
Writing a two-sided argument essay

Topic: Vegetarian diet

Argument: *'Is a vegetarian diet healthier and better for the environment?'*

Type: Academic [10 sources]

Level: *****[B2/C1]

Lesson Plan

Aim: to develop the students' ability to generate main ideas with support and write a two-sided argument.

3 types of lessons (writing x2 / reading)

1. Writing

- Ask Students to discuss *'Is a vegetarian diet healthier and better for the environment?'*
- Write down the reasons for 'yes' and 'no'
- Feed in / check key vocabulary (see next page)

Free Writing #1: [give out [Outline #1](#)] Students choose 2/3 of the positives / negatives discussed and add support. Go to introduction and fill the ideas of general, specific, outline, thesis, then to conclusion. Write the essay and students check ideas against the text [they could do the Reading Exercise]

Guided Writing #2: [give out [Outline #2](#)] Students read the outline with the basic points and then write the essay around these ideas. Then compare to the text.

Marking Student's work:

Use marking code: www.academic-englishuk.com/error-correction

2. Reading

1. Give out text and [Outline #3](#). Students read the essay and write down the key points and support in the structured outline [the bullet points relate to each piece of support]. Students check answers with [Outline #4](#).

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Is a vegetarian diet healthier and better for the environment?

C. Wilson (2017)

Key vocabulary

1. Eating habits
2. Vegetarianism
3. Human evolution
4. Efficiency / efficient
5. To feed a population
6. A greener planet
7. Cruel & unethical
8. A sentient being
9. Privilege
10. Veal / baby calf
11. A Crate /
12. to make tender
13. Slaughtering
14. Human anatomy / anatomic
15. Carnivores
16. Intestine / liver / digestion
17. Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) / Climate Change
18. A dense form of something
19. To elevate
20. Electrochemically
21. Threats
22. Vitamin B12 / Iron
23. To absorb
24. Peer reviewed
25. Deficit
26. Mono-agriculture
27. To grow cereals
28. United Nations (UN)

Is a vegetarian diet healthier and better for the environment?

C. Wilson (2017)

Eating habits have changed over the past two decades and with it has been the rise in vegetarianism. In fact, the Vegsoc.org. (2016) claims that 17% of the U.K. are vegetarian and this is evidenced in the increase in vegetarian dishes in most restaurants. There are many reasons for the growth, but recent research suggests that people believe that a vegetarian diet is healthier and growing food rather than farming animals is less polluting to the environment. Proponents for the meat industry argue that eating meat has been a natural human evolution and it is the most efficient way to feed the ever growing human population. This essay will discuss the arguments for and against and state clearly that a vegetarian diet is healthier and greener for the planet.

There are three main reasons why a vegetarian diet is healthier and better for the environment. The most significant point is that eating meat is cruel and unethical. Animals are sentient beings that have the emotions of fear, stress and pain. It could be argued that animals have equal rights to live and be free and farming practice takes away this privilege (HSUS, 2011). The Veal meat industry is a convincing example of extreme cruelty, whereby the calf is held in a crate, unable to move, for up to 20 weeks before slaughtering. This practice is to keep the meat tender. The second argument is that there is significant scientific and medical evidence that the human anatomy has evolved to support a primarily vegetarian diet. Humans are considerably different to carnivores in that their teeth are not similar and the intestine and liver of a carnivore allows for digestion of meat. Millward's (1999) research has highlighted that a vegetarian diet improves health, can meet all the protein needs and provides health benefits. In fact, American Dietetic Association (2009) state that meat is not essential for a healthy diet. A final argument connected to the environment is that a vegetarian diet leads to lower Greenhouse gases (GHGs). The meat industry produces 54% more GHGs than growing crops and is responsible for 18% of all global methane (Scarborough et al., 2014), which causes Climate Change. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (2014), a 'worldwide diet change away from animal products' is necessary to stop the worst effects of global climate change. Overall, a vegetarian diet would have a positive effect on the planet and its people.

