

Specimen – Treehotel

Character: Kent Lindvall (owner)

THE QUESTION

Some local people think that the Treehotel might have a negative effect on our forest environment. What is your opinion and why?

MODEL ANSWER

I believe this concern is entirely unfounded. We purchased this land from someone who intended to use it for logging – without our intervention, the trees would have been destroyed entirely. We constructed the venue sustainably, even fitting an infrared film visible only to birds to prevent them colliding with the glass – demonstrating our commitment extends beyond the guests to the wildlife itself. Activities such as noisy snowmobile safaris are strictly prohibited; instead we offer gentle walking tours where guests develop a genuine appreciation for the forest. We are preserving this environment, not damaging it.

93 words | 3 details + 3 developments

MARK SCHEME – Indicative Content

Relevant Perspective: Kent Lindvall believes the Treehotel will NOT have a negative effect / is likely to have a positive effect.

Supporting Detail from Text	Developments
Land was bought from someone planning to use it for logging	<i>trees would have been cut down otherwise / saved the land / preserved land for the future</i>
Treehotel was built sustainably / built with features to guard against damage to wildlife	<i>not just local concern, also wider commitment to environment / complement not damage</i>
Activities allowed are not environmentally damaging / no snowmobile safaris / walking tours encouraged	<i>noise pollution avoided / guests are guided and follow set routes / develop understanding of community</i>

S24 V11 — Plogging

Character: Anna Ruiz (environmental campaigner)

THE QUESTION

The best way to deal with the problem of litter in this area is to encourage more people to go plogging. What is your opinion and why?

MODEL ANSWER

I believe that plogging alone will not solve this problem. The issue begins much earlier — with our consumption habits. Businesses produce enormous quantities of packaging and single-use materials, yet we expect individuals to spend their free time cleaning up the consequences. This is not a sustainable solution; it merely addresses the symptom. Furthermore, existing laws need to be reviewed so that they act as a genuine deterrent against littering and hold manufacturers accountable. A multipronged effort targeting businesses, legislation and consumer behaviour would create lasting change rather than placing the burden on volunteers.

90 words | 3 details + 3 developments

MARK SCHEME — Indicative Content

Relevant Perspective: Anna Ruiz believes plogging is not the best way / insufficient.

Supporting Detail from Text	Developments
the problem begins much earlier / consumption habits are the problem	need to look at what causes litter / prevent rather than cure
role of businesses / customers have a bigger part to play	take responsibility / use recyclable packaging / put own rubbish in the bin
multipronged effort required / review laws	law to act as a deterrent / ban single-use plastic / won't deal with whole issue alone
expecting others to use their free time / pick up your mess	should be able to enjoy leisure activities in clean environments / not the right message

S24 V12 – Authentic Travel

Character: City person who enjoyed a black-hole resort

THE QUESTION

Some people think that a holiday at a 'black-hole resort' would be boring. What is your opinion and why?

MODEL ANSWER

I completely disagree – my stay was far from boring. As someone who lives in a hectic city, having no access to my phone or the internet was a welcome relief. It allowed me to genuinely disconnect from the constant pressure of being online, which improved my mental state considerably. Doing nothing for a week was not laziness but a deliberate choice to slow down and recharge – something my usual routine never permits. The simplicity of being off-grid made it feel like a real adventure, offering a mindful experience I could never have found at a conventional resort.

98 words | 3 details + 3 developments

MARK SCHEME – Indicative Content

Relevant Perspective: You did not find the holiday boring / you enjoyed your holiday.

Supporting Detail from Text	Developments
it was basic / off-grid / simple	<i>eco-friendly / interesting / welcome contrast with city / a deliberate choice</i>
mobile phones don't work / can't get online there	<i>welcome break from pressures and responsibilities / digital detox</i>
do nothing for a week	<i>relaxing / opportunity to recharge / destress / not constantly moving on</i>
it is a new trend / a fashionable kind of place to go	<i>can't be boring if becoming more popular / so many people want to go</i>



W24 V11 – Animal Sanctuaries

Character: Rita Ni (conservationist)

THE QUESTION

Some people think that sanctuaries like yours are irresponsible and exploit animals and volunteers. What is your opinion and why?

MODEL ANSWER

I strongly disagree with this view. My sanctuary runs a captive breeding and reintroduction programme – the gold standard of conservation – which means our priority is increasing animal numbers and preventing species from becoming extinct. We adopt a hands-off approach because less direct contact with animals makes their eventual release into the wild far more successful; this may disappoint some volunteers, but animal welfare must come before their desire for closeness. Additionally, we educate our volunteers about the broader conservation picture, ensuring they understand why protecting entire species matters more than interacting with individual animals.

