



**How to Plan & Write  
IELTS Problem Solution  
Essays**

## 3 types of essays

**Problem and solution**

**Cause and solution**

**Just the solution**

IELST  
Question  
Example

**1. One problem faced by almost every large city is traffic congestion.**

**What do you think the causes are? What solutions can you suggest?**

**2. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the number of endangered species has increased significantly and we have witnessed more mass extinctions in this period than in any other period of time.**

**State some reasons for this and provide possible solutions.**

Different ways  
the question is  
asked –  
Problem &  
Solution

**What issues does this cause and how can they be addressed?**

**What are some resulting social problems and how can we deal with them?**

**What problems arise from this and how can they be tackled?**

**Why is this? How might it be remedied?**

**What are the reasons for this, and how can the situation be improved?**

**Why is this happening, and what measures can be taken to tackle this problem?**

Only  
Solution

**How can this situation be improved?**

**What solutions can you suggest to deal with this problem?**

**How can this problem be solved?**

**What measures could be taken to prevent this?**

# Recognise what the question is asking

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- **Problem** – issues, resulting, situation
- **Cause** – reasons, why
- **Solution** – deal with, addressed, tackled, remedied, improved, measures taken, solved, prevent

# Problem , Cause, Solution?

- I missed the bus after hanging out with my friends till late night.
- I've misread the bus schedule thinking it was 10:00am instead of 9:00am.
  
- I did not study enough for the test as I was busy with other things.
- I scored only 60 marks for my English Test.
  
- Air pollution has increased drastically in the country due to increase in number of cars on the road.
- People should carpool more often to reduce air pollution.

# Essay Structure

## **1) Introduction**

- Paraphrase the question
- State 1 key problem/cause and related solution

## **2) Main body paragraph 1 – Problem or Cause**

- Topic sentence – state the problem or cause
- Explanation – give detail explaining the problem or cause
- Example – give an example

## **3) Main body paragraph 2 – Solution**

- Topic sentence – state the solution
- Explanation – give detail explaining the solution
- Example – give an example

## **4) Conclusion**

- Summarise the key points



# PRACTICE QUESTION

**One problem faced by almost every large city is traffic congestion.**

**What do you think the causes are? What solutions can you suggest?**

- **Analyse the question**
- **Generate ideas**
- **Identify vocabulary**

# #1 Analyse the question

1. Topic words
2. Other keywords
3. Instruction keywords

**One problem faced by almost every large city is traffic congestion.**

**One problem faced by almost every large city is traffic congestion.**

**What do you think the causes are? What solutions can you suggest?**

# #2

## Plan your structure

### Cause:

- Too many cars on the roads – increasing numbers of people own cars, more convenient than buses & trains
- Inadequate public transport – crowded, old & dirty
- Poor road layout
- Rush hour traffic – most people travel to & from work at the same times each day

### Solution:

- Car sharing, park-and-ride scheme, congestion charge
- Improve public transport – more frequent and better quality
- Improve infrastructure – bus lanes, cycle lanes will make it safer for people to cycle
- Flexible working hours

# #3 Vocabulary

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- **traffic jam**
- **heavy traffic**
- **queue**
- **vehicles**
- **commute**
- **rush hour**
- **private transport**
- **infrastructure**