In balance, proponents for the meat industry have three opposing views to the arguments of vegetarianism. The most significant is that eating meat is not cruel but a natural part of the cycle of life and evolution. Human beings have been eating meat for 2.3 million years and according to Wyness et al., (2011) this dense form of nutrients and calories have ensured our survival but also the development of the brain and intelligence. A further point is that vegetarians mistakenly elevate the value of animal life over plant life. Research by Simmons (2009), shows that plants respond electrochemically to threats and may feel fear, so vegetarians are cruel too. The second strongest argument is that meat is the best source of iron and vitamin B12. Peer reviewed research by Fenech and Rinaldi (1995) has shown that the body absorbs 35% iron through meat but only 20% through plants. (3). In addition, the same research highlighted that 2:3 vegetarians were deficit in B12 as opposed to 1:20 meat eaters. A final argument is that raising beef is the most efficient way to produce food

for humans. Simmons (2009) states that 85% of land in the US is not suitable for growing crops. He also claims that mono-agricultural farming has evolved to be based primarily on cereals and beef, such changes to growing would take years, if not centuries (ibid). In sum, there are credible arguments for the meat industry.

In conclusion, both sides of the argument have merit. A vegetarian diets seems to be more humane, anatomic and less polluting. A meat eating diet is part of human evolution, more nutrient absorbing and an efficient way of using land. However, the evidence that a vegetarian diet is healthier is relatively conclusive and the time is now to work towards a greener lifestyle and planet. Growing crops are much less polluting and reducing CO₂ / CH₄ is a primary goal for all nations, no matter what cost or changes that need to take place. Overall, this essay supports the views of the UN Environmental programme, who suggest a vegetarian diet will help prevent climate change.

[750 words]

Reference list

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Fenech, M. and Rinaldi, J. (1995). A Comparison of Lymphocyte Micronuclei and Plasma Micronutrients in Vegetarians and Non-Vegetarians. *Carcinogenesis*, 16(2), pp.223-230.

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Outline #1

Make notes using this outline to plan an essay on: 'Is a vegetarian diet healthier and better for the environment?'

Introduction	
General	
Specific	
Outline	
Thesis	

No - write your ideas and support	
1) Point / idea: support	
2) Point: support	
3) Point support	

Yes - write your ideas and support	
1) Point / idea: support	
2) Point: support	
3) Point support	

Conclusion	
Summary:	
Thesis	
Recommendation	

Outline #2

Use these ideas to write a two-sided argument on: 'Is a vegetarian diet healthier and better for the environment?'

Introduction	
General	Eating habits = changed last 10 years > in vegetarianism.
Specific	17% U.K vegetarian, > veg. dishes restaurants. Vegsoc.org. (2016) For =vegetarian diet = healthier /growing food < polluting. Against=eating meat is natural human evolution & efficient way feed human population.
Outline	This essay will discuss the arguments for and against
Thesis	A vegetarian diet is healthier and greener for the planet.

YES

1.cruel & unethical

- Animals are sentient beings = fear, stress and pain.
- Animals = equal rights to live and be free & farming takes away (HSUS, 2011).
- Example of cruelty = The Veal meat industry = calf held in a crate, unable to move (to keep meat tender), for 20 weeks before slaughtering.

2. Medical evidence / human anatomy

- Human anatomy evolved = primarily vegetarian diet.
- Humans different to carnivores = teeth / intestine/ liver
- Millward's (1999) research = a vegetarian diet = all protein needs & provides health benefits.
- American Dietetic Association (2009) = 'meat not essential for healthy diet.'

3.Environment

- Lower Greenhouse gases (GHGs).
- The meat industry produces = 54% GHGs than growing crops & 18% of all Global methane (Scarborough et al., 2014).
- United Nations Environment Programme (2014), a "worldwide diet change away from animal products" = stop the worst effects of global climate change.

