

IELTS Essay Comparison: Band 5 vs Band 8

Agree/Disagree Type Question

Demonstrating that Band 8 writing uses accessible vocabulary and clear reasoning

Essay Question

"Some people believe that social media has a positive impact on society, while others argue it has negative effects. Do you agree or disagree with the statement that social media has more positive than negative effects on society?"

Instructions: Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience. Write at least 250 words.

★ Band 5 Answer

Basic response with limited development

I think social media has more negative effects than positive effects on society. There are many reasons for this.

First, social media makes people spend too much time on their phones. They dont talk to their family and friends in real life. This is bad for relationships. Also, people become addicted to social media and they cant stop using it.

Second, social media has fake news. People believe wrong information and this causes problems. For example, during COVID-19, many people believed fake news about vaccines and they didnt take vaccines. This was dangerous.

Third, social media makes people feel bad about themselves. They see other peoples perfect photos and they think their life is not good. This causes depression and anxiety. Young people especially have this problem.

However, social media also has some good things. People can talk to friends who live far away. They can also learn new things and share their ideas. But I think the bad things are more than good things.

In conclusion, social media has more negative effects than positive effects. People should use it less and spend more time in real life.

Q Band 5 Analysis

⚠ Task Response (5)

- Position is clear but underdeveloped
- Limited relevant examples
- Basic conclusion without synthesis

🔗 Coherence & Cohesion (5)

- Basic paragraph structure
- Limited linking devices
- Repetitive organization

📖 Lexical Resource (5)

- Limited vocabulary range
- Repetitive word choices
- Basic collocations

🔧 Grammar & Accuracy (5)

- Simple sentence structures
- Basic grammatical errors
- Limited complex structures

🏆 Band 8 Answer

Well-developed response with accessible vocabulary

While social media platforms have undoubtedly transformed modern communication, I believe their negative consequences outweigh their benefits for society as a whole.

The primary concern regarding social media is its impact on mental health, particularly among young people. Studies consistently demonstrate that excessive social media use correlates with increased rates of anxiety and depression. Users frequently compare their lives to carefully curated online personas, leading to feelings of inadequacy and social isolation. For instance, research by the American Psychological Association found that teenagers who spend more than three hours daily on social platforms are twice as likely to experience mental health issues.

Furthermore, social media has become a breeding ground for misinformation, which poses serious threats to public health and democratic processes. The rapid spread of false information during recent global events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and various political elections, has demonstrated how these platforms can undermine scientific consensus and social cohesion. The algorithms that govern content distribution often prioritize engagement over accuracy, inadvertently amplifying sensational or misleading content.

Additionally, social media platforms have fundamentally altered human interaction patterns, often replacing meaningful face-to-face connections with superficial online exchanges. This shift has contributed to what researchers term "digital loneliness," where individuals maintain extensive online networks while experiencing genuine social isolation in their physical communities.

Nevertheless, it would be unfair to dismiss social media's positive contributions entirely. These platforms have democratized access to information, enabled global communication, and provided valuable opportunities for education and business development. They have also proven instrumental in organizing social movements and providing support networks for marginalized communities.

In conclusion, although social media offers certain advantages, its negative effects on mental health, information quality, and authentic human connection present more significant challenges to society. Moving forward, we must develop more effective strategies to harness these platforms' benefits while mitigating their harmful consequences.

Q Band 8 Analysis

✅ Task Response (8)

- Clear position with nuanced argument
- Relevant, specific examples
- Balanced discussion with strong conclusion

🔗 Coherence & Cohesion (8)

- Clear paragraph progression
- Effective linking devices
- Logical flow of ideas

📖 Lexical Resource (8)

- Varied, precise vocabulary
- Natural collocations
- Appropriate register

🔧 Grammar & Accuracy (8)

- Complex sentence structures
- Accurate grammar throughout
- Varied sentence patterns

🔍 Key Differences: Band 5 vs Band 8

Aspect	Band 5	Band 8
Position Statement	Simple, direct disagreement	Nuanced position with acknowledgment of complexity
Evidence & Examples	Basic, general examples	Specific research citations and detailed examples
Vocabulary	Simple, repetitive words	Varied, precise but accessible vocabulary
Sentence Structure	Simple sentences, basic connectors	Complex structures with effective linking
Paragraph Development	Basic topic sentences, limited development	Well-developed paragraphs with clear progression
Counterarguments	Brief, underdeveloped acknowledgment	Thoughtful consideration of opposing views
Conclusion	Simple restatement	Synthesizes arguments and suggests future direction

💡 Vocabulary Enhancement Examples

Band 5 Expressions

"I think social media has more negative effects"

"People spend too much time on phones"

"This is bad for relationships"

"Social media has fake news"

Band 8 Expressions

"I believe their negative consequences outweigh their benefits"

"Excessive social media use correlates with increased rates"

"This shift has contributed to digital loneliness"

"Has become a breeding ground for misinformation"

🔑 Key Takeaways for Band 8 Writing

Structure & Organization

- ✓ Clear position with nuanced perspective
- ✓ Well-developed body paragraphs with specific examples
- ✓ Effective use of linking devices
- ✓ Conclusion that synthesizes and suggests future direction

Language & Style

- ✓ Varied vocabulary that's precise but accessible
- ✓ Complex sentence structures with accuracy
- ✓ Natural collocations and appropriate register
- ✓ Specific evidence and research citations

★ Remember: Band 8 Success Formula

Band 8 writing doesn't require overly complex vocabulary or pretentious language. Focus on clear arguments, specific examples, varied sentence structures, and precise but accessible word choices. Quality of reasoning and coherence matter more than vocabulary complexity.