

Writing task 1: exercise 11

The reading passage emphasizes the importance of REM sleep, stating that it plays a critical role in intellectual performance, emotional well-being, and maintaining healthy energy levels through internal clock regulation. However, the lecture challenges these claims, offering a more skeptical view of REM sleep's overall significance. First, the reading claims that REM sleep supports learning and memory, contributing to long-term memory formation and intellectual performance. The lecturer, however, argues that while some research suggests a connection, it is not conclusive. He points out that other stages of sleep may play an equal—or even greater—role in processing memories. Therefore, attributing cognitive benefits solely to REM sleep oversimplifies how memory works during sleep. Second, the passage claims REM sleep improves emotional health by helping individuals process emotions through dreaming. The lecturer disputes this, explaining that dreams are highly subjective and unpredictable. While some may find emotional relief in dreams, others might experience distressing or confusing content that can worsen their emotional state. This variability undermines the idea that REM sleep universally supports emotional well-being. Finally, the reading suggests REM sleep helps regulate our internal clock, thus optimizing our energy levels and preventing oversleeping. This response, the lecturer questions this connection, noting that many people with irregular sleep schedules—due to work or family responsibilities—still function well without consistent REM cycles. This suggests that REM sleep may not be as essential to energy regulation and daily functioning as previously believed. In conclusion, the lecture casts significant doubt on the reading's optimistic view of REM sleep by highlighting the complexity and inconsistency of its claimed benefits.

Academic Writing : exercise 11

I think the scale tips heavily toward the negative effects of industrial agriculture. The strain it puts on our planet's resources is astronomical. It is a system of production that relies heavily on fossil fuels, contributes to deforestation, and accelerates the loss of biodiversity. The overuse of antibiotics in livestock can lead to antibiotic resistance in humans. Also, we mustn't overlook that these farming practices often lead to socio-economic issues, like the displacement of small-scale farmers. As we grapple with a changing climate and a growing population, we need to ensure the sustainability of our agricultural practices. Rather than

persisting in an unsustainable system because it feeds the masses today, we need to plan for a future where both people and the planet can thrive. In my view, the costs of industrial farming far outweigh its short-term benefits.

Writing task 1: exercise 10

The reading passage argues that a permanent human settlement on the moon is unlikely in the near future due to environmental hazards, resource limitations, and psychological challenges. However, the lecture counters these points, suggesting that recent technological advances offer feasible solutions to these issues. First, the reading emphasizes that the moon's lack of atmosphere makes humans vulnerable to solar radiation and meteoroid impacts, requiring technological solutions that are not yet available. In contrast, the lecturer points out that these environmental risks can be addressed using relatively low-tech methods. He explains that lunar soil can be used to build protective shielding against solar radiation, and underground habitats can naturally protect settlers from meteoroid strikes, making lunar living much safer than previously thought. Second, while the reading highlights the scarcity of vital resources on the moon—particularly air, soil, and water—as a major obstacle, the lecturer argues that this challenge is becoming more manageable. He cites recent discoveries of frozen water in the moon's polar regions, which can be extracted and used not only for drinking and producing oxygen, but also for creating rocket fuel. Furthermore, he mentions hydroponic systems as a way to grow food without soil, reducing dependence on Earth-based resources. Finally, the reading warns that prolonged isolation and the lack of Earth-like stimuli on the moon could have serious psychological effects on settlers. The lecture responds by proposing modern solutions to mitigate these issues. The speaker suggests that regular communication with people on Earth, the use of virtual reality, and designing habitat with open space and natural lighting can help residents stay connected and mentally healthy. Artificial Earth-like environments could also be created to reduce stress and feelings of disconnection. In conclusion, the lecturer acknowledges the challenges of lunar colonization but believes that with current and emerging technologies, these problems are solvable, making a permanent moon settlement a realistic goal in the near future.

Academic Writing : exercise 2

This is a complex issue with valid arguments on both sides. Personally, however, I lean towards supporting the tax on unhealthy items. While I acknowledge and understand Tanya's points regarding the potential for the impact to be primarily on lower-income families, I think the ultimate benefit of reduced consumption of unhealthy foods is an important one. My suggestion would be to use revenues from these proposed taxes to subsidize healthier, fresh food options, therefore reducing their cost and making them more affordable and attractive to low-income families. This way, not only do the less healthy options become less appealing, but healthier options become more accessible to everyone.