NO

1. Not cruel

- Natural part of the cycle of life & evolution.
- Human beings = eating meat for 2.3 million years
- Meat = dense nutrients & calories = survival & develop brain intelligence (Wyness et al. 2011)
- Plants respond electrochemically to threats & fear = vegetarians cruel too (Simmons, 2009 research)

2 Iron & Vitamin B12.

- Fenech & Rinaldi (1995) research = body absorbs 35% iron through meat but 20% through plants.
- Research 2:3 vegetarians were deficit in B12 to 1:20 meat eaters

3.Efficient production

- Simmons (2009) 85% of land in the US is not suitable for growing crops.
- Mono-agriculture evolved primarily on cereals and beef, changes = years / centuries (ibid).

Conclusion	
Summary:	Vegetarian diets = humane, anatomic and less polluting. Meat diet = human evolution, more nutrient & efficient land use.
Thesis	A vegetarian diet is healthier = greener lifestyle and planet. Growing crops = less polluting /reduces CO2 / CH4 is important globally.
Recommendation	UN Environmental programme = vegetarian diet will help prevent climate change

Outline #3

Read the essay on: *'Is a vegetarian diet healthier and better for the environment?'*

Fill in the outline (*basic notes only*)

Introduction	
General:	
Specific:	
Outline:	
Thesis:	

Yes – find the main points and support

1) _____

-
-
-

2) _____

-
-
-
-

3) _____

-
-
-

No— *find the main points and support*

1) _____

-
-
-
-

2) _____

-
-

3) _____

-
-

Conclusion	
Summary:	
Thesis:	
Recommendation:	

Outline #4: ANSWERS

Introduction	
General	Eating habits have changed over the past two decades and with it has been the rise in vegetarianism.
Specific	Vegsoc.org. (2016) 17% U.K vegetarian, increase in veg. dishes restaurants. For =vegetarian diet is healthier and growing food less polluting to the environment. Against=eating meat is natural human evolution & efficient way feed human population.
Outline	This essay will discuss the arguments for and against
Thesis	a vegetarian diet is healthier and greener for the planet.

YES

1.cruel & unethical

- Animals are sentient beings that have the emotions of fear, stress and pain.
- Animals have equal rights to live and be free and farming practice takes away this privilege (HSUS, 2011).
- The Veal meat industry example of cruelty, calf held in a crate, unable to move, for up to 20 weeks before slaughtering.

2.Medical evidence / human anatomy

- Human anatomy evolved to a primarily vegetarian diet.
- Humans different to carnivores = teeth not similar & intestine & liver of a carnivore allows for digestion of meat.
- Millward's (1999) research = a vegetarian diet improves health, meet all protein needs & provides health benefits.
- American Dietetic Association (2009)= meat not essential for healthy diet.

3.Environment

- Leads to lower Greenhouse gases (GHGs).
- The meat industry produces 54% more GHGs than growing crops and is responsible for 18% of all Global methane (Scarborough et al., 2014).
- The United Nations Environment Programme (2014), a "worldwide diet change away from animal products" is necessary to stop the worst effects of global climate change.

NO

1. not cruel

- A natural part of the cycle of life and evolution.
- Human beings have been eating meat for 2.3 million years
- Wyness et al., (2011) this dense form of nutrients and calories have ensured our survival & development of the brain intelligence.
- Research by Simmons, (2009), plants respond electrochemically to threats & fear, so vegetarians are cruel too.

2 Iron & Vitamin B12.

- Fenech and Rinaldi (1995) research has shown that the body absorbs 35% iron through meat but only 20% through plants.
- Research 2:3 vegetarians were deficit in B12 to 1:20 meat eaters

3. Efficient production

- Simmons (2009) 85% of land in the US is not suitable for growing crops.
- Mono-agriculture evolved primarily on cereals and beef, changes to growing would take years, if not centuries (ibid).

Conclusion	
Summary:	A vegetarian diets seems to be more humane, anatomic and less polluting. A meat eating diet is part of human evolution, more nutrient absorbing and an efficient way of using land.
Thesis	A vegetarian diet is healthier is conclusive and work towards a greener lifestyle and planet. Growing crops less polluting and reducing CO2 / CH4 is a primary goal for all nations, no matter what cost or changes that need to take place.
Recommendation	Supports the views of the UN Environmental programme, who suggest a vegetarian diet will help prevent climate change