93 words | 3 details + 3 developments

MARK SCHEME – Indicative Content

Relevant Perspective: Rita Ni believes sanctuaries like hers are responsible / do not exploit animals and volunteers.

Supporting Detail from Text	Developments
Rita Ni's fantastic / gold standard projects // captive breeding and reintroduction programme	<i>priority is increasing animal numbers / helps ensure species do not become at risk</i>
has a hands-off approach / less direct contact	<i>may not be what volunteers want but makes reintroduction easier / animal welfare more important</i>
responsible sanctuaries educate volunteers	<i>will not give in to demand for cute and cuddly experiences / teach about what endangers wildlife</i>
dispiriting to see volunteers not really helping (at other sanctuaries)	<i>makes sure volunteers are used effectively / educated about the bigger picture</i>
there is a need for funds / harder to raise funds	<i>cannot afford bad publicity / would not risk damaging reputation</i>
responsible sanctuaries have long-term plans	<i>reintroduction takes a long time / don't recruit for short time only</i>

W24 V12 — Fitness App

Character: Ned (personal trainer)

THE QUESTION

I've been thinking of getting a personal trainer, but some people say it's a waste of money. What is your opinion and why?

MODEL ANSWER

I completely disagree. As a personal trainer, I get to know my clients personally, which means my advice is tailored to their specific needs — not a generic programme generated by an algorithm. I can tell when someone is pushing themselves too hard and prevent them from overtraining, which protects them from serious injury and ensures exercise remains enjoyable. Beyond physical fitness, I also recommend healthy eating and relaxation techniques, looking after their overall wellbeing. Unlike an app, I provide guidance only when asked — giving clients the space to progress at their own pace.

95 words | 3 details + 3 developments

MARK SCHEME — Indicative Content

Relevant Perspective: Ned disagrees — personal trainers are not a waste of money.

Supporting Detail from Text	Developments
personal trainer can become a friend	<i>get to know the client really well / client will trust you / privacy / no mean comments</i>
perceptive — alert to when 'you're too hard on yourself' / stops overtraining	<i>in tune with feelings / restore confidence / helps avoid injury / pace progress sensibly</i>
recommends relaxation / healthy eating / good diet	<i>not just running but overall fitness / advise about both physical and mental health</i>
gives advice / guidance / tips when needed / asked for	<i>no pressure to have trainer whole time / gives space / advice specific to individual</i>

S25 V11 – Swimming Pools

Character: Ted (Mario's neighbour)

THE QUESTION

I think that sharing my swimming pool is an environmentally friendly thing to do. What is your opinion and why?

MODEL ANSWER

I must be honest – I do not consider your pool environmentally friendly. Private pools consume enormous quantities of water, which is becoming an increasingly scarce resource globally; sharing the pool does not change how much water it uses. The chemicals required, particularly chlorine, are harmful and create pollution that affects both health and the surrounding ecosystem. You could have chosen solar heating, yet you did not – meaning significant energy is consumed unnecessarily. Sharing a damaging facility does not make it sustainable. I believe we should be investing in alternatives that genuinely protect our environment rather than adding to the problem.

98 words | 3 details + 3 developments

MARK SCHEME – Indicative Content

Relevant Perspective: Ted disagrees – sharing the pool does not make it environmentally friendly.

Supporting Detail from Text	Developments
global water scarcity / droughts // a precious resource // has to empty and re-fill frequently	<i>private pool uses massive amount of water / selfish when world faces drought / waste of water</i>
pool uses chemicals / chlorine // chlorine causes dry skin / green hair // alternative natural cleaning methods	<i>bad for health / wildlife / cause pollution // ignored the alternative natural cleaning methods</i>
heat so much / a lot of water / not solar heated	<i>does not use green energy / could have opted for solar heating / wastes energy</i>
a luxury / indulgence / status symbol	<i>an opportunity to show off rather than help the environment / irresponsible spending</i>
man-made pool is bad / not sustainable // (Ted) cares too much about the environment	<i>a private pool is unnecessary / wild swimming / natural environment is preferable</i>

S25 V12 — Zoo / Project Planet

Character: Lucy Graves (animal welfare campaigner)

THE QUESTION

Our audience may be surprised that you've worked closely with the zoo on 'Project Planet'. Many people are against this project. What is your opinion and why?

MODEL ANSWER

I believe that people are not paying attention to the benefits of this project. The animals will be housed in far larger enclosures in a rural setting — meaning they will be more comfortable and able to roam in conditions closer to their natural habitat. I have personally developed interactive displays and documentaries that will educate visitors about why animals are genuinely at risk, which a traditional zoo cannot achieve. Furthermore, the project is built around a species survival plan, directing resources towards the animals most in need of protection. This is about making a long-term impact on conservation, not merely entertaining visitors.

