

### Checklist

Assess your progress in this unit. Tick (✓) the statements which are true.

I can describe the processes of pregnancy and birth

I can give advice using a range of verbs and expressions

I can describe the signs and symptoms of pregnancy and labour

I can write an essay about advantages and disadvantages

### Key words

Pregnancy  
amniotic fluid

embryo

foetus

miscarriage

placenta

Labour

contractions

dilated

rupture

waters

Birth

birth plan

breech

Caesarean

epidural

induce

presentation

Look back through this unit. Find five more words or expressions that you think are useful.

A	Water birth is becoming increasingly popular and more hospitals are making this option available to women. <b>However</b> , it is important for women to be aware that there are potential problems as well as benefits before opting for a water birth.
B	The main benefit of a water birth is that it makes labour more comfortable. It is easier for the woman to move around, which gives her a feeling of control and <b>therefore</b> makes her feel more relaxed and less anxious. The reduced pain of water birth also lowers anxiety. <b>For this reason</b> , being in water lowers the blood pressure, which avoids a range of complications.
C	On the negative side, it is difficult to monitor the woman accurately during a water birth, so it is not suitable for high-risk pregnancies. <b>Also</b> , it is easier for waterborne pathogens to be transferred from mother to baby – or to medical staff. <b>In addition to this, although</b> being in water reduces the mother's pain, it can also weaken the contractions. Another drawback is the risk of hypothermia unless water temperature is carefully monitored. Finally, the risk of heavy blood loss is increased in water; <b>as</b> bleeding is difficult to measure underwater. <b>Despite</b> these disadvantages, both patients and medical staff are very positive about water birth and many women opt to do it again for subsequent children. With more training and facilities, the limitations of water birth could be reduced.

2 Connectors are used to join ideas together. Write the bold words and phrases in the essay under the three headings.

ADD	<i>in addition</i>
CONTRAST	<i>however</i>
REASON	<i>therefore</i>

3 Write an essay of 200–250 words with the title *The advantages and disadvantages of home birth*. Before you begin, brainstorm ideas with a partner. Write the essay in four sections, as in the example.

- A Introduction
- B Advantages
- C Disadvantages
- D Conclusion