

- 7** Read the main body of the essay below on the topic: "State benefits should be available to all." Do you agree? Then, read the beginnings and endings and say which of the techniques on p. 56 has been used in each one. Next, list the viewpoints presented and the justifications or examples given for each. Finally, replace the bold type words or phrases with other synonymous ones.

BEGINNINGS...

- 1 A man wakes up and sees well-shod feet rushing by within inches of his face. His filthy sleeping bag is damp, and the sodden cardboard box which shelters him is about to collapse. Yet, he cannot afford a real home and state benefits are not available to him. This situation is not uncommon although, in my opinion, such unfortunate people should all be eligible for financial aid.
- 2 Have you ever wondered what it must be like to wake up on a cold pavement, knowing that you will have to spend the day wandering from place to place, penniless, and hungry? For thousands of people in the western world this is an everyday experience - although in my opinion, it does not have to be that way if the state administers benefits properly and fairly.
- 3 George Bernard Shaw once wrote, "The greatest of evils and the worst of crimes is poverty." The question is why the homeless, the disabled and the elderly should be treated like criminals by the state rather than be given the help and services they rightfully deserve. I believe that all people in need should be given help and support by the state.

In the first place, I think it is wrong to deny state benefits to any person in need. **It seems to me** totally unfair that a homeless person should be denied state benefits simply because he or she has no fixed address. **In effect**, the homeless person is being punished for being homeless, **whereas** state benefits would allow that person to find and maintain a home.

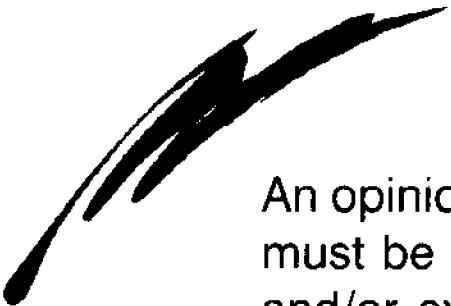
In addition, it is not only the homeless who suffer from lack of state aid but the handicapped are also neglected. **Although** all disabled people are entitled to state benefits, many are unaware of the range and variety of benefits they could be receiving in order to improve the quality of their lives. **This is a result of** the complexity of the state system and the lack of clear information about benefits. **It appears that** these people are suffering for the simple reason that the state does not care enough to make information freely available to those who are **clearly** in need of financial help.

Furthermore, the elderly are another sector of society who suffer both from lack of information and lack of concern. It is often the case that medical benefits are denied simply because a person is not visibly or dramatically ill, **whereas** in fact this person is in need of additional benefits **in order to** maintain a reasonable level of health. Such people **obviously** deserve to receive all the benefits they are entitled to.

There are those who argue, on the other hand, that many people receive state aid although they do not deserve it. **It is true that there** is such a problem. Certain people take advantage of the system by registering for benefits in more than one country, or claim to have dependents who do not even exist. **It is my belief that** it is the responsibility of the state to impose tighter controls so that only those who are truly in need of benefits receive them.

...ENDINGS

- A While it cannot be denied that state benefits are sometimes wasted on those who do not deserve them, it is my firm belief that, with proper controls, all those who are truly in need should receive financial help from the state. I believe that the homeless, the disabled and the elderly should all be given the chance to lead productive and healthy lives.
- B All in all, I believe that all deserving people should receive state benefits so that they have the chance to lead productive and healthy lives. If you suddenly found yourself out of work and homeless, wouldn't you expect the state to help you get back on your feet again?
- C To sum up, it would seem that benefits should be available to all who deserve them, and that clear information should be made available to all who may be in need of help. It is the responsibility of the state to give all its citizens the chance to lead productive and healthy lives.



An opinion essay is a formal piece of writing. It requires your opinion on a topic, which must be stated clearly, giving various viewpoints on the topic supported by reasons and/or examples. You should also include the opposing viewpoint in another paragraph.

A successful opinion essay should have:

- a) **an introductory paragraph** in which you state the topic and your opinion.
- b) **a main body** which consists of several paragraphs, each presenting a separate viewpoint supported by reasons. You also include a paragraph presenting the opposing viewpoint and reason why you think it is an unconvincing viewpoint; and
- c) **a conclusion** in which you restate your opinion using different words.

Points to consider

- Decide whether you agree or disagree with the subject of the topic, then make a list of your viewpoints and reasons.
- Write well-developed paragraphs, joining the sentences with appropriate linking words and phrases. Do not forget to start each paragraph with a topic sentence which summarises what the paragraph is about.
- Linking words and phrases should also be used to join one paragraph with the other.
- Apply techniques presented on p. 56 to begin and end your essay.



Useful Expressions for Giving Opinions:

- To my mind/To my way of thinking, ...
It is my (firm) belief/opinion/view/conviction (that) ...
In my opinion/view ...
I (firmly) believe ...
I am (not) convinced that ...
I (do not) agree that/with ...
It strikes me that ...
My opinion is that,
I (definitely) feel/think that ...
I am inclined to believe that ...
It seems/appears to me ...
As far as I am concerned, ...

DO'S

formal style

.....

introduction states topic clearly

.....

clear topic sentences

.....

well-developed paragraphs

.....

linking words & phrases

.....

generalisation

.....

quotation

.....

examples

.....

DON'TS

informal style

- a) colloquial expressions
 - b) short forms
-

introduction fails to state topic clearly

.....

unclear/irrelevant topic sentences

.....

emotive vocabulary

.....

over-generalisation

.....

blind use of statistics

.....

personal examples

.....

use of clichéd expressions

.....