

Mark Teacher's

# IELTS Writing Correction Service

Name: Min-Soo

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Question Type: Position

Question Number: 17

Question: Today, the high sales of popular consumer goods reflect the power of advertising and not the real needs of the society in which they are sold. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Introduction Paragraph


+ **Introduce the topic:**


Many people have ~~get~~ **become** / **gotten** used to seeing advertisements in almost every part of their daily lives.


+ **Thesis Statement:**

Some argue that the massive sales of trendy products result from advertising, not individuals' real needs. I agree with their opinion **up to a point**.

Extra Comments 

 You introduced the topic quite accurately, but double-check your spelling and vocabulary, especially "s"


 You outlined a nuanced position

 I expect to see 1 body paragraph about the strong influence of advertising, but 1 paragraph outlining counter-arguments or sharing another reasons for the high sales of consumer goods.

Body 1: Point / Conclusion:

It is true that massive companies entice ~~folks~~ **people** / **consumers** into buying their products with ~~the~~ commercials.

-  - "folks" is too informal for IELTS Writing

-  - Do you know any synonyms for "massive"? [Large / Huge / Global / Multinational / Giant]

### Evidence / Supporting Details:

**R1)** They reach their ~~goals~~ **audiences / sales targets** by using promotions that manipulate individuals' feelings by conveying that they must buy their products in order to **enjoy the best features or most powerful versions of their technology**. ~~be updated. A perfect example of this trend is when~~ Many electronic enterprises, like Apple and Samsung, ~~create~~ make a **massive** profit by conveying **to** customers through powerful advertisements **that their latest handsets and tablets are significantly more advanced than their predecessors, even if the improvements are only marginal**. ~~to buy a newly launched cellphone almost similar to their current gadgets.~~

- [C&C] - I have made a lot of changes here. Most of my changes are to make your explanation much more detailed, precise, and show a **clear comparison**: "*more advanced ... best features ... most powerful versions*"
- [📖] - Again, try to vary your vocabulary.

**R2)** They often ~~meet~~ **achieve** their aim by using powerful promotional techniques like striking endorsement deals with high-profile celebrities, advertising their products during commercial breaks between popular TV programs, and installing giant billboards in city centres.

- [TR - C&C] - This idea only describes what advertising is. It does not say anywhere why they are "powerful." There are also too many examples.
- [💡] - **Here's how you could focus on 1 example**: "*... like striking endorsement deals with high-profile celebrities. This makes customers associate the endorsed products with success and quality, which over time can convince customers to part with their cash.*"

**R3)** Similarly, by offering **hefty discounts** or ~~using the buy one product and win another technique~~, **offering products as prizes** many large companies lure consumers into buying commodities that are not their true needs. For instance, in 2019, on Black Friday, I vividly remember buying three additional pairs of sneakers solely because producers offered customers **a discount of 70%**.

- [TR - C&C] - This idea would prove that **sales** encourage people to buy more. This is different from advertising. I think you already have enough in this paragraph and do not need to present any more ideas. Unfortunately this idea does not contribute to Task Response or Coherence & Cohesion.

### Extra Comments

Unfortunately I needed to make a lot of changes to this paragraph. Here are some other ideas that could be used to support and describe the influence of advertising.

[💡] - Technology has made it easier for companies to target specific customers. (*Cookies, algorithms, search history*) etc.

[💡] - Advertisers have infiltrated more parts of our lives than ever before. Every major store, brand, or franchise pays heavily to appear on people's social media feeds and be promoted by advertising algorithms. This means people encounter ads more frequently than ever before, and eventually, their repeated promotions get through.

[💡] - Advertisers have become better at knowing what types of images, designs and videos are most enticing for customers. They conduct lots of market research to understand their customers wants and needs, and include those findings in their advertising campaigns, commercials and posters.

### Body 2: Point / Conclusion:

On the other hand, **in the majority of cases**, the high sales of consumer products are the direct result of consumers' actual needs, not the influence of advertisement.

- 😞 [C&C] - I'm surprised to see the word "*majority*". In your introduction, your position was "*up to a point*". This is a much smaller degree than what you've said in this topic sentence. Therefore one of those sentences must change.

## Evidence / Supporting Details

**R1)** Business companies often carry out exhaustive research to find their customers' true necessities before launching their products.

- [📖] - Choose one. Businesses or Companies
- [C&C] - Is there more to this point?

**R2)** Moreover, these businesses come up with something new that usually fulfils the demands of their clients. In recent decades, these companies have made enormous contributions to humans by producing a light, touch-screen laptop computer for those who need a slim, portable computer to implement their daily routine work more flexibly or remotely. Another example could be fabricating manufacturing a [pollution-free / zero-emission] car that operates on cheap, reliable energies to reduce spending on gasoline, and manufacturing a soundless vacuum cleaner for those who have free times only at nights doing their housework and wise not to cause inconvenience and disturbance to their neighbours.

- [📖] - This is too dramatic. We use this phrase to describe life-saving medicine and scientific breakthroughs, not consumer products.
- [C&C] - I had to provide the clear, tangible benefits of the products to prove why your topic sentence is true. I would remove the example about the vacuum. You have enough examples, and it does not qualify as an "enormous contribution to humans."
- [TR - C&C] - Unfortunately, all the examples and explanations here go against your position in the introduction. In your introduction, you agreed that sales people only buy things they need "up to a point." But here you have mentioned "enormous contributions to humans" and presented proof that consumer goods are addressing real and important issues affecting people and humanity.
- [💡] - To correct this, you need to change your position statement in your introduction, or change the ideas here. The easiest thing would be to change the wording of your position:  
"I believe that both advertising and the creation of genuinely useful products are responsible for this trend."  
"In my view, advertising and the invention of genuinely helpful goods are working together to drive this growth."

