Writing a two-sided argument essay

Topic: Mobile phones health risk

Argument: ‘Are mobile phones a health risk?’
Type: Academic [6 sources]
Level: **** [B2/C1]

Lesson Plan

Aim: to develop the students’ ability to generate main ideas with support and write a two-sided argument.

3 types of lessons (writing x2 / reading)

1. Writing

- Ask Students to discuss ‘Are mobile phones a health risk?’
- Write down the reasons for ‘yes’ and ‘no’
- Feed in / check key vocabulary (see next page)

Free Writing #1: [give out Outline #1] Students choose 2/3 of the positives / negatives discussed and add support. Go to introduction and fill the ideas of general, specific, outline, thesis, then to conclusion. Write the essay and students check ideas against the text [they could do the Reading Exercise]

Guided Writing #2: [give out Outline #2] Students read the outline with the basic points and then write the essay around these ideas. Then compare to the text.

Marking Student’s work:
Use marking code: www.academic-englishuk.com/error-correction

2. Reading

1. Give out text and Outline #3. Students read the essay and write down the key points and support in the structured outline [the bullet points relate to each piece of support]. Students check answers with Outline #4.

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Are mobile phones a health risk?
C. Wilson (2017)

Key vocabulary

1. Mobile phone / cell phone / a mobile
2. Convenience
3. Radio Frequency (RF) Radiation
4. To transmit
5. To exemplify
6. A brain Tumour
7. Immense
8. The nervous system
9. Credible evidence
10. Validity
11. A Glioma (google this)
12. A consistent pattern
13. Bias
14. Misleading
15. Latency period
16. Conflicting evidence
17. Conclusive evidence
18. Popularity
19. Caution
20. Hands-free set
Are mobile phones a health risk?
C. Wilson (2017)

Mobile phone usage has increased 67% in the last 5 years, with one in every five adults owning a smart phone (Chaffey, 2016). Obviously, mobile phones are making our lives much more convenient with an instant connection to friends, family and the Internet. However, these mobile devices emit a Radio Frequency (RF) radiation which is claimed to be possibly harmful to health and can cause brain tumours. This essay will discuss the positive and negative research into the safety of mobile phone use. It will conclude that there are inconsistencies in the research of mobile phones being safe and that long-term mobile phone usage is in fact a health risk.

There is a significant amount of evidence that suggests mobile phones are safe. The most consistent argument is that RF radiation, which is transmitted from mobile phones, is also transmitted safely from other devices such radios and televisions. To exemplify this point, radios have been used since 1893 and the television since 1939. This seems to suggest that the long-term use of RF radiation devices is safe. A second argument in support of the safety of mobile phones is a recent Danish study, where 350,000 citizens were studied over a ten-year period and the data concluded that 'there was no association between brain tumours / cancers and long term use of mobile phones' (Stockman, 2013: 554). There have been numerous published studies from 2001 to 2015 concluding similar findings. A final important observation by Linet & Inskip (2010) is that despite the immense increase in mobile phones in the last five years, there has not been a dramatic increase in brain or nervous system cancers. According to Chaffey (2016) between 2009 and 2014 phone use increased 67%, however reported brain cancer decreased. These three arguments offer credible evidence that mobile phones are relatively safe.

There is also credible evidence that questions the validity of the research into whether mobile phones are safe. Firstly, it is imperative to understand that there have been numerous studies that has shown 'a consistent pattern in mobile phone use and developing a Glioma, a type of brain tumour. For example, a 2009 study found that long term mobile phone use approximately doubles the risk of a brain tumour' (Khurana et al., 2009). In fact, there has been numerous professional studies concluding similar facts that mobile phones cause cancer. An important connected second point is the credibility of the research into mobile phones are safe. Kundi (2010) claims that much of the research is funded by mobile phones companies and as a result the conclusions are bias, untrustworthy and possibly misleading. Research groups do not have to state who funds or pays for the studies and there is a need for greater transparency in the industry. Finally, many academics have argued that 10 year studies are too short and fail to take in a range of age groups and users. According to The Environmental Health Trust (2011) research into Glioma brain tumours is that it has a 20-30 year latency period. Therefore, suggesting that the true results of any study is yet to be conclusive. In addition, very heavy users and young adults are the most at risk, and these groups have not been sufficiently researched. In sum, there is conflicting evidence in much of the research into the safety of mobile phones.
In conclusion, there has been academic research into both arguments of mobile phone safety. Researchers who claim mobile phones are safe, cite TV & Radio emit RF radiation provides conclusive evidence from credible studies and refer to the recent increase in the popularity of mobiles has not increased brain tumours. However, critics argue that there is conclusive studies that reveal mobile phones are a health risk, much of the positive research seems to be bias and untrustworthy because cancers take more than 10 years to be detected. It is important to state that with such conflicting evidence mobile phones are a health risk especially for heavy users and young people. It seems sensible to suggest that they are used with caution and the use of hands-free sets are important to keep the phone away from the ear.

[685 words]

Reference List


# Outline #1

Make notes using this outline to plan an essay on: ‘Are mobile phones a health risk?’

## Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>Outline</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## No - write your ideas and support

1) **Point / idea:**
   - support

2) **Point:**
   - support

3) **Point**
   - support

## Yes - write your ideas and support

1) **Point / idea:**
   - support

2) **Point:**
   - support

3) **Point**
   - support

## Conclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary:</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Outline #2

Use these ideas to write a two-sided argument on: ‘Are mobile phones a health risk?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outline</th>
<th>Mobile phone usage increase = 67% / last 5 years, 1:5 adults have smart phone.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>mobile phones = lives convenient / connection to friends, family and the Internet. However, Radio Frequency (RF) radiation = harmful &amp; brain tumours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thesis</td>
<td>Inconsistencies in the research and long-term mobile phone usage is a health risk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NO

- **RF radiation**, RF come from devices such radios and televisions.
  - radios have been used since 1893 and the television since 1939.
  - RF devices = safe.

- **Research**
  - Danish study, where 350,000 citizens ten-year period and the data
  - No health risks (Stockman, 2013: 554).
  - numerous published studies from 2001 to 2015 say mobiles are ok

- **Use increase last five years, no dramatic increase in cancer.**
  - Between 2009 and 2014 phone use increased 67%, however reported brain cancer decreased. Chaffey (2016)

Yes

1. **Numerous studies** that has shown 'a consistent pattern in mobile phone use and developing a Glioma, a type of brain tumour.
   - 2009 study found that long term mobile phone use approximately doubles the risk of a brain tumour'. (Khurana et al., 2009).
   - numerous professional studies.

2. **The credibility of the research into mobile phones are safe.**
   - Most research is funded by Mobile Phones companies = bias, untrustworthy, possibly misleading.
   - Need for greater transparency in the industry. Kundi (2010)

3. **10 year studies are too short and fail to take in a range of age groups and users.**
   - Glioma brain tumours have a 20 - 30-year latency period. The Environmental Health Trust (2011)
   - Very heavy users and young adults not been researched fully..

Conclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary:</th>
<th>mobile phones are safe, TV &amp; Radio emit RF radiation, credible studies = not increased brain tumours. However, mobile phones = health risk, research is bias and untrustworthy, and cancers = 10 years to be detected.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td>Conflicting evidence mobile phones = health risk - heavy users and young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>used with caution a / use hands-free sets to keep the phone away from the ear.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outline #3

Read the essay on: ‘Are mobile phones a health risk?’ Fill in the outline (basic notes only)

**Introduction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>Outline</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**No**- find the main points and support

1) 
   - 
   - 
   -

2) 
   - 
   -

3) 
   -

**Yes**- find the main points and support

1) 
   - 
   -

2) 
   - 
   -

3) 
   - 
   -

**Conclusion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary:</th>
<th>Thesis:</th>
<th>recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Outline #4 ANSWERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>general</td>
<td>Mobile phone usage has increased 67% in the last 5 years, with one in every five adults owning a smart phone. (Chaffey, 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific</td>
<td>Mobile phones are making our lives much more convenient with an instant connection to friends, family and the Internet. However, these mobile devices emit a RadioFrequency (RF) radiation which is claimed to be possibly harmful to health and can cause brain tumours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outline</td>
<td>This essay will discuss the positive and negative research into the safety of mobile phone use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thesis</td>
<td>It will conclude that there are inconsistencies in the research of mobile phones being safe and that long-term mobile phone usage is in fact a health risk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NO

- **RF radiation**, transmitted safely from other devices such as radios and televisions.
- Radios have been used since 1893 and the television since 1939.
- Long-term use of RF radiation devices is safe.

### Research

- Danish study, where 350,000 citizens ten-year period and the data. (Stockman, 2013: 554).
- Concluded that 'there was no association between brain tumors / cancers
- Numerous published studies from 2001 to 2015.

### Use increase last five years, no dramatic increase in brain or nervous system cancers.

- Linet & Inskip (2010)
- 2009 to 2014 phone use increased 67%, however reported brain cancer decreased. Chaffey (2016)

### Yes

4. **Numerous studies** that has shown 'a consistent pattern in mobile phone use and developing a Glioma, a type of brain tumour. (Khurana et al., 2009)
   - 2009 study found that long term mobile phone use approximately doubles the risk of a brain tumour.
   - Numerous professional studies.

5. **The credibility of the research into mobile phones are safe.**
   - Research is funded by Mobile Phones companies = bias, untrustworthy and possibly misleading.
   - Need for greater transparency in the industry. Kundi (2010)

6. **10 year studies are too short and fail to take in a range of age groups and users.**
   - Glioma brain tumours has a 20-30 year latency period.
   - Very heavy users and young adults not been researched fully..

### Conclusion

**Summary:**
Researchers who claim mobile phones are safe, cite TV & Radio emit RF radiation, evidence from credible studies the popularity of mobiles has not increased brain tumours. However, critics argue mobile phones are a health risk, much of the research is bias and untrustworthy, and cancers take more than 10 years to be detected.

**Thesis:**
Such conflicting evidence mobile phones are a health risk especially for heavy users and young people.

**Recommendations:**
It seems sensible to suggest that they are used with caution and use hands-free sets to keep the phone away from the ear.