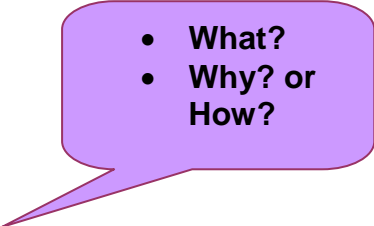


If you'd like more help with your IELTS preparation please visit my website [www.myielts teacher.com](http://www.myielts teacher.com)

## How do I brainstorm?

To brainstorm ideas I often ask myself these questions:

- 
- What?
  - Why? or How?

You can apply these questions to most IELTS essays.

- The aim of brainstorming is to write down as many ideas as you can that are related to the topic question.
- You should have more ideas than you need for your essay. This is because when you plan your essay you will find some of your ideas are inappropriate or lack detail, and so you will delete them.
- In the IELTS exam this process should take you about 5 minutes.

So let's start with an essay question.

(I've highlighted the key words in red – these are the words you should circle in the IELTS exam.)

**Schools** should **concentrate more** on teaching **academic subjects** because they are of greater **benefit** for **children** in the **future**. **Less importance** should be given to **non-academic** subjects such as sports and music.

Do you agree or disagree?

This essay topic was provided by one of my students who took the IELTS exam in May 2010.

**Please note that the ideas for this essay are my own ideas based on my own opinions. There is no perfect answer as everyone has different opinions. Some of these ideas will be deleted at the next stage of essay planning.**



## 1. What are academic subjects and non-academic subjects?

Academic	Non-Academic
Maths Sciences – Biology, Chemistry, Physics English and other languages History Geography	Sports Music Art / Design Computer Cooking / Woodwork / Sewing Religious studies



## 2. Why or How are both these subjects a benefit for the future?

### Academic

- **Traditional subjects** – route to university – then to future career (eg. Maths and sciences for engineering, medicine)
- **Maths** – need basic knowledge for everyday calculations
- **Sciences** – understand how the world around you works
- **Languages** – native language essential, others good for international business or travel
- **History** – hate this subject! Not sure about benefit! Maybe help to solve future world problems?
- **Geography** – like sciences and with globalisation useful for developing business with knowledge of location, culture, climate etc.

**Process of learning** – reading, writing essays, analysing problems, finding solutions, reaching conclusions etc. Related to theory

### Non-Academic

- **More practical or vocational subjects** – now possible to enter university to study these specific subjects (eg. Sports for sports science or management)

- **Sports** – develop team work, for health, link to social life in future, relaxing
- **Music** – good for auditory people, related to specific careers (eg. Opera singer, musician), link to social life in future, relaxing
- **Art** – related to specific jobs (design, fashion etc), link to future social networking, appreciation of design, colour, expression of emotion
- **Computer** – basic practical skills essential for social and business life
- **Cooking etc.** – practical skills for future, useful for those focusing on trades rather than university
- **Religious studies** – relate to own culture, country, community, provides a pathway for acceptable social behaviour

**Process of learning** – practical classes, finding solutions through practical application, 'hands-on', less reading or theory based work, project work

---

### So to summarise my ideas for you:

#### **What's my opinion?**

Disagree – there should be a balance between both subjects

**Academic subjects** good for some university courses, develop learning skills such as critical reading, analysis, conclusions etc.

Some essential subjects such as Maths and language for day to day

Some students will thrive in these subjects

**Non-Academic** good for some university courses, develop more practical skills – solving by doing

Some essential subjects such as computing, sport for health

Some students will thrive in these subjects

Also brings balance to school day – need some lighter studies to help brain relax so it focuses on more challenging subjects.

If you'd like more help with your IELTS preparation please visit my website [www.myielteacher.com](http://www.myielteacher.com)