

IELTS Listening Lesson 3

Setting:

A student has scheduled a meeting with their tutor to discuss a first draft of their essay for an assignment in a university course on Media and Society.

Questions 1–8

Complete the sentences below.

Write *ONE OR TWO WORDS* only for each answer.

1. The student came to the tutor to discuss the structure of their _____.
 2. The tutor says the introduction should include a clear _____ statement.
 3. To improve flow between ideas, the tutor suggests adding _____ sentences.
 4. Some of the student's _____ are not fully connected to the argument.
 5. The student is advised to explain the _____ of any statistics they include.
 6. The tutor notes inconsistencies in the student's _____ style.
 7. A helpful referencing guide can be found on the university _____ website.
 8. The tutor encourages the student to maintain a more academic _____.
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Questions 9–10

Choose the correct letter, A, B, or C.

9. What does the tutor say about the student's counterargument section?
- A. It is well-balanced and clearly written
 - B. It is too detailed and distracts from the main point
 - C. It should be expanded and responded to more fully
10. What does the tutor offer to do before the essay deadline?
- A. Review a second full draft
 - B. Look over a revised paragraph or two
 - C. Help the student rewrite the conclusion
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Tutor: Good morning! Thanks for coming in. I've had a chance to read through your draft. There's definitely a lot to work with here.

Student: Thanks! Yeah, I wasn't sure how it was going to come across. I'm still figuring out how to structure things properly.

Tutor: That's totally fine. It's part of the process. So—let's start there. I noticed that your introduction outlines the topic well, but you might want to be a bit more specific about your thesis statement.

Student: Right. I kind of struggled with that. I wasn't sure whether to just say what the essay was going to do or actually take a position.

Tutor: Ideally, you want to take a clear position. It gives your argument a direction and helps the reader know what to expect.

Student: Okay. So should I say something like, "This essay argues that social media has a predominantly negative effect on political engagement"?

Tutor: Yes, that's much stronger. It gives you a clear line of argument to follow throughout the essay.

Student: Got it. I'll rework that. What about the body paragraphs? Do they flow logically?

Tutor: The ideas are all relevant, but the transitions between paragraphs are a bit abrupt. For example, you go from discussing misinformation to online activism without really linking the two.

Student: Oh, yeah. I wasn't sure how to connect them. Should I add a sentence at the end of each paragraph?

Tutor: That's a good start. Even a short sentence that explains how the next point builds on the previous one would help the flow a lot.

Student: Alright, that makes sense. I can do that.

Tutor: Another thing I wanted to mention is your use of sources. You've included quite a few, which is good, but some of them aren't integrated very smoothly into the text.

Student: Do you mean the quotes?

Tutor: Exactly. Like here—you've quoted a statistic from Pew Research, but it kind of stands alone. It would be stronger if you commented on its significance or linked it directly to your argument.

Student: Ah, okay. So instead of just dropping it in, I should say something like, "This statistic demonstrates..." or "This supports the idea that..."?

Tutor: Exactly. That way, you're showing the reader how the evidence fits into your reasoning.

Student: I see. I'll go back and try to do that with all the quotes.

Tutor: Great. And while we're on sources—did you have a particular referencing style you were aiming to follow?

Student: Um... I think I was going for APA, but I might've mixed it up a bit.

Tutor: I noticed that. Some of the in-text citations look more like MLA. You'll want to go back and make sure you're consistent. And don't forget to format your reference list at the end accordingly.

Student: Will do. Is there a guide I can use to double-check?

Tutor: Yes, the library website has a referencing guide for each style, and it's very clear. I can send you the link.

Student: That'd be really helpful, thanks.

Tutor: No problem. One other thing I wanted to touch on is the tone. Sometimes your writing gets a bit too informal—like here, where you say “a lot of people don’t really care.”

Student: Oh—should I rephrase that?

Tutor: Yes, aim for a more academic tone. Maybe “many individuals appear disengaged” or “public interest seems limited.”

Student: Got it. I’ll go through and adjust the language.

Tutor: Excellent. Now, in terms of argument development, I think you could expand a bit more on the counterarguments.

Student: You mean the bit where I mention that some people think social media increases awareness?

Tutor: Yes. Right now, you mention it briefly and then move on. Try engaging with it more fully—acknowledge why someone might believe that, then explain why your position still holds stronger.

Student: That makes sense. So it’s not enough to just mention the other side—I need to respond to it.

Tutor: Precisely. That’s what shows critical thinking.

Student: Okay. I’ll definitely work on that section. I think I rushed it.

Tutor: That’s understandable—this is still a first draft. But the foundation is there, and with these changes, I think it will come together nicely.

Student: Thanks. This is actually really helpful. I feel like I know what to do now.

Tutor: I'm glad. Just make sure to give yourself enough time to revise before the deadline. And if you want to check anything, you're welcome to send me a paragraph or two via email before the final submission.

Student: Really? That'd be great. I'll aim to get a revised version done in the next few days.

Tutor: Perfect. And remember—clarity, structure, and a clear argument. You're already most of the way there.

Student: Thanks so much. I'll get started on the revisions today.

1. essay
2. thesis
3. transition
4. quotes
5. significance
6. citation
7. library
8. tone
9. C – It should be expanded and responded to more fully
10. B – Look over a revised paragraph or two