

## APPENDIX A ESSAY TOPICS

1. *We live in a technological age. However, technology cannot solve all the world's problems. Therefore some people argue that we need to place less emphasis on technological solutions and more on other values.*
2. *Many modern children spend a great deal of time sitting in front of a television or computer screen. This is extremely harmful to their development. Therefore parents should strictly limit the time children spend in this way.*
3. *The environment is one of the most important issues in the world today, but governments are not doing enough about it. To what extent do you think that individuals can help to protect the environment?*
4. *The Internet has provided great benefits, but at the same time it has also created new problems and inequalities. Is it possible to control some of these problems?*
5. *It is often argued that children must be protected from unsuitable material on TV and the Internet by government censorship. Others say that it is the parents' responsibility to control what their children do and watch. To what extent do you think that this is true?*
6. *Most education systems rely on examinations to encourage children to study, but as a result children suffer from too much stress and they never learn to be creative. Therefore examinations should be abolished. Do you agree?*
7. *Most pollution, especially air and water pollution, is caused by industry. If we want to protect the environment we should make factories and other forms of industry pay for all the pollution that they cause. That is the only way to make sure that the owners will make a serious effort to reduce the pollution that they cause. To what extent do you agree with this opinion?*
8. *In every city the car is king of the road. Cars cause death and injury and air pollution, and they make life difficult and dangerous for others. It is time to reduce the number of cars in our cities and to encourage other means of transport. Do you agree with this opinion?*
9. *'Money cannot buy happiness' it is often claimed. But with money you can buy most of the things that are necessary for happiness: good food, accommodation, entertainment, travel, quality health care etc. No wonder most people want to make as much money as possible. Do you agree or disagree?*
10. *To be successful in education it is more important to be a good student than to have good teachers. Would you support that statement?*

11. *At present we rely on oil for most of our energy needs. However, oil is a fossil fuel and causes air pollution, and it will eventually run out. Nuclear energy is the only practical and clean source of energy for the world. Do you agree?*
12. *Modern technology has increased our material wealth, but not our happiness. To what extent do you agree with this statement?*
13. *The increasing role of English in the world means that the learning of other languages is being neglected. This will have serious results for the continued use of these languages, and of their cultures. What is your opinion?*
14. *Young people are said to have lost many of the traditional values of the older generation. This does not matter, because the old values have no relevance in the modern world. We need to develop a whole new set of values. Do you support this statement?*
15. *Professional sport involves large sums of money and receives enormous media coverage. Meanwhile serious culture, including music, art and theatre, is badly neglected. This is making our society more shallow. Do you think this is the case?*
16. *International sports competitions are the best way to prevent conflict. National feelings can be expressed in friendly competition, rather than fighting, and sports heroes are better role models than fighters. The large sums of money spent on international sport competitions such as the Olympic Games are therefore justified. Do you agree?*
17. *As there is increasing unemployment in the world, while at the same time those who have jobs are working harder and harder, it would be better to have 4 day working weeks for everyone, and so create more jobs. What is your opinion about this suggestion?*
18. *Tobacco and alcohol are drugs that cause addiction and health problems. Should they be made illegal? Or should all drugs be legalised?*
19. *We are surrounded by advertising. Some people think that this is good, because it gives us choices as consumers, but others argue that it makes people selfish and greedy for more and more goods. Do you think that there should be less advertising?*
20. *We know that many kinds of animals can feel pain and emotional suffering just as humans do. It is therefore necessary to support animal rights as well as human rights. Do you agree?*