WRITING TASK 2

Should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

It has been said, “Not everything that is learned is contained in books.” Compare and contrast knowledge gained from experience with knowledge gained from books. In your opinion, which source is more important? Why?

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

You should write at least 250 words.

SAMPLE 1.

“Experience is the best teacher” is an old cliché, but I agree with it. The most important, and sometimes the hardest, lessons we learn in life come from our participation in situations. You can’t learn everything from a book.

Of course, learning from books in a formal educational setting is also valuable. It’s in schools that we learn the information we need to function in our society. We learn how to speak and write and understand mathematical equations. This is all information that we need to live in our communities and earn a living.

Nevertheless, I think that the most important lessons can’t be taught; they have to be experienced. No one can teach us how to get along with others or how to have self-respect. As we grow from children into teenagers, no one can teach us how to deal with peer pressure. As we leave adolescence behind and enter adult life, no one can teach us how to fall in love and get married.

This shouldn’t stop us from looking for guidelines along the way. Teachers and parents are valuable sources of advice when we’re young. As we enter into new stages in our lives, the advice we receive from them is very helpful because they have already had similar experiences. But experiencing our own triumphs and disasters is really the only way to learn how to deal with life. (232 words)
SAMPLE2.

For some centuries humanity has used books to document its growing knowledge. Some people prefer learning from books while others are convinced first-hand experience provide a better learning experience. In my opinion books cannot fully replace experience but can enhance, facilitate and speed up the process of gaining knowledge in some field.

Undoubtedly first-hand experience is useful to learn about a field but can be time consuming or only available at certain times or places. For example to study the history of the pyramids most people would have to travel far. On the other hand books are comparatively cheap, easily available and can be used anywhere. Without books and only personal experience the number of people having access to knowledge would be seriously limited in some fields.

Secondly, experience is limited to our own and that of people we known. However, books allow us expand the depth of our knowledge by sharing other people’s experiences. Usually they are written by subject experts and comparing our personal experience to the author’s experiences allows gives us a broader view of the field.

Furthermore, some fields are difficult to experience in person or bar beginners for safety reasons. Space exploration fascinated many people but only very few people went into space so far. Another example is surgery; beginners need to gain some knowledge prior to practicing.

From this description it is obvious that in many areas books are an excellent complement for our personal experience. I therefore expect their usage, whether in printed or digital form, to increase in the future.