

94	PR	Some people trust their first impressions about a person's character because they believe these judgments are generally correct. Other people do not judge a person's character quickly because they believe first impressions are often wrong. Compare these two attitudes. Which attitude do you agree with? Support your choice with specific examples.
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*Any opinion is, in fact, a judgment. I feel that as Americans we would do well to judge others less often. Still, we must be able to decide whom to spend our time with and whom we'd rather forget. In my opinion, this type of judgment is best after we get to know other people. First impressions are not always accurate impressions.*

*Judging a person based on a first impression does save time. There are more people than anyone could possibly get to know in one lifetime. It is frustrating to waste time getting to know someone, only to find out that your first impression was correct and that you really don't like him or her. So is it a waste of time getting to know people you probably won't like? That seems to be a valid point of view, but I believe that it is not the best attitude to take.*

*It's more humane to spend time getting to know people before judging them. I know that I don't always make a good first impression, even when I truly like the person with whom I am interacting. We all have bad days. I wouldn't want to lose a job or