Starting academic writing - determiners pairwork and useful phrases

**Student A**

*Choose one of the sections below and read example phrases from it with the word in bold missing (e.g. “BEEP commonly quoted definition of this is by…”)* until your partner guesses the missing word. They can **only guess once for each example sentence**. When they finish, read out the ones that they got wrong, then change roles and do the same again. You can use the same section more than once if you haven’t used all of the examples. If you run out of examples before they correctly guess the missing word, try to make up your own examples with the same missing word.

**My**
- In my own opinion, this depends on the situation of the country in question.
- My own experience of this is quite different.

**Some**
- According to some research released early last year,…
- I will give some examples of this below.
- It is worth taking some time to define these two important terms.
- There has been much debate in the last half a year or so in some circles about…

**The**
- According to the vast majority of experts in the field,…
- Although that is generally true, it is also sometimes the case that…
- Debates over the precise definition have yet to be resolved, but…
- I also surveyed a selection of the literature on…
- I will give three reasons for this in the paragraphs below.
- I will then look at a few cases in which the opposite is true.
- In the majority of cases, voters respond to this by…
- More recently, the definition has been extended to cover…
- Over the last few decades,…
- Perhaps the best definition is provided by Smith in…
- The acknowledged authority on this area defines it as…
- The core meaning of this is…
- The origins of the term lie in…
- There are two strongly contrasting points of view on the issue of…
- This can have both good and bad effects on the countries involved.
- Unlike the everyday English use, the technical meaning is…
A
● A commonly quoted definition of this is by…
● A fuller definition is…
● A more accurate definition would be…
● As a general rule,…
● In the two paragraphs below I will look at a few of the arguments on both sides.
● It is a common view in many countries that…
● Many people are of the opinion that it is a good idea to ensure that…
● There has been a certain amount of controversy on social media recently on the topic of…
● There is a feeling among approximately half of Japanese voters that…
● This is a problematic term, but…
● This term has a specialised meaning in this context, being…
● Whether this is a good idea or not really depends on…

This
● I believe that in general this approach has a lot of merit.
● I will look at the positive and negative results of this policy in turn.
● In this essay I will attempt to evaluate…
● It is impossible to fully comprehend this topic without first understanding…
● The most widely recognised authority on this matter is W.H.Brown, who says…
● There is also a lot of resistance to this idea.
● This paper draws primarily on the work of Hatton (2008).
● We can improve on this somewhat vague definition by…

- (= nothing)
● - More recent definitions emphasize…
● A majority of people in - newly industrialised countries experience…
● Almost all - young children in the modern world…
● I will discuss – both points of view in that order below.
● It is perhaps thought by - politicians that…

Switch sheets and do the same again, making sure you start with the most difficult examples as your partner has already seen that sheet.
Phrases for starting essays, including defining your terms

Student B
Choose one of the sections below and read example phrases from it with the word in bold missing (e.g. “BEEP commonly quoted definition of this is by…”) until your partner guesses the missing word. They can only guess once for each example sentence. When they finish, read out the ones that they got wrong, then change roles and do the same again. You can use the same section more than once if you haven’t used all of the examples. If you run out of examples before they correctly guess the missing word, try to make up your own examples with the same missing word.

A
• A considerable body of literature exists on the effects of…
• A definition which is perhaps easier to understand is…
• A more precise definition is…
• For a significant number of people growing up nowadays,…
• However, there is also a lot of resistance to this idea.
• I believe that in general it is probably a good thing.
• I will then use the data to come to a conclusion on how welcome this might be.
• There are a number of possible definitions of…
• There is a widespread belief that…
• This has been a somewhat controversial topic among online commentators since…
• This paper begins with a review of the recent literature on…
• Understanding of the concept depends upon a clear definition of…

The
• As Smith noted in his recent paper on the same topic,…
• Before moving on, it is worth defining the fundamental terms involved in this field.
• However, opposition parties argue against the government’s policy by quoting…
• I believe that the positive aspects easily outweigh the negative ones.
• I will then conclude by selecting the most crucial of those aspects.
• In the author’s experience, such feedback works best if…
• In the paragraphs below I will look at both sides of the argument in turn, then…
• Perhaps a majority of families in the world have to deal with the issue of…
• Probably the most relevant of those definitions is…
• Since the turn of the millennium, there has been lots of news coverage on the topic of…
• The arguments in this paper rely on a definition of…
• The fundamental meaning of this is…
• The latter policy will obviously have both good and bad effects in short and long term.
• The two leading experts in this field use the term in slightly different ways.
• There is no consensus about what the term covers, but…
An
- I will make an attempt to justify this opinion below by looking at three main reasons for my view.
- Many societies have an unwritten rule that...
- Smith gives an alternative definition,…
- There is an assumption among many politicians that...

Its
- This essay takes most of its data from...
- The use of the term has drifted away from its origins in...

This
- A good primary source on this topic is…
- However, others argue against this philosophy.
- I am quite a strong supporter of this idea in the majority of cases.
- I will give three reasons for this opinion below.
- In this paper, the term is used to mean…
- There are both pros and cons to this course of action, which I will examine in that order below.
- This essay makes extensive reference to the works of..

