



Academic Writing



Paragraph Writing: Quotations

Ecocities

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Writing Exercise: Paraphrasing

Topic: Ecocities

Time: 60+ minutes

Level: *****[B1/B2/C1]

Lesson Plan

Aim: *To develop the students' ability to write a paragraph using a range of quotes to create a cohesive piece of writing. This exercise practises paraphrasing and linking devices.*

1. Lead in

Ask students to:

- Discuss 'how ecocities are changing the future of our planet.'
- Write down 'the reasons for and against building ecocities' ([students could do some internet research here](#)).
- Decide where they stand. Are they for or against?
- Feed in / check key vocabulary (see next page).

2. Lesson

- Choose three of these quotations and write a paragraph (approx. 120-180 words) on the following: 'The reasons for building ecocities far outweigh the reasons against'. Use accurate in-text citation and appropriate paraphrasing.
- Distribute the handout of quotes: Writing exercise 1.
- Students read the quotes (check any unknown vocabulary), identify the positive and negative statements and then choose **3 key quotes** to paraphrase for their paragraph.
- Give 40 minutes.
- Peer feedback ([use peer review form page 5](#)) or teacher marks [use marking code: www.academic-englishuk.com/error-correction].
- Give out sample answer with questions ([answers on page 6](#)).

Differentiation

- **Option 1:** Reduce the quotes down from 10 to 6.
- **Option 2:** Focus just on the pros or cons (Pros = quotations: 1,3,5,7,9 / Cons = quotations: 2,4,6,8,10)
- **Option 3:** Students write in pairs or small groups.

Ecocities: Writing Exercise 1

Choose three of these quotations and write a paragraph (approx. 120-180 words) on the following: *'The reasons for building ecocities far outweigh the reasons against'*. Use accurate in-text citation and appropriate paraphrasing.

1. *'Faced with unprecedented challenges of climate change; terrorism; environmental degradation; instability of economic markets; demographic shifts; increasing social inequality; crumbling infrastructure; and other factors, cities that prospered in the 19th and 20th centuries are now being stretched to their physical and social limits. Eco-cities have emerged as a solution to these crises'* (LSE, 2015).
2. *'Each and every place is unique – its geography, its hydrology, its history, its ecosystems and its climate – making it difficult to have a single typology or model of the ecocity'* (Hes, 2020).
3. *'The world's population is constantly increasing. To accommodate everyone, we need to build modern, sustainable cities'* (Global Goals, 2024).
4. *'Many cities claim to be ecological cities, but there are no non-ambiguous definitions of ecological cities and few efforts have been made to measure to what extent the cities have achieved their goal'* (van Dijk, 2015).
5. *'[It is] not just about the solar panels, taking care of the water properly, doing all those things that people fairly quickly come to nowadays, it [is] more about creating a community, and helping generate the culture needed in the community to drive ecological or sustainable development into the future'* (Downton, as reported by Urban Ecology Australia, 2021).
6. *'Changes in the behaviour of consumers will be required'* (van Dijk, 2015).
7. *'These strategies are carefully choreographed to function as an urban organism where flows of energy, water, and waste are integrated and optimised'* (LSE, 2015).
8. *'Diversity, difference, and debate – the very characteristics that make cities liveable – are swept aside in favour of rationality, efficiency, and functionality'* (LSE, 2015).
9. *'Substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, holistic disaster risk management'* (Global Goals, 2024).
10. *'Eco-cities are advertised as being ecologically progressive but their ethos is informed almost exclusively by neoliberal capitalism and the competitive global economy. Eco-cities thus serve as engines of global capitalism'* (LSE, 2015).

