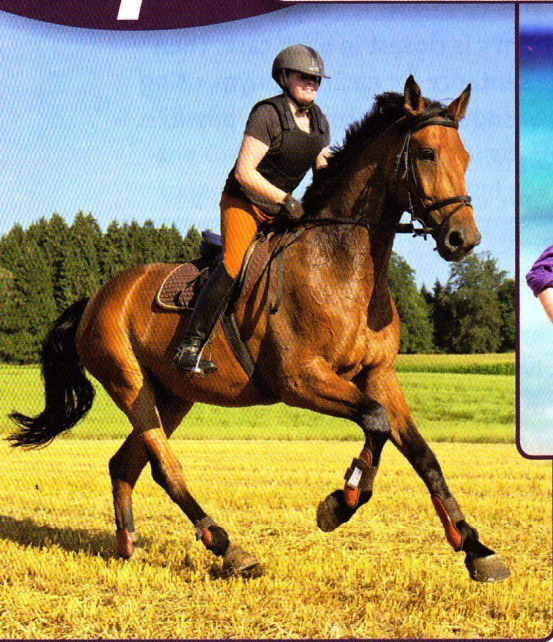


17.3

Reading into Writing: Full Task 1



Exam spot

Remember the importance of reformulation – you will lose marks if you use words that occur in the texts. Think of synonyms you can use instead.

- 1 Use the pictures to help you define the term ‘quality of life’.

What other factors are involved besides the ones illustrated? Discuss your ideas with a partner.

- 2 These factors are often used to measure quality of life. Which did your discussion in 1 include?

climate	gender equality
life expectancy	political freedom
stability in relationships	job security

- 3 Look at this exam task.

Write an essay summarising and evaluating the key points from both texts. Use your own words throughout as far as possible, and include your own ideas in your answer.

The phrase ‘quality of life’ embraces a number of different aspects, including physical health, emotional well-being, material wealth, community life, political stability, job satisfaction, and even geography and climate. Only the most fortunate of individuals will have access to ‘perfect’ conditions in all categories, and the various quality-of-life index calculations are averaged-out statistics. Yet it could be argued that a person’s state of health determines their ability to work and benefit from community life, so is of prime importance. On the other hand, certain aspects are outside the individual’s control – political freedom, for example, or the local climate.

- 4 Read the Exam spot and then read the sample answer on page 149. Underline any words and phrases that have been ‘lifted’ from the texts and rewrite them. Quoted terms do not need to be replaced. For example, it would be better to change the underlined parts of the first paragraph as follows.

In both cases, healthiness is seen as a crucial attribute, since it dictates whether someone can hold down a job, and therefore influences other ‘quality of life’ indicators.

Every year, much media attention is given to ‘quality of life’, usually following the publication of reports indicating the best cities to live in, the most temperate world climates, the country with the safest economy, and so on. Such analyses are interesting, but how much use can the individual make of them? In spite of advances in mobility, it is unrealistic for most of us to emigrate to this year’s top country, nor should we have to take such a radical step. Everything starts at home – even those who struggle to make ends meet can enjoy a good quality of life providing they are healthy and supported by friends and family.

Both texts deal with the concept of 'quality of life' and consider which factors within this umbrella term are the most important in reality. In both cases, physical health is seen as being of prime importance, since it determines an individual's ability to work and will determine many of the other aspects too.

The first text gives an overview of the factors that go to make up a person's quality of life, mentioning health and well-being, social involvement, work, the political status quo and the local climate. Not only does it underline the fact that without good health, job satisfaction and an active and fulfilling role in the community are impossible, but also, it argues that some aspects cannot be changed – political background and freedom, for example.

The second text focuses on the annual phenomenon of quality-of-life indexes and, while viewing them as informative, questions the value of their having such prominence in the media. For most of us, it is academic which city in the world has the best quality of life, as we have no real opportunity to uproot our existence and rush to start a new life there. Nor is it necessary, argues the writer, as a good quality of life is still possible, provided that the individual is healthy and supported by friends and family.

While this may be true up to a point, it is nevertheless going to be far more difficult for people trapped in poverty to gain a quality of life equal to that of people at the other end of the wealth spectrum – especially in our materialist society, where possessions seem to count for so much and we are constantly encouraged to wish for more.

Idiom spot

In the second text, the idiom *make ends meet* is used. What does it mean?

Choose suitable idioms to match the cartoons below and then explain the meaning of all eight.

cut corners
down and out
keep your head above water
feel the pinch
in the red
on a shoestring
tighten your belt
a rough ride

