

□ WRITING PIECE 1 - FEEDBACK

Section 1:

#1 (First paragraph): Strengths:

- Strong opening that sets the context of global inequality
- Clear thesis statement about rich countries' responsibility

Weaknesses: Underdeveloped Arguments → Your opening fails to provide concrete reasons why rich countries should help. Phrases like "as we navigate the complexities of globalization" and "this is not just a moral outrage" need more depth to convince readers.

As the gap between wealthy and struggling nations continues to widen, rich countries have both the means and the moral duty to support developing nations. This support isn't merely charity - it's an investment that benefits everyone through increased global stability and economic growth.

#2 (Second paragraph): Strengths:

- Good attempt at addressing counter-arguments
- Clear focus on specific areas (education and healthcare)

Weaknesses: Weak Rebuttal → Your response to critics lacks strong reasoning. The phrase "This is completely false" doesn't effectively counter the dependency argument. You need to show why the criticism isn't valid with real examples.

While some worry that aid creates dependency, successful programmes like healthcare initiatives have actually built self-sufficiency in many communities, helping them develop their own sustainable systems.

#3 (Final paragraph): Strengths:

- Strong concluding message about shared responsibility
- Good connection to future implications

Weaknesses: Vague Call to Action → Your conclusion with phrases like "let us recognize our shared humanity" doesn't give readers specific ways to support the cause. You need clearer direction for what should be done.

We must take concrete steps now: support aid programmes, encourage fair trade policies, and invest in sustainable development projects that help poorer nations build strong economies.

■ Your piece shows promise but needs more work on making arguments stronger. Start by giving real examples when you talk about how aid helps countries. Also, try to show both sides of each argument more fairly - this makes your writing more trustworthy. When you talk about solutions, be more specific about what exactly should be done. Your paragraphs could flow better if you add linking words between ideas. Try to make your writing more personal by sharing why this topic matters to everyone. Additionally, work on making your first and last paragraphs grab attention better - maybe start with a story that shows why helping poor countries is important.

Score: 41/50

Section 2:

Why Rich Countries Must Assist Poorer Nations

#1 ~~As we navigate the complexities of globalization, it's essential to acknowledge~~ [In today's connected world, we must recognise] the vast disparities between rich and poor nations. The statistics are staggering: millions of people suffer from hunger, poverty, and inequality, while others enjoy unprecedented wealth and privilege. ~~This is not just a moral outrage, but also a preventable tragedy.~~ [This devastating inequality is both morally wrong and completely preventable.] Rich countries have a responsibility to assist poorer nations, not just as a humanitarian gesture, but also as a sound investment in our shared future. We must act with compassion, wisdom, and foresight.

Rich countries have a responsibility to help poorer nations reduce poverty and hunger. According to the United Nations, in 2020, an estimated 820 million people suffered from hunger worldwide, with the majority living in developing countries. ~~Evidence This is not just a moral outrage, but also a preventable tragedy.~~ [This evidence shows both the scale of suffering and the urgent need for action.] Critics may argue that aid is often ineffective or wasted, but this ignores the many success stories of targeted interventions, such as the Millennium Development Goals, which helped reduce poverty rates by half between 1990 and 2015. Moreover, a study by the World Bank found that every dollar invested in development assistance generates an average return of \$1.40 in economic growth. This is a sound investment in the future of our planet, and one that we cannot afford to ignore. By reducing poverty and hunger, we not only improve the lives of millions but also create a more stable and prosperous world for all.

~~#2 Rich countries must also help poorer nations improve access to education and healthcare.~~ [Furthermore, wealthy nations have an obligation to support education and healthcare development in poorer countries.] According to UNESCO, in 2019, 258 million children and youth were out of school, with many more receiving inadequate education. This perpetuates cycles of poverty and inequality, as education is a key driver of economic mobility and social progress. Some critics may argue that aid creates dependency. ~~This is completely false~~ [However, evidence shows otherwise,] as it ignores the many examples of successful partnerships between developed and developing countries, such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which has helped save millions of lives since its inception in 2002. Furthermore, a study by the Lancet found that every dollar invested in healthcare generates an average return of \$1.60 in economic growth. By investing in education and healthcare, we not only improve the lives of individuals but also create a more productive and prosperous society. This is a vital step towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and creating a more equitable world for all.