Academic Writing : exercise 3

My view aligns more with Jane on this topic. I believe that technology does enhance the educational experience when used thoughtfully and purposefully. In addition to what Jane mentioned – about technology making learning more accessible and facilitating understanding of complex concepts – I think technology also prepares students for the modern workplace, which is increasingly digital. I also agree with Mark's concerns, especially the issue of equal access, which is a significant issue in many regions. Rather than seeing technology as a complete replacement for conventional teaching methods, we should see it as a tool to complement and enhance existing teaching methods, ensuring not to abandon the critical human interaction, mentoring.

Academic Writing : exercise 4

I would like to weigh in on the question of economic growth versus environmental sustainability. I believe it is a false dichotomy as Bruce rightly suggested. Economic growth is fundamentally rooted in the sustainability of our environment. Exploiting the environment for growth today only jeopardises our future. We need to adopt strategies that align with sustainable development goals. This not only includes green technologies and renewable energy sources, as suggested, but also investing in education and research around sustainable practices, incentivizing businesses for green operations, and stringent regulations to penalize environmental degradation. Only by doing so we can ensure that we are paving the way for sustainable future.

Academic Writing : exercise 5

Joining in the discussion about social media, I think that the benefits and drawbacks of social media are largely dependent on the individual user. It

is a tool, and like any tool, whether it is beneficial or harmful depending on how it is used. That being said, I agree with Rachel that the benefits of social media, for example the increased connectivity and information dissemination, are real and important. But Mike is also right that the misuse of social media can have serious detrimental effects, particularly on mental health. Therefore, it is important for users to be mindful of their habits and for parents and educators to guide younger users. It is just as vital for governments and social media companies to implement better safeguards and make the platforms a safer space for everyone.

Academic Writing : exercise 6

In response to the question about single-payer healthcare system, I support the idea of having a single-payer system in place. The current disparity in the healthcare system where some can receive top-tier treatment whereas others are left without any, is a human rights issue. While higher taxes and the risk of decreased quality are valid concerns raised by Paul, we should also consider the large amount of resources that are currently devoted to administration under the multiple-payer system. Under a government-run system, administrative efficiency could increase and costs could decrease. Furthermore, if the quality of care does decline, this can be seen as a collective issue that encourages governments and populations alike to invest in improving the healthcare system.

Academic Writing : exercise 7

The debate between healthcare as a right or a privilege is deeply complex. I lean towards the school of thought that believes health care is a human right. While Alice has a point about the efficiency and innovative potential private healthcare holds, the sole fact remains that everyone falls sick sometimes. In those times, access to medical care should not be constrained by one's financial standing. Balancing efficiency and universal access is indeed challenging, but not impossible. Instead of delineating between public and private, a hybrid model that includes government-subsidized basic healthcare and private sector for more specialized treatments could be a solution.

Academic Writing : exercise 8

As the nature versus nurture debate continues, I have always been inclined toward the belief that our behavior and personality are deeply interconnected with both our genetics and environment. Genetic

predisposition does play a significant role in outlining our basic traits—agreeing with Lily. However, the influence of environment, as Paul stated, cannot be overlooked. The experiences and environments we encounter play a significant role in molding those basic traits established by our genes. I believe the interaction between these two plays the biggest role in ultimately defining our character.

Academic Writing : exercise 10

I believe technology has been a boon in our rapid advancing society, but with caveats. As Daniel pointed out, there is much good that comes from it: increased efficiency, faster and wider communication and scope for breakthrough innovations. However, Samantha's point on responsible use cannot be undermined. While it has offered many conveniences, the technological dependence has also had its drawbacks. One of it being losing touch with some of human aspects, like face-to-face communication and perhaps some basic life skills. As such, it's up to us to find that balance and use technology as tool that aids our life, rather than letting it control us.

Academic writing : exercise 12

Remote work offers flexibility but risks isolating employees. I agree with Sophia that productivity can increase without commutes, yet James rightly highlights the loss of workspace camaraderie. Hybrid models—combining remote and in-office days—could balance both benefits while fostering teamwork