

## WRITING TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

*Some industry leaders believe that children should learn computer programming in primary school.*

*To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion? .*

Give reasons for your answer and include relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

**MODEL ANSWER 8.5**

With computers such an integral part of our modern civilisation, the need to train new generations of skilled programmers is irrefutable. However, I do not think this justifies teaching coding in primary school.

Obviously, the sooner children begin programming, the more knowledge and experience they are likely to have by the time they reach university. Understandably, some in the IT industry call for lessons in coding at the youngest possible age feeling that this will give domestic companies the edge over their international competitors.

However, any curriculum must be a compromise between what is ideal and what is possible given the financial and scheduling constraints under which primary schools operate. Coding is no doubt a useful skill to have, but it pales in comparison with learning how to read and write properly. Relatively few jobs require programming, but a great many require literacy and numeracy, so this is obviously where the bulk of a primary school's precious resources must be spent.

Furthermore, in primary schools, each class generally has a single teacher responsible for teaching all subjects. They have long been required to teach elementary mathematics and English, but programming will be a skill that many of them do not possess. There is no way to bridge this gap that does not require the considerable time and expense of either rehiring new teachers or retraining old ones. By waiting until children enter high school, it is possible to ensure that they learn programming from dedicated specialists.

To sum up, although there are potential benefits to teaching computer programming at primary school, these are clearly outweighed by the disadvantages, and so on balance, I am against the idea.

(277 words)

## MODEL ANSWER 8.5 - TASK ACHIEVEMENT

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## MODEL ANSWER 8.5 - COHERENCE and COHESION

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## MODEL ANSWER 8.5 - LEXICAL RESOURCE

With computers such an **integral part** of our **modern civilisation**, the need to train new **generations** of skilled programmers is **irrefutable**. However, I do not think this **justifies** teaching **coding** in primary school.

Obviously, the sooner children begin **programming**, the more **knowledge** and **experience** they are likely to have by the time they **reach university**. Understandably, **some** in the IT industry **call for lessons** in **coding** at the youngest possible age feeling that this will **give domestic companies the edge over** their **international competitors**.

However, any **curriculum** must be a **compromise** between what is **ideal** and what is possible given the **financial and scheduling constraints** under which **primary schools operate**. **Coding** is no doubt a **useful skill** to have, but it **pales in comparison** with learning how to read and write **properly**. **Relatively** few jobs **require** programming, but a great many require **literacy and numeracy**, so this is obviously where the **bulk** of a primary school's **precious resources** must be spent.

Furthermore, in primary schools, each class generally has **a single teacher** responsible for teaching all subjects. They have long been required to teach **elementary** mathematics and English, but programming will be a skill that many of them do not **possess**. There is no way **to bridge this gap** that does not require the **considerable** time and expense of either **rehiring** new teachers or **retraining** old ones. By waiting until children **enter** high school, it is possible to **ensure** that they learn programming from **dedicated specialists**.

To sum up, although there are **potential benefits** to teaching computer programming at primary school, these are clearly **outweighed by** the disadvantages, and so **on balance**, I am against the idea.

## MODEL ANSWER 8.5 - GRAMMATICAL RANGE and ACCURACY

With computers **such** an integral part of our modern civilisation, the need to train new generations of skilled programmers **is** irrefutable. However, I do not think this **justifies teaching coding** in primary school.

Obviously, **the sooner** children begin programming, **the more** knowledge and experience they **are likely** to have **by the time** they reach university. Understandably, some in the IT industry call for **lessons in coding** at the youngest possible age **feeling that this will** give domestic companies the edge over **their** international competitors.

However, any curriculum **must be** a compromise between **what** is ideal and **what** is possible **given the** financial and scheduling constraints **under which** primary schools operate. Coding is no doubt a useful skill to have, but it pales in comparison with learning how to read and write properly. Relatively few jobs **require programming**, but a great many **require literacy and numeracy**, so this is obviously **where** the bulk of a primary school's precious resources **must be spent**.

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