- (= nothing)
- For - people growing up nowadays,…
- In developed countries most – children…
- It is often said by - newspaper columnists that…
- This can have both good and bad effects on – society.
- This paper will follow - most recent papers on the topic in taking this to mean…
Useful phrases for starting academic essays/ papers
Without looking above for now, try to remember of think of at least three phrases for each of these functions below. Some phrases can go in more than one place below.

Setting the scene (= explaining the situation under which you are researching/writing)

Setting out your position on the topic (= limited summary of the views expressed in the essay/paper)
Explaining the structure of the essay/paper (= how the information in it is organised)

Defining your terms (= explaining what important terms which you will use mean)

Quoting/ Mentioning sources

Look back at the first worksheets for at least three more of each of the things above, then compare your answers with the answer key. Many more sentences are possible, so ask your teacher to check any others that you came up with.
Useful phrases for starting academic essays/ papers
Suggested answers

Phrases which match more than one category below are put in all relevant places.

Setting the scene (= explaining the situation under which you are researching/ writing)
- A considerable body of literature exists on the effects of...
- A majority of people in - newly industrialised countries experience...
- According to some research released early last year,....
- According to the vast majority of experts in the field,....
- Almost all - young children in the modern world...
- For - people growing up nowadays,...
- For a significant number of people growing up nowadays,...
- However, opposition parties argue against the government's policy by quoting...
- However, others argue against this philosophy.
- However, there is also a lot of resistance to this idea.
- In developed countries most – children...
- In the majority of cases, voters respond to this by...
- It is a common view in many countries that...
- It is often said by - newspaper columnists that...
- It is perhaps thought by - politicians that...
- Many people are of the opinion that it is a good idea to ensure that...
- Many societies have an unwritten rule that...
- Over the last few decades,...
- Perhaps a majority of families in the world have to deal with the issue of...
- Since the turn of the millennium, there has been lots of news coverage on the topic of...
- The latter policy will obviously have both good and bad effects in short and long term.
- There are two strongly contrasting points of view on the issue of...
- There has been a certain amount of controversy on social media recently on the topic of...
- There has been much debate in the last half a year or so in some circles about...
- There is a feeling among approximately half of Japanese voters that...
- There is a widespread belief that...
- There is also a lot of resistance to this idea.
- There is an assumption among many politicians that...
- This can have both good and bad effects on – society.
- This can have both good and bad effects on the countries involved.
- This has been a somewhat controversial topic among online commentators since...

Setting out your position on the topic (= limited summary of the views expressed in the essay/ paper)
- Although that is generally true, it is also sometimes the case that...
- As a general rule,...
- I am quite a strong supporter of this idea in the majority of cases.
I believe that in general it is probably a good thing.
I believe that in general this approach has a lot of merit.
I believe that the positive aspects easily outweigh the negative ones.
In my own opinion, this depends on the situation of the country in question.
In the author’s experience, such feedback works best if...
My own experience of this is quite different.
Whether this is a good idea or not really depends on...

Explaining the structure of the essay/paper (= how the information in it is organised)
I will discuss – both points of view in that order below.
I will give some examples of this below.
I will give three reasons for this in the paragraphs below.
I will give three reasons for this opinion below.
I will look at the positive and negative results of this policy in turn.
I will make an attempt to justify this opinion below by looking at three main reasons for my view.
I will then conclude by selecting the most crucial of those aspects.
I will then look at a few cases in which the opposite is true.
I will then use the data to come to a conclusion on how welcome this might be.
In the paragraphs below I will look at both sides of the argument in turn, then...
In the two paragraphs below I will look at a few of the arguments on both sides.
In this essay I will attempt to evaluate...
There are both pros and cons to this course of action, which I will examine in that order below.
This paper begins with a review of the recent literature on...

Defining your terms (= explaining what important terms which you will use mean)
- More recent definitions emphasize...
A commonly quoted definition of this is by...
A definition which is perhaps easier to understand is...
A fuller definition is...
A more accurate definition would be...
A more precise definition is...
Before moving on, it is worth defining the fundamental terms involved in this field.
Debates over the precise definition have yet to be resolved, but...
In this paper, the term is used to mean...
It is impossible to fully comprehend this topic without first understanding...
It is worth taking some time to define these two important terms.
More recently, the definition has been extended to cover...
Perhaps the best definition is provided by Smith in...
Probably the most relevant of those definitions is...
Smith gives an alternative definition,...
The acknowledged authority on this area defines it as...
The arguments in this paper rely on a definition of...
The core meaning of this is...
The fundamental meaning of this is...
The origins of the term lie in...
The two leading experts in this field use the term in slightly different ways.
The use of the term has drifted away from its origins in...
There are a number of possible definitions of...
There is no consensus about what the term covers, but...
This is a problematic term, but...
This paper will follow - most recent papers on the topic in taking this to mean...
This term has a specialised meaning in this context, being...
Understanding of the concept depends upon a clear definition of...
Unlike the everyday English use, the technical meaning is...
We can improve on this somewhat vague definition by...

Quoting/ Mentioning sources
- More recent definitions emphasize...
- A commonly quoted definition of this is by...
- A considerable body of literature exists on the effects of...
- According to some research released early last year,...
- According to the vast majority of experts in the field,...
- As Smith noted in his recent paper on the same topic,...
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- I also surveyed a selection of the literature on...
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- This essay takes most of its data from...
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- This paper will follow - most recent papers on the topic in taking this to mean...