

# In-Class Essay Scaffold

How to prepare for your in-class essay.

## Step 1: Understand the Question

You won't know the question until the day of the in-class, but the topic will be nature vs. nurture. Ensure that you understand this debate, and that you have an idea of where the current scientific understanding sits in this debate.

Use the stimulus to help guide you as to what sort of question it might be, keeping in mind that the stimulus is your primary source for responding to it.

## Step 2: Analyse the Stimulus

Review the stimulus provided.

Take notes on important points or arguments presented in the stimulus (see below for help in doing this).

## Step 3: Gather Supporting Evidence

Remember that while the stimulus is your main source, you are strongly encouraged to include other sources. Without additional sources, your response will be average at best. Looking back at what we have covered in class is an excellent starting point, but you can include sources such as:

**Research studies:** Look for scientific studies that relate to the topic.

**Theories and concepts:** Explore psychological theories that discuss nature vs. nurture.

**Examples:** Find real-life examples that illustrate the concepts.

**Film and video resources:** Watch relevant videos or documentaries to deepen your understanding.

## Step 4: Outline Your Essay

While you can only take a one-sided A4 page of notes, it can be helpful to have a rough plan for your essay. You may or may not want to include some notes on this plan in your A4 page. Your essay should follow a traditional essay format:

**Introduction:** Start with a hook to engage the reader.

Provide a thesis statement outlining your stance (a thesis is akin to an argument, it should be the final sentence of your introduction).

**Body paragraphs:** Organise your arguments with supporting evidence.

Use transitional words to connect ideas.

**Conclusion:**

Summarise key points.

Restate your thesis in a conclusive way.

To aid you in analysing the stimulus, you may use this scaffold:

<b>What is the main argument(s) of the stimulus?</b>	
<b>What conclusion does the stimulus come to? What evidence does it have to support it?</b>	
<b>What parts of the stimulus do you agree with? Why? Use evidence to support here - this can be used to make an argument in your essay.</b>	
<b>What parts of the stimulus do you disagree with? Why? Use evidence to support here - this can be used to make an argument in your essay.</b>	
<b>What parts of the stimulus remind you of other things you have learned about? You could bring these things in as supporting evidence.</b>	
<b>If someone asked you to explain nature vs. nurture to them, what parts of the stimulus would help you to do this?</b>	