## Extra Comments

### Conclusion Paragraph:

In conclusion, advertisers ~~producers~~ sometimes ~~tell~~ lure us into buying products that are not essential for us, but, in most cases, promoted merchandise reflects our actual needs.

- 😞 [C&C] - Again, I have the opposite opinion from the introduction.
- [TR - C&C] - Again, the simplest thing is to change the introduction.

### Band & Criteria Feedback:

#### Overall Score: Band 6.0

- **Task Response: 5.0** - You addressed the topic of advertising mostly, but the opinion transformed as the essay went on. Reason 3 in Body 1 was outside the topic. Read the question carefully.
- **Coherence & Cohesion: 6.0** - Body 1 needed a lot of changes to become more precise and coherent.. Body 2 was better, but after so many examples, it needed a link to help the reader remember the conclusion you were trying to reach.
- **Vocabulary: 6.0** - Spelling was okay, but I had to change a lot of vocabulary to create more common and familiar collocations and phrases. Also, some wording affected the coherence and cohesion of the arguments. (enormous contributions / sales are *not quite the same as* advertising.
- **Grammar: 7.0** - Grammar was good - I made the least changes in this area.

**Extra Comments** 🗨️: Read the essay topic very carefully. This essay question is worded very carefully, so make sure you read it closely before you take a position. It can make a crucial difference to your Task Response and Coherence & Cohesion scores.

**Feedback Key:**

- [👍] **Great! Well done!** - This sentence or paragraph is well-written, logically presented, addresses the task or supports your opinion / topic sentence.
- [TR] **Task Response** - If your ideas and arguments are not addressing the specific topic and specific question presented in the essay question. Any ideas or conclusions outside of the topic will harm this criteria.
- [C&C] **Coherence & Cohesion** - How well you logically build and present your reasons. Do the examples support the point? Is the conclusion of this point logical? It's also the connection between your position and the conclusions you reach in Body 1 and Body 2.
- [🔧] **Grammar** - Tenses, articles, prepositions, word order and other grammar changes that would be considered mistakes.
- [📖] **Wording / Vocabulary** - Words or phrases that are unclear or unfamiliar to native English readers. They may harm Vocabulary or Coherence & Cohesion scores.
- [💡] **Alternative Reasons** - I will suggest a different argument that more clearly supports your overall position, or the topic sentence of the body paragraph
- [?] **Confusing / Unclear** - I am not sure what you are trying to prove or explain. The wording or example could be unclear. Sometimes this is due to cultural differences or examples that I (a British person) am not familiar with.

Questions about the feedback? Email me: [mark@markteacher.com](mailto:mark@markteacher.com)

(Sample essay on next page)

# IELTS Task 2 Essay Sample

**Today, the high sales of popular consumer goods reflect the power of advertising and not the real needs of the society in which they are sold. To what extent do you agree or disagree?**

Nowadays advertising is more **invasive** and **personalised** than ever. It has been said that the reason for the increasing popularity of sales in consumer goods can be **credited** to the power of advertising, rather than the actual needs of people. While I agree that advertising is highly influential, I also believe there are other factors that have **brought about** this change.

First of all, I do believe that advertising companies have **embraced** technology to become more powerful and **persuasive** than ever before. Advertising agencies can now create **targeted** adverts based on users' internet activity to sell them specific products that align with their previous searches. This is **enticing** and because the products they suggest are usually related to their consumers' immediate problems or interests. Furthermore, ad companies have been experimenting with technology that measures how **convincing** their ads are. For instance, they can track how long someone looks at an advertisement and use that **metric** to **gauge** how effective it is, and make necessary changes to make it even more persuasive. Therefore, I think the increased **precision** of modern advertising is **partly** responsible for the increase in consumer spending.

However, I also think there are contributing factors as well. Firstly, people generally have more **disposable income** these days. Salaries and employment have increased, particularly in skilled sectors like technology and finance. This **excess** income allows consumers to spend on goods that simply make their lives more comfortable or convenient, such as kitchen appliances or new smart devices. On top of that, in the UK at least, fewer families are having children, which also gives them more disposable income. Another key reason is that consumer products have become much cheaper overall. Online **retailers**, such as Amazon and AliExpress, compete fiercely to attract customers, and therefore sell a huge range of consumer goods at very **affordable** prices, meaning that more people at lower income **thresholds** are able to afford more items.

In conclusion, although modern advertising **techniques** have most likely **driven up** sales, I also believe that economic factors, such as increased household income and cheaper prices, have also **contributed** to this change.

351 words

- **Invasive** (adj.) - in your life but unwelcomed
- **Personalised** (adj.) - personal to you
- **To credit** (v.) - to be thanks to
- **To bring about** (ph.v) - to create
  
- **To embrace** (v.) - to use fully
- **Persuasive** (adj.) - able to change your opinion
- **Targeted** (adj.) - focused l
- **Enticing** (adj.) - appealing / attractive
- **Convincing** (adj.) - able to make you believe smth fully
- **Metric** (n.) - number
- **To gauge** (v.) - to measure
- **Precision** (n.) - accuracy
- **Partly** (adv.) - slightly/partially
  
- **Disposable income** (adj.) - money for hobbies and pleasure (after rent/food)
- **Excess** (adj.) - extra
- **Retailers** (n.) - shops/sellers
- **Affordable** (adj.) - cheap
- **Thresholds** (n.) - limits/amounts
  
- **Techniques** (n.) - methods/approaches
- **To drive up** (ph.v) - to increase
- **To contribute** (v.) - to cause/to influence