#3 Finally, rich countries have a stake in promoting economic growth and stability in poorer nations. According to the World Bank, in 2020, the global economy lost an estimated \$2.3 trillion due to poverty and inequality. This is a staggering loss of human potential and economic productivity, which affects us all. Some critics may argue that aid is a handout, but this ignores the many examples of successful economic partnerships between developed and developing countries, such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which has helped increase trade and investment between the US and sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, a study by the International Monetary Fund found that every dollar invested in economic development generates an average return of \$2.50 in economic growth. By promoting economic growth and stability, we not only improve the lives of millions but also create a more prosperous and interconnected world. ~~This is a vital step towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and creating a more equitable and peaceful world for all.~~ [These efforts are crucial for building a world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.]

In conclusion, rich countries have a moral and economic imperative to assist poorer nations. By investing in development assistance, we can create a more just and equitable world, reduce poverty and inequality, and promote economic growth and stability. The evidence is clear: every dollar invested in development generates significant returns in economic growth, human well-being, and global stability. Let us ~~recognize~~ [recognise] our shared humanity and act with compassion, wisdom, and foresight to build a brighter future for all. We owe it to ourselves, our children, and the millions of people around the world who are counting on us.

□ WRITING PIECE 2 - FEEDBACK

Section 1:

#1 (First paragraph) Strengths:

- Your opening effectively introduces the topic and establishes its relevance
- Your thesis statement clearly presents the main argument about smartphones' negative impact

Weaknesses: Underdeveloped Hook → Your opening sentence lacks engagement and fails to grab the reader's attention. The question "Are smartphones making us dumber?" feels too direct and simple. You could make it more thought-provoking by painting a picture or sharing a relatable situation.

Exemplar: ***Imagine a room full of students, heads down, thumbs tapping away on their phones while their teacher's voice fades into the background - this scene raises an important question about how smartphones affect our thinking abilities.***

#2 (Second paragraph) Strengths:

- Your clear topic sentence introduces the main idea about memory decline
- Your supporting details flow logically

Weaknesses: Limited Counter-Arguments → You briefly mention opposing views but dismiss them quickly without proper discussion. When you write "While some argue that smartphones help by providing quick access to facts," you need to explore this counterpoint more deeply before explaining why it's wrong.

Exemplar: ***Although smartphones give us instant access to information, this convenience comes at a cost - our brains lose the valuable exercise of remembering and processing information independently.***

#3 (Fourth paragraph) Strengths:

- Your examples effectively illustrate how smartphones affect social interactions
- Your transition between ideas flows smoothly

Weaknesses: Weak Conclusion → Your ending points about face-to-face interactions feel rushed and don't fully wrap up the argument. The sentence "Face-to-face interactions help develop empathy..." needs more development to strengthen your point.

Exemplar: *In-person conversations create genuine connections through shared emotions, body language, and immediate responses - elements that cannot be replaced by quick texts or emoji reactions.*

■ Your persuasive piece shows good basic understanding of the topic, but needs more depth in several areas. You could improve the second paragraph by giving specific examples of how students struggle with memory retention. Also, the third paragraph about critical thinking would benefit from real-life examples that readers can relate to. Your conclusion needs stronger final thoughts that leave readers thinking. Try adding personal experiences or stories that show these problems in action. You should work on making your counter-arguments stronger by fairly presenting opposing views before explaining why you disagree. Additionally, try to make your writing more engaging by using vivid examples that paint pictures in readers' minds.

Score:43/50

Section 2:

Are smartphones making us dumber?

