new efforts to crack down on plagiarism and memorized essays used by hundreds of students at the same time. It is **still okay to use templates** and it is **still okay to use personal examples**.

It is still ok to:

- Use personal examples in your essays
- Use examples about other people
- Use templates

The TOEFL has a bit of a plagiarism problem but **Do NOT overuse templates**

AVOID TOEFL TEMPLATES (INDEPENDENT)

In the 2019-2020 “TOEFL Bulletin under the “Plagiarism”, look at category on page 36

Avoid TOEFL Templates: Example template sentences for independent writing

- **“There are many different opinions about whether it should be mandatory for students to attend classes.”:** [TOEFL Resources](#), [Essay Pro](#), [Should Attendance Be Mandatory](#), [Leon Akin](#), and Studybay.
- **“I am of the opinion that it remains important for students to physically attend their classes.”:** [TOEFL Resources](#), [Tiu’s Life](#), and [No Title Web Site](#) all use this sentence.
- **“I will explore why I feel this way in the following essay.”:** [TOEFL Resources](#), [Test Big](#), Studybay, and a few other web sites.

KIND OF EXAMPLES

- There are many kinds of examples in essays, and following is a short explanation of a few of them.
- **persuasive or argumentative essay** - The [persuasive or argumentative essay](#) picks a certain viewpoint and offers support of it with data, statistics and other evidence. Its purpose is to make the reader agree with the proofs and conclusions. In other words, the reader should share the viewpoint of the writer.
- **comparison essay** - A [comparison essay](#) will compare and contrast two things and point out their similarities and differences. The writer needs to find as many similarities and differences as possible so will need to do some research.
- **descriptive essay** - [Descriptive essays](#) answer the questions: how, what, why, when, and where. They can be written about any subject: a place, person, animal, event, thing or memory. The writer will share with the reader feelings and perceptions.

AVOID TOEFL TEMPLATES: SOLUTION

“if I should not use templates, what should I do?” you inquire. Simply put, you should create your own. Learning how to create your own templates involves good old fashion hard work of learning grammar.

- coordinating conjunctions
- compound sentences & complex sentences
- transition words
- cohesive words
- adverb, adjective, and noun clause connectors
- ...

EXAMPLES

- Personal life or educations
- Family
- Friend
- President, Governer, Mayor, Parlimant Member, ...
- Famous celebrities
- Famous scientist
- statistics
- ...

Also you can use fishbone concept here.

EXAMPLES

- Friend or relative who taught you a valuable lesson
- A minor yet significant life or professional event
- What lessons have shaped you
- What is meaningful to you
- How you are suited for a profession
- How you learned from past mistakes
- Personal point of view on a current event or topic (diversity, inclusion, seclusion)
- Overcame a hardship
- Rose above the competition
- Identified with a culture or community
- Became a leader
- Learned from mistakes

LINK BACK

- Logical Chain or why?
- Assumption or how?
- Conceptual Elucidation
- If/then Statement
- Concession Point
- Anticipate the objection
- Example
- Link back

Ex: Topic 9, 10, 12, 15

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EXTRAS

1. General Writing
2. Writing Ideas
3. Cohesion & Coherence
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5. Grammar
6. Punctuation
7. The magic of 3

PROFREAD

- Save two minutes to check your essay for mistakes. It will pay off, I promise. Just make sure to practice this skill. Once you become a good proofreader you will ALWAYS find mistakes in your essays. You know, every time I write a sample essay for my website, it is **full** of mistakes. Even I need to proofread!
- Okay, that's it! The ten most common TOEFL writing mistakes! Actually, let's be bold and end on a bonus rule...



THANK YOU

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2021