

# Self-assessment exercises

## 1 Describing a process

- (a) stage/ part/ step
- (b) the/ its
- (c) for
- (d) Secondly/ Then
- (e) and
- (f) critically/ rigorously/ carefully
- (g) which
- (h) skills/ techniques
- (i) answer
- (j) be
- (k) taking
- (l) you
- (m) checking/ ensuring
- (n) After
- (o) maximum
- (p) to
- (q) tables/ graphs/ figures
- (r) should/ must

## 2 Summarising a report

The summary should contain the following key points:

- scientists/ Oxford University/ researching crow behaviour
- showed that crows can make simple tools — not only primates
- experiment — meat in glass tube + wire
- birds shaped wire to make hook/ extract meat
- researchers saw them do similar in native environment

(Example summary)

Recent research by scientists at Oxford University has demonstrated that crows have the ability to produce simple tools from materials not found in their natural surroundings. In the experiment, which was devised after observing similar behaviour in their habitat, the birds bent a length of wire into a hook to pull a piece of meat from inside a glass tube. Chimpanzees are known to use ‘tools’ in this way, but this is the first time that birds have been shown to have such abilities. (84 words)

### 3 Problems and solutions

(Example answer)

<b>Problem</b>	Fair and accurate assessment of students’ performance has always been a difficult task. Coursework and examinations have both been used to grade student work.
<b>Benefits of A</b>	The benefits of assessment through coursework are the inclusion of all a student’s work over the period, as well as the encouragement to work consistently. In addition, it provides students, to some degree, with a choice of topics.
<b>Drawbacks of A</b>	However, there are concerns that plagiarism of coursework is quite easy, and it also requires good time-management skills. The greater volume of work may also make it harder for teachers to assess everything fairly.
<b>Benefits of B</b>	Examinations, however, make plagiarism much more difficult, and also provide an incentive for thorough revision of the semester’s work. It is also claimed that all students have to compete on equal terms, answering the same questions in the same amount of time.
<b>Drawbacks of B</b>	Critics of exams point out that some students become too nervous to perform well, and that only a restricted range of topics can be assessed. Non-native speakers are also likely to be disadvantaged.

<b>Conclusion</b>	Because of the powerful arguments on both sides of this debate, most courses are actually assessed by a combination of both methods, and this seems to be the most satisfactory situation.

# Answers Self-assessment exercises

*These exercises are included to allow students to assess their progress in academic writing. The first, Describing a process, is a test of accuracy, the second, Summarising a report, tests summary writing, while the third, Building an argument, tests the ability to write a problem-solution paragraph.*

## 1 Describing a process: writing an essay

- (a) stage/ part/ step
- (b) the/ its
- (c) for
- (d) Secondly/ Then
- (e) and
- (f) critically/ rigorously/ carefully
- (g) which
- (h) skills/ techniques
- (i) answer
- (j) be
- (k) taking
- (l) you
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- (n) After
- (o) maximum

- (p) to
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## 2 Summarising a report

The summary should contain the following key points:

- scientists/ Oxford University/ researching crow behaviour
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### Model summary

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(84 words)

## 3. Problems and solutions

Model answer

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<b>Benefits of A</b>	The benefits of assessment through coursework are the inclusion of all a student's work over the period, as well as the encouragement to work consistently. In addition, it provides students, to some degree, with a choice of topics.
<b>Drawbacks of A</b>	However, there are concerns that plagiarism of coursework is quite easy, and it also requires good time-management skills. The greater volume of work may also make it harder for teachers to assess everything fairly.
<b>Benefits of B</b>	Examinations, however, make plagiarism much more difficult, and also provide an incentive for thorough revision of the semester's work. It is also claimed that all students have to compete on equal terms, answering the same questions in the same amount of time.
<b>Drawbacks of B</b>	Critics of exams point out that some students become too nervous to perform well, and that only a restricted range of topics can be assessed. Non-native speakers are also likely to be disadvantaged.
<b>Conclusion</b>	Because of the powerful arguments on both sides of this debate, most courses are actually assessed by a combination of both methods, and this seems to be the most satisfactory situation.