References

Hes, D., (2020). *Changing the Way We Think About Ecocities* [online]. Available at: <https://www.filmsforaction.org/articles/changing-the-way-we-think-about-ecocities/> (Accessed 14 March 2024)

The Global Goals, (2024). *Sustainable Cities and Communities* [online]. Available at: <https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/11-sustainable-cities-and-communities/> (Accessed 12 March 2024)

The London School of Economics and Political Science, (2015). *Book Review: Eco-Cities and the Transition to Low Carbon Economies* [online]. Available at: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/book-review-eco-cities-and-the-transition-to-low-carbon-economies/> (Accessed 13 March 2024)

Urban Ecology Australia, (2021). *How to Build an Ecocity* [online]. Available at: <https://www.urbanecology.org.au/how-to-build-an-ecocity/> (Accessed 16 March 2024)

van Dijk, M.P., (2015). 'Measuring eco cities, comparing European and Asian experiences: Rotterdam versus Beijing', *Asia Europe Journal*, 13, pp. 75–94. doi: [10.1007/s10308-014-0405-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10308-014-0405-7) (Accessed 16 March 2024)

Paragraph Peer Feedback Form

	Yes	No	Comments <i>Anything missing, unclear or a mistake.</i>
Main Body			
Is there a clear topic sentence?			
Is there a main argument?			
Are the ideas supported?			
Are there three quotes in the paragraph?			
Are the ideas commented upon and evaluated?			
Are the sources incorporated effectively?			
Is the in-text referencing accurate?			
Is there a concluding sentence?			
Highlight anything you don't understand.			
Language			
Highlight any vocabulary mistakes.			
Highlight any grammar mistakes.			
Highlight any academic style mistakes.			
Organisation			
Is it logical and clear?			
What cohesive devices have they used?			
Highlight anything you don't understand?			
Overall			
What did they do well?			
What do they need to do to improve?			

Sample Answer

The reasons for building more ecocities mainly lie in response to how urban areas have changed due to the impacts on the environment and the people inhabiting them. Cities which are more sustainable are necessary for several reasons. Firstly, changes to both the size and structure of the population in cities has led to cities being pushed to their limits and unable to accommodate everyone who lives there (Global Goals, 2024; LSE, 2015). Furthermore, impacts of climate change and global warming can adversely affect how cities maintain overall living standards, for instance, the infrastructure and services provided for inhabitants (LSE, 2015). Thus, as Downton (cited by Urban Ecology Australia, 2021) claims, ecocities can not only reduce the effects of the climate crisis, but also help to instil community values which results in the facilitation of ecological and sustainable development for several years to come.

144 words

Paragraph Questions

- 1) Is there a topic sentence? What is the topic? What is/are the controlling ideas?
- 2) Is there a main argument?
- 3) Which quotes were used?
- 4) Is it logical and clear? How has the paragraph been organised?
- 5) Is there an example?
- 6) Is there a concluding sentence? What is concluded?
- 7) How are the sources incorporated?

Sample Answers

The reasons for building more ecocities mainly lie in response to how urban areas have changed due to the impacts on the environment and the people inhabiting them. Cities which are more sustainable are necessary for several reasons. Firstly, changes to both the size and structure of the population in cities has led to cities being pushed to their limits and unable to accommodate everyone who lives there (Global Goals, 2024; LSE, 2015). Furthermore, impacts of climate change and global warming can adversely affect how cities maintain overall living standards, for instance, the infrastructure and services provided for inhabitants (LSE, 2015). Thus, as Downton (cited by Urban Ecology Australia, 2021) claims, ecocities can not only reduce the effects of the climate crisis, but also help to instil community values which results in the facilitation of ecological and sustainable development for several years to come.

144 words

Paragraph Questions

1) Is there a topic sentence? What is the topic? What is/are the controlling ideas?

Yes. Topic: Building ecocities. Controlling ideas: The environment and population.

2) Is there a main argument?

Yes – several benefits to building ecocities.

3) Which quotes were used?

Quote 1 / Quote 3 / Quote 5.

4) Is it logical and clear? How has the paragraph been organised?

Yes - logical. Modern cities have changed > people living in them > has increased but also the demographics have changed > cities currently can't cope. Climate crisis also affects cities > has far-reaching impacts on the cities and inhabitants. Ecocities can help both these aspects.

5) Is there an example?

'for instance, the infrastructure and services provided'.

6) Is there a concluding sentence? What is concluded?

Ecocities are crucial if people want to continue to live in cities.

7) How are the sources incorporated?

...has led to cities being pushed to their limits and unable to accommodate everyone who lives there (Global Goals, 2024; LSE, 2015)

Thus, as Downton (cited by Urban Ecology Australia, 2021) claims...