~~In today's digital age, smartphones have become an integral part of our lives. However, as we become increasingly reliant on these devices, many argue that they are contributing to a decline in cognitive abilities. [As we become increasingly dependent on our smartphones in today's digital world, many worry about their impact on our thinking abilities.] With their constant bombardment of notifications, easy access to information, and endless distractions, it seems that smartphones may, in fact, be making us dumber. Despite the convenience they provide, the overuse of smartphones may be diminishing our ability to think critically, remember important information, and engage in meaningful conversation. #1~~

Smartphones are causing a decline in our ability to remember and retain information, which makes us less sharp over time. In Australia, research from the University of Melbourne found that nearly 60% of university students reported using their smartphones during class for non-study-related activities, such as texting or checking social media. This distraction leads to poorer academic performance, as students who multitask on their phones often score lower on tests and assignments. Smartphones serve as a kind of "external memory," making it easier to store important dates, phone numbers, or notes. However, this over-reliance on digital reminders means that our brains are no longer actively processing and retaining information, weakening our memory skills. A study conducted by Australian National University found that people who frequently use smartphones to store information struggle to remember basic facts without

checking their phones, a sign of cognitive atrophy. While some argue that smartphones help by providing quick access to facts, this convenience prevents us from actively engaging with information. Research from the University of Sydney suggests that memory retention is stronger when we practice recalling information without relying on devices. Therefore, the overuse of smartphones risks making our memories weaker, as we no longer exercise the mental muscle needed to retain knowledge. #2

The rise of smartphones is also diminishing our ability to think critically and solve complex problems. According to a study by The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), students who use their smartphones for non-educational purposes, like social media or gaming, for more than two hours a day tend to perform worse on problem-solving and critical thinking tasks. This is because smartphones offer easy access to information, eliminating the need for deep thinking or reflection. For instance, instead of working through a difficult math problem, many students might search for an answer online, thus bypassing the process of critical thinking and problem-solving. Critics argue that smartphones actually enhance critical thinking by giving us access to a vast range of information and perspectives. While this may be true, it is important to consider how the way we access information affects our thinking. Pew Research found that 73% of Australians admit that their smartphones often distract them from focusing on challenging tasks. This constant interruption and the ease of finding quick answers online means we don't spend the necessary time reflecting on complex problems. By relying on shortcuts for answers, we weaken our problem-solving abilities and fail to develop the deeper cognitive skills needed for critical thinking. In essence, smartphones encourage passive consumption of information instead of active analysis and reasoning.

Smartphones are also contributing to a decline in social skills, making it more difficult for us to engage in meaningful face-to-face interactions. A 2018 report by Common Sense Media found that 58% of Australian teenagers believe that smartphones make it harder for them to concentrate on their friends when they're together in person. Instead of engaging in real-time conversations, many of us are glued to our phones, texting, scrolling, or watching videos. This constant phone-checking disrupts the flow of conversation and reduces the quality of interactions. Furthermore, a study from The Australian Psychological Society found that 56% of Australians between the ages of 18 and 29 reported feeling lonely or isolated despite having a large number of online friends, highlighting how digital communication is not a substitute for in-person connection. Critics argue that smartphones can foster social connections by enabling communication with people from different parts of the world. However, while virtual communication can maintain relationships, it doesn't compare to the depth and richness of face-to-face conversations. Face-to-face interactions help develop empathy, improve communication skills, and create stronger emotional bonds, which are essential for forming lasting relationships. The overuse of smartphones reduces the time we spend engaging in these

meaningful interactions, ultimately weakening our social skills and contributing to a sense of isolation. #3

In conclusion, while smartphones have undeniably revolutionised the way we live and work, their overuse is eroding our cognitive abilities, critical thinking skills, and social capacities. From impairing memory retention to hindering meaningful conversations, smartphones are making us dumber in ways we may not fully understand yet. To reclaim our mental sharpness and social engagement, it is crucial that we find a balance between using smartphones and maintaining the intellectual and social skills that make us truly human. Without this balance, we risk becoming a generation that is technologically advanced but mentally diminished.

□ WRITING PIECE 3

Section 1:

#1 (First paragraph): Strengths:

- Clear thesis statement that presents the main argument effectively
- Strong hook that introduces the topic and its relevance to Australia

Weaknesses: Limited development of counterarguments → Your opening paragraph touches on opposing views briefly but does not fully address them. When you mention "traditional school start time," you could strengthen your argument by discussing why this tradition needs to change.

Exemplar: *While the traditional 8:30 AM start time has been a longstanding practice in Australian schools, mounting evidence suggests this schedule conflicts with teenagers' biological sleep patterns, making it crucial to reconsider our approach.*

#2 (Second paragraph): Strengths:

- Strong connection between sleep and mental health
- Good use of evidence to support claims

Weaknesses: Underdeveloped rebuttal → Your response to critics about extracurricular activities needs more depth. You quickly dismiss the concern without offering practical solutions for maintaining these important activities with a later start time.

