

# Building a convincing 250-word essay

## French B2 (upper intermediate) · Lesson

This French B2 lesson explains **French argumentative essay DELF B2** step by step, with examples in French and English. Then practise with the worksheet on French argumentative essay DELF B2 and check yourself with the quiz.

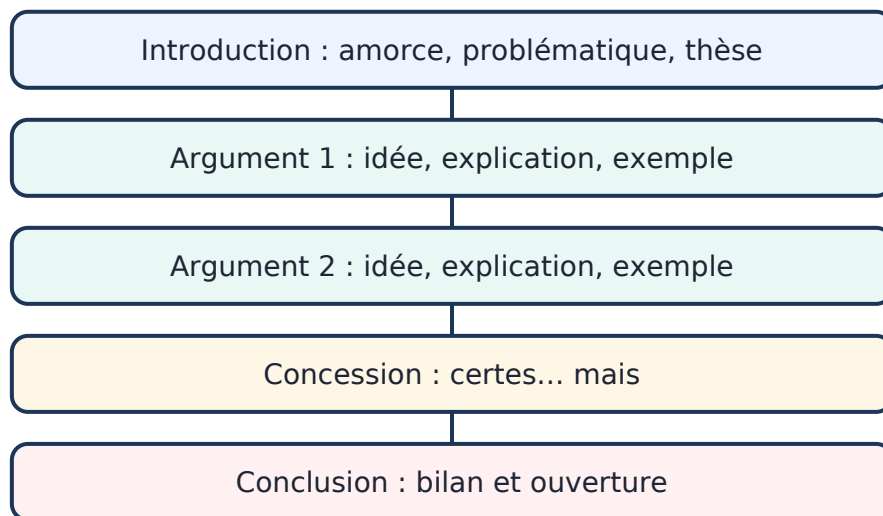
**Quick answer:** A French argumentative essay (l'essai argumenté) defends one clear position in about 250 words. It has three moves: an introduction that states the issue and the thesis, a body of two or three paragraphs (idea, explanation, example), and a conclusion. Connectors such as d'abord, en outre and cependant make the logic visible.

**Level:** French B2 (CEFR upper intermediate) · **Standards:** CEFR B2, Writing

## French argumentative essay DELF B2: the lesson

### What does a DELF B2 argumentative essay look like?

The B2 writing task asks for about 250 words in which you defend a point of view on a subject from public life. The examiner checks three things: your position is clear, each idea is supported, and the text is easy to follow from one paragraph to the next.



*The five blocks of a 250-word essay, from top to bottom.*

### How do you build the introduction?

#### Three moves in three sentences

1. L'amorce: a general sentence that opens the topic.
2. La problématique: the question the topic raises.
3. La thèse: your position, with the plan in a few words.

### Topic: should cities ban cars from their centers?

Dans de nombreuses villes, le centre est saturé de voitures. — Many city centers are clogged with cars.

Faut-il pour autant les interdire ? — Should they be banned for that reason?

Je pense qu'une interdiction progressive s'impose, pour des raisons de santé et de qualité de vie. — I think a gradual ban is necessary, for reasons of health and quality of life.

## How do you develop one argument?

Give each paragraph one idea, then explain it, then prove it with an example: Les voitures polluent l'air. En effet, les particules fines provoquent des maladies respiratoires. Par exemple, à Grenoble, les écoles voisines des grands axes mesurent régulièrement ces particules.

|                                                       |                                                        |                                                |                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ajouter</b><br>de plus<br>en outre<br>par ailleurs | <b>Opposer</b><br>cependant<br>pourtant<br>en revanche | <b>Expliquer</b><br>car<br>en effet<br>puisque | <b>Conclure</b><br>donc<br>en somme<br>en conclusion |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|

Connectors grouped by what they do.

| Function    | Connectors                                                   |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Concession  | certes... mais, bien que + subjunctive, même si + indicative |
| Consequence | donc, par conséquent, c'est pourquoi                         |
| Example     | par exemple, ainsi, notamment                                |
| Order       | d'abord, ensuite, enfin                                      |

## How do you end the essay?

Close with a short bilan: restate the thesis in new words, then open onto a wider question. En somme, la ville de demain devra partager l'espace entre tous ceux qui l'habitent. — In short, tomorrow's city will have to share its space among everyone who lives there.

### Common mistakes of English speakers

Bien que is always followed by the subjunctive: Bien que ce soit cher, not bien que c'est cher. Also, actuellement means "currently", never "actually". Finally, do not stack connectors: Cependant, mais... is one too many.

### The classic plan

French schools teach the *dissertation* with a three-step plan: thèse, antithèse, synthèse. At B2 you can use a lighter version: two arguments for your position and one conceded counterpoint.

### Zoé's tip

Write your plan in four lines before the first sentence: thesis, argument 1, argument 2, concession. Ten minutes of planning save you from rambling in the last twenty.

### Key points to remember

- The DELF B2 essay asks for about 250 words defending a point of view.
- The introduction has three moves: amorce, problématique, thèse.
- Each paragraph holds one idea, one explanation and one example.
- Bien que and quoique are followed by the subjunctive.
- The conclusion restates the thesis and never adds a new argument.

## Building a convincing 250-word essay: frequently asked questions

### How many words should a DELF B2 argumentative essay have?

The task asks for about 250 words. Aim for 230 to 270 and count honestly: examiners penalize texts that are clearly too short or far too long.

### What is a thesis in a French essay?

The thèse is your position on the question, stated in one clear sentence in the introduction. Every paragraph that follows must support it or discuss an objection to it.

### Can I use je in a B2 essay?

Yes, in moderation. Use je pense que or à mon avis once or twice, then prefer impersonal forms such as il est évident que or on constate que.

### Which connectors are best to show contrast?

Use cependant, pourtant and en revanche between sentences, and bien que or même si inside a sentence. Remember that bien que needs the subjunctive.

### How should I end the essay?

Restate your position in new words, summarize the two main arguments in one sentence, and add a short opening onto a wider question. Never introduce a new argument in the conclusion.