100 words | 3 details + 3 developments

MARK SCHEME — Indicative Content

Relevant Perspective: Lucy Graves supports 'Project Planet'.

Supporting Detail from Text	Developments
animal welfare campaigner // conservationists involved	<i>taking advice from experts / project aims to protect, preserve animals, their habitats</i>
education / not just entertainment // virtual reality / interactive displays / 4D documentaries // innovative	<i>visitors get deeper understanding of animals / look at why animals are at risk / more than a conventional zoo</i>
important research // species survival plan // protect at-risk species // focus on animals most in need	<i>zoos have changed / studying threats / more important to prevent extinction than entertainment</i>
a bigger world picture // making impact for the future	<i>crucial role in global movement to protect animals / without research there will be consequences</i>
rural location // new, far larger enclosures	<i>improved conditions / city no place for wild animals / closer to natural habitat</i>
older zoo residents / black-eyed lemurs will be there	<i>there will still be interesting animals to see</i>
free bus service / public transport // restricted parking	<i>no need to drive / more environmentally friendly / save money</i>

W25 V11 — Mount Everest

Character: Local business person

THE QUESTION

Some people want to ban foreign tourists from climbing Everest due to the negative impact they have on the area. What is your opinion and why?

MODEL ANSWER

I am strongly against a ban. Tourism is vital to our economy — climbers support local businesses including guesthouses and eateries, and a ban would devastate the livelihoods of ordinary people who depend entirely on this income. The climate and geography of this region offer very few alternative ways to make a living, so removing tourism would leave many families with nothing. Instead of banning climbers entirely, we should establish a quota system or increase permit fees to manage numbers responsibly. The government is already taking action to clean the mountain, proving that practical solutions exist without destroying our way of life.

100 words | 3 details + 3 developments

MARK SCHEME — Indicative Content

Relevant Perspective: The local business person is against a ban.

Supporting Detail from Text	Developments
(good for) tourism businesses // eateries / guesthouses // trekking, rafting, kayaking	<i>other businesses would shut down / locals would lose income / tourists improve / raise living standards</i>
contribute to local economy // a large part of Nepali economy // (support) the livelihood of local people	<i>ban would impact negatively on economy / fewer tourists mean less money / alternatives to a ban — quota, restrict numbers, increase permit fee</i>
harsh conditions	<i>the climate and geography offer few alternatives to make a living</i>
service industry around mountaineering // pay, hire Sherpas // climbers are clients	<i>lose a valuable source of revenue / locals depend on climbers for employment / part of Sherpa history, identity</i>
climbers can raise awareness of climate change	<i>important for people to see the effects of climate change and act on it</i>
climbers travel through Nepal, booking activities, accommodation	<i>climbers do not just come to climb / taking away climbing will impact other businesses</i>
government, Sherpas trying to clean the mountain // new rules for waste management	<i>action is already being taken // educate tourist climbers rather than ban them</i>

W25 V12 — Sneakers

Character: Matthew Chang (director of Vida)

THE QUESTION

Many people think that Vida sneakers are boring. What is your opinion and why?

MODEL ANSWER

I would argue that there is nothing boring about sustainability. Our sneakers are deliberately simple and classic in design because we want them to last — unlike major brands that release a constant stream of new styles, encouraging wasteful overconsumption that ends up in landfill. Every pair is made from entirely recycled material, and customers can return them for recycling when worn out, keeping them out of landfill entirely. Our growing popularity proves that consumers are turning away from mass-produced products and choosing brands with a genuine environmental conscience. That is not boring — it is the future of responsible manufacturing.

97 words | 3 details + 3 developments

MARK SCHEME — Indicative Content

Relevant Perspective: Matthew Chang does not think Vida sneakers are boring / accepts they may seem boring but they have other qualities.

Supporting Detail from Text	Developments
smaller, more sustainable brand // environmentally friendly, care about the environment	<i>nothing boring about sustainability, protecting the future // do not need celebrities to sell them</i>
famous, big brands are slow producing sustainable sneakers	<i>Vida filling a gap in the market // big brands more concerned with profit</i>
gaining popularity	<i>consumers turning away from big brands // excited by individuality rather than mass produced</i>
large price tag // quality // durability // cheap unbranded sneakers thrown away	<i>price reflects skill / economical since they last / value for money / reduces overconsumption</i>
simple, classic designs	<i>deliberate // stylish // timeless // avoidance of fashion trends // no need to upgrade</i>
100% recycled material // return for recycling // other sneakers end up in landfill	<i>keep out of landfill // educating consumers // nothing boring about eco conscience</i>