

This week we are looking at discussion texts. A discussion text presents both sides of an argument and gives a balanced view. Our continent this week is South America – home to the Amazon Rainforest therefore our discussion texts will be based around the Amazon.

Introduction: Brief overview of the what the discussion is about.

Reasons for

Reasons against

Conclusion: Summary of main arguments. Statement explaining your own viewpoint.

Should the Amazon Tribes use the natural medicines they find in the Rainforest?

For thousands of years, shamans (the medicine experts in the Amazon tribes) have passed on information about the healing properties of the rainforest’s plants from one generation to the next. All of the world’s cultures use plants and other growing things as medicines, for example: aspirin, to cure headaches, came from willow bark, codeine in cough syrup was found first in the opium poppy and penicillin was first extracted from bread mould.

As forest peoples come into increasing contact with the outside world, they are being exposed to modern medicines. This has caused them to question their own medicines in the rainforest. In this text I shall discuss whether they should use the medicines they find in the rainforest or not.

Firstly, some people argue that the synthetic, man-made compounds found in modern medicines are based on what has been found in plants. Therefore, the plants are a suitable treatment for different diseases and illnesses. More importantly, the shaman has thousands of years of experience of plants **whereas** modern medicine can be developed over months. This wealth of experience can be benefited from by the people ~~which is a good thing for them if they become unwell.~~

On the other hand, it is important to note that modern medicines are kept completely sterile whereas the forest medicines are out in the open. This means that people could touch them with dirty hands, or animals could brush against them or even urinate on them. Evidence suggests that this leads to further disease which will not help the patient.

To sum up, modern medicines come from plants so why not use the plants. **However**, plants are not necessarily clean which could make someone more ill. After examining the different points of view, I have concluded that it would be better for the Amazon people to use the modern medicines that we have developed.

Conjunctions: link ideas and add more detail to sentences

Task 1: Read the discussion text on the first page then answer the questions below. Remember to use the text to support your answers.

1. 'Shaman' have only been around for a short while. Is this statement true or false? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

2. Name 3 medicines which have originated from plants.

3. Give a reason why they should continue to use the natural remedies.

4. What advantage does modern medicine have over the natural remedies?

5. What does the author of the discussion text believe?

6. What do you think? Should they continue to use natural medicines or should they start to use the modern medicines. Support your answer with reasons why.