

IELTS Writing Sample #176

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Present a written argument or case to an educated reader with no specialist knowledge of the following topic.

Film stars and music celebrities may earn a great deal of money and live in luxurious surroundings, but many of them lead unhappy lives. Do you agree?

To what extent is this the price they pay for being famous?

You should use your own ideas, knowledge and experience and support your arguments with examples and relevant evidence.

You should write at least 250 words.

IELTS Writing Tip

Step 1: Underline key words in the exam question.

This will help you focus your answer on the key points, then brainstorm ideas for both sides of the argument, that is, both for and against the issue.

Step 2: Show clear links between the main argument and the supporting arguments.

In your introduction, re-word the question showing the topic clearly and state the opinion(s) that you will go on to discuss. Remember that each paragraph should have one main argument - start a new paragraph when you start a new main idea. Develop contrasting views, problems and solutions, advantages and disadvantages. Make sure you justify each point with clear supporting material. Do not forget to provide a logical argument wherever you refute the opposing opinion.

Step 3: Provide a strong conclusion.

Conclude your essay by summarising the main points and stating your own personal view.

Sample Band 9 answer

Newspapers and magazines are full of stories about famous people and the wonderful lifestyles that they enjoy. I think it's something that we get used to. We expect to see them wearing very expensive clothes and, going to amazing parties. It seems natural that if you have a lot of money, you will spend it in these ways.

(Opening paragraph agrees with first part of premise.)

Some people who are rich and famous do manage to have a happy life as well. They get married and have children and, although they have to work hard, they still have time to give to their family. Victoria and David Beckham are just one example of a happy

celebrity couple.

(Second paragraph disputes second part of premise.)

However, money doesn't always bring happiness. In fact, sometimes the opposite is true. Stars often talk to the press about the pressures of being rich and famous. Some of them end up drinking too much or taking too many drugs. The actress Elizabeth Taylor, for example, has been in clinics many times for these problems. The divorce rate is also very high among celebrities. Often their marriages last only a short period of time and they re-marry very quickly but the same thing happens again.

(Third paragraph agrees and gives two clear examples.)

Ultimately, I think it depends on the person. I don't really believe that being unhappy is a consequence of fame but I do think that it may be very difficult to cope with having a lot of money and fame. Celebrities are ordinary people underneath and perhaps some of them are not strong enough to deal with their fame.

(Conclusion provides a possible explanation and gives a personal view.)

(254 words)