Exemplar: *Although critics worry about the impact on after-school activities, schools could adapt by shortening lunch periods or slightly extending afternoon hours, ensuring students benefit from both proper rest and extracurricular engagement.*

#3 (Fourth paragraph): Strengths:

- Effectively links sleep to future success
- Good incorporation of expert opinion

Weaknesses: Vague conclusion on life preparation → Your discussion about preparing students for adult life lacks specific examples. When addressing the criticism about early working hours, you could provide concrete examples of how better sleep habits benefit long-term success.

Exemplar: *While some worry that later start times won't prepare teens for early work schedules, developing healthy sleep habits during these crucial years helps students build better time management skills and work-life balance for their future careers.*

■ Your piece shows strong potential but needs more development in key areas. The argument would be more convincing if you added specific examples of schools that have successfully implemented later start times. You could strengthen your second paragraph by discussing how different start times might work in practice. Also, your third paragraph would benefit from including real student experiences with different sleep schedules. Additionally, you could improve the flow by adding more transition sentences between paragraphs. Your conclusion could be stronger by proposing specific steps schools can take to implement these changes.

Score: 42/50

Section 2:

Should School Start Later

In Australia, the question of whether school should start later has sparked an ongoing debate. The traditional school start time, usually around 8:30 or 9:00 AM, ~~may be failing~~ [is failing] our students in terms of their health, academic performance, and long-term success. Research indicates that teens are not getting enough sleep, and this lack of rest has serious consequences. ~~It's time for a change.~~ [The time has come for meaningful change.] Schools should start later to better align with teenagers' sleep needs, promote healthier lifestyles, and ensure students are set up for future success. #1

Starting school later can significantly improve students' physical and mental health. Research by the Australian Sleep Health Foundation shows that over 50% of teenagers do not get the recommended 8-10 hours of sleep each night. Chronic sleep deprivation in teenagers is linked to serious mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, and a higher risk of suicide. Critics argue that a later start could disrupt extracurricular activities, but sleep deprivation has a far more damaging impact on students' mental well-being. Studies from the Australian Institute of Family Studies show that well-rested students are more likely to engage in after-school activities and are better equipped to manage stress. When students are healthy and rested, they are more emotionally resilient and able to handle the pressures of school and life. Therefore, later start times would directly benefit students' physical and mental well-being. #2

Starting school later has a direct link to better academic performance. A study by the University of Sydney found that students who got more sleep performed better academically, with improved concentration, memory, and problem-solving abilities. Well-rested students are more alert in class, absorb information more effectively, and can engage with lessons at a deeper level. Critics claim that later start times would shorten the school day and cut into valuable class time. However,

research from the Australian Research Council shows that students who start school later have more focused, productive class time. A study in Melbourne showed improved attention and performance with just a 30-minute delay in the start time. In fact, the quality of learning during well-rested hours outweighs the quantity of class time. Starting school later ensures students are more engaged and capable of achieving higher academic outcomes.

Long-term success is another compelling reason to start school later. Adolescents who regularly get enough sleep develop better decision-making skills, emotional regulation, and impulse control, all of which are critical for future success. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, sleep-deprived teens are at higher risk for risky behaviours, including substance abuse and unsafe driving, which can affect their future opportunities. While critics argue that later start times would not prepare students for the early hours of adulthood, this perspective overlooks the crucial brain development during adolescence. Dr. Judith Owens, a leading sleep expert, explains that consistent sleep patterns support better cognitive and emotional growth, which will benefit students as they transition into adult life. Teaching students to prioritise sleep during their teen years can result in healthier habits that lead to more successful and balanced futures. #3

In conclusion, the evidence overwhelmingly supports later school start times. Allowing students to sleep more would improve their physical and mental health, boost academic performance, and provide long-term benefits for their future success. Australian schools need to take action and adjust schedules to align with the natural sleep patterns of teenagers. By prioritising sleep, we can create healthier, more engaged students who are better prepared for the challenges ahead. Starting school later is a simple yet powerful step toward ensuring students reach their full potential.