

3 Language learning

Answer key

1 Suggested answer

The thesis statement appears in the introduction of an essay and controls the main argument and opinion of an essay in relation to the essay question. It can also indicate the sub-topics of an essay and the order in which they will be discussed.

2 1 c 2 a 3 b

3 Plan A would answer the essay question more successfully, as it analyzes the issue of culture and society in language, and uses this information to support the argument that learners need this knowledge to successfully communicate.

Plan B is not a suitable structure for this essay, since it follows a 'for and against' style of organization, which does not suit the essay question and the thesis statement. Also, it does not deal with the key issues in enough detail.

4 Suggested answer

Paragraph 1

1 Definition of language: as a means of communication and way of describing reality, social bonding

2 What English reveals about its speakers: gender views, cultural issues, social issues and issues of power

Paragraph 2

Link previous paragraph to learners who will need this knowledge, e.g. those who are aiming to communicate in English for work or life in an English-speaking country.

Paragraph 3

Discussion of the type of learners for whom this knowledge is not as important, e.g. those who learn English to pass exams, without any intention of using the language. Although this knowledge is important for communication for some learners, it is not vital for their lives.

5 1 Language is an important means of cultural transmission. (b)

2 Recently, the city council in Farmers Branch adopted a resolution declaring English as the official language of that city. (c)

3 The largest portion (over 10 per cent of the US population) of non-English speakers use Spanish at home. (a)

4 The English language ignores women by using the masculine form to refer to human beings in general. (b)

6 Suggested answers

1 Animals communicate about the present, but are unable to communicate about anything to do with the past or the future. [*present simple for general truth*]

2 The council in a suburb of Dallas, Texas, decided that English should be the official language of the town. [*past simple for past action*]

3 Women are forgotten in terms such as *chairman* and *mankind*. [*present simple passive for general truth*]

4 It is argued that the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis overstated the connection between language and thought. [*past simple for past action*]