

**Text Structure and Language Features: Example 1**

**Text Structure - Opinion Title**

**SHOULD THE LEGAL AGE OF SMOKING BE RAISED?**

The legal age of smoking must be raised for several reasons. At present in New Zealand it is legal to buy cigarettes if you are over 16, but you cannot buy alcohol until you are 18, so both these drugs should be treated the same. There are many reasons why smoking should not be encouraged in young people.

**Statement of position**

**Argument point, elaboration**

Firstly smoking creates a major health hazard which endangers not only smokers themselves, but their friends and families who may not smoke. People who smoke are often inconsiderate about making others into passive smokers and teenagers often are thoughtless about other people. Many countries are passing laws which make it illegal to smoke inside any public place, including all bars, clubs and restaurants, so it is gradually becoming more and more socially unacceptable and difficult to smoke in public.

**Argument point, elaboration**

Secondly, smoking is a selfish drain on the health system. Cigarette smoking is the most common cause of illness and premature death due to cancer and heart disease. However most smokers maintain this unhealthy habit despite the fact that they know that giving up would immediately improve both their life expectancy and their quality of life.

**Argument point, elaboration**

Moreover, smoking during pregnancy can damage unborn babies and create future health problems for them, such as asthma. Young girls who have unplanned pregnancies often don't realise they're pregnant for a while, and continue to smoke, risking damage to the baby in the first few weeks while it is forming.

**Argument point, elaboration**

Thirdly smoking is very expensive. and a waste of money. Cigarettes bring only ill-health as a return on your money. Your money is literally "going up in smoke".

**Conclusion and restatement of position**

Therefore, for the good of our youth, the legal age of smoking should be increased so that it is the same as the age of buying alcohol.

**Language Features**

Use of present tense as main tense

Use of word chains to build topic information, e.g. smoking, cigarettes, nicotine, health hazards

Use of relating verbs, e.g. Cigarettes are the most common cause. These are the main reasons.

Use of action verbs, e.g. improve, adds,

Use of passive voice, e.g. be lowered, be wasted

Use of modality, e.g. can't, can, should, must

Use of general nouns, e.g. smoking

Use of technical language, e.g. alcohol, caffeine, nicotine

Use of detailed noun groups, e.g. the legal age of smoking

Use of adverbial phrases, e.g. for several reasons

Use of conjunctions, e.g. however, even though, ,

Use of text connectives to structure argument, e.g. firstly, secondly, lastly

Use of evaluative language, e.g. major health hazard, premature death, unhealthy habit

Use of persuasive language, e.g. The legal age of smoking should be raised and use of references/ facts to support argument, e.g. Unfortunately (comment adjunct/opinion adverb)

Use of beginning of sentence to focus the reader's attention, e.g. Smoking is very expensive.

Use of compound and complex sentences

Adapted from the text of Nishos delos Reyes.