Writing Introductions

Task 1: Decide which is the most successful introduction. Consider which one

1. successfully links the title in the introductory paragraph
2. tells the reader the general significance of the question
3. gives general background information
4. sets out the aim of the essay
5. gives the writer’s approach to the topic (the thesis statement / argument)
6. outlines the issues the essay will deal with and signals the structure

a) Essay title: ‘How has the role of British trades unions changed since the 1970s? Can they still be described as a vital defence for the weak against the strong?’

A trade union is an organisation of workers who combine to further their interests: they choose representatives to negotiate on their behalf and engage in collective bargaining with employers. Historically trade unions have a voluntary structure which consists of members and elected officials. This paper aims to examine why their role has changed since the 1970s and will focus on their objectives. Also, it will look at political activities and the provision of social services. Furthermore, it will show how the decline of trade union membership and Employment Act affects the power of the trade unions.

b) Essay title: ‘Evaluate measures for traffic control. How effective are they?’

The congestion charge began operating in central London in February 2003 and was the first of its kind in the world. This essay aims to examine cost effectiveness, the impact on businesses and the effects on transport efficiency and air quality. It will be argued that whilst the congestion charge has brought about a positive result in the reduction of traffic congestion, there has been no significant reduction in levels of air pollution, and therefore the congestion charge should be extended to evenings and weekends.
c) Essay title: ‘Should assisted dying be legalized in English law?’

The question whether assisted dying should be legalized is one of the most controversial multidisciplinary problems in England. It implicates ethical, medical and legal problems of fundamental importance. Under current legislation voluntary euthanasia is regarded as murder and assisted suicide is an offence under section 2 (1) of the Suicide Act of 1961. However, in 2003 the Assisted Dying for the Terminally Ill Bill [HL] was introduced to the House of Lords that - if enacted in its revised form – would have legalized physician assisted suicide. After a controversial debate the House of Lords decided to block the Bill. The following essay will argue that the decision, despite justified doubts, was right because of profound ethical, medical and legal reasons. The first part of the essay will examine the ethical aspects, the second part deals with medical and practical considerations whereas the last part deals with the question whether there is - according to European Union law – a legal obligation to allow assisted dying.

d) Essay title: ‘Examine the extent to which Europe underdeveloped Africa and the role slavery played in the process.’

Estimates vary, but somewhere between 20 and 100 million people were either enslaved or killed in Africa and the Americas during the slave trade. But in addition to this human tragedy, the trade also had a huge economic impact in the three continents involved. This essay aims to examine that impact and the way in which an essential imbalance was created. I will begin by looking at the figures for slave exports and imports during the period of 1700-1800. Secondly, I will consider the estimated total value of that trade, and lastly I will try to estimate the contribution of the slave trade to the socio-economic underdevelopment of Africa.
**Answer:**

C is probably the most successful introduction as it is the only paragraph which specifically addresses the title and clearly sets out the aims of the essay.