

# **TOEFL iBT Writing Guide**

By Arnold Strachan

Arnold's English

A simple framework for writing clear TOEFL essays.



This guide explains how to structure a strong TOEFL independent writing essay, including how to write clear thesis statements, organize effective body paragraphs, and support your ideas with explanations and examples.

It is designed for students preparing for the **TOEFL iBT Writing section**.

## TOEFL Independent Writing Structure

Many high-scoring TOEFL essays follow a simple structure:

Introduction

Body Paragraph 1

Body Paragraph 2

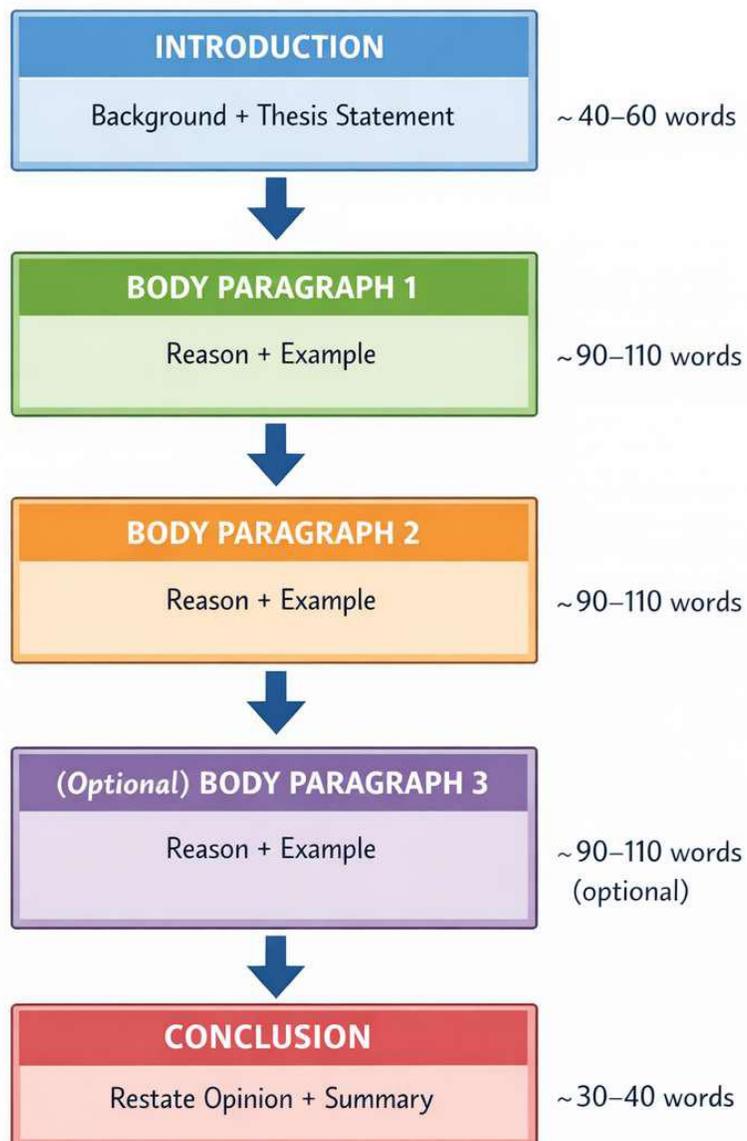
(Optional) Body Paragraph 3

Conclusion

Two strong body paragraphs are usually enough, but you may include a third reason if it helps strengthen your argument.

## TOEFL Independent Writing Essay Structure

---



---

## Example TOEFL Question

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Students learn better when studying in groups than when studying alone.

Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

## Introduction

A strong introduction usually has two parts.

---

### 1. Background Sentence

Introduce the topic in general terms.

Example:

Many students use different study methods to prepare for exams and improve their academic performance.

---

### 2. Thesis Statement

State your opinion clearly.

Example:

I believe studying in groups is more effective because students can exchange ideas and help each other understand difficult concepts.

---

## What is a Thesis Statement?

A **thesis statement** is the main idea of your essay.

It tells the reader:

- your opinion
- the main reasons you will explain

Example thesis:

Studying in groups is more effective because students can share knowledge and stay motivated.

This thesis tells the reader:

Opinion

Group study is more effective

Reason 1

Students share knowledge

Reason 2

Students stay motivated

These reasons will become the **main ideas of the body paragraphs**.

---

## Page 4

### Body Paragraphs

Each body paragraph explains **one reason from your thesis**.

A useful structure for TOEFL writing is **TEAL**.

---

### TEAL Paragraph Structure

#### T – Topic Sentence

Introduce the main idea of the paragraph.

#### E – Example

Give a real example or situation.

#### A – Analysis

Explain how the example supports your idea.

#### L – Link

Connect the idea back to your main argument.

---

### **Example Body Paragraph (TEAL)**

#### **Topic Sentence**

One reason group study is effective is that students can explain ideas to each other.

#### **Example**

For example, when I studied with classmates before a mathematics exam, one friend explained a formula that I had not understood during the lecture.

#### **Analysis**

Hearing the explanation from another student helped me understand the concept much more clearly.

#### **Link**

Therefore, studying with others can improve understanding and make learning more effective.

---

### **Page 5**

#### **Conclusion**

A conclusion should **summarize your essay and restate your opinion.**

Use this simple structure.

---

#### **Restate your opinion**

Rewrite your thesis using different words.

#### **Summarize your main ideas**

Briefly mention the reasons discussed in the body paragraphs.

#### **Optional final thought**

End with a short statement about the importance of the issue.

---

### **Example Conclusion**

In conclusion, studying in groups can be more effective than studying alone. Students can share knowledge, motivate each other, and help solve difficult problems. For these reasons, group study can improve both understanding and academic performance.

---

### **Important Tip**

**Do not introduce new ideas** in the conclusion. Only summarize the ideas already discussed in your essay.

Need help improving your TOEFL writing?

Visit:

[arnoldsenGLISH.com](http://arnoldsenGLISH.com)

Free writing guides, essay templates, and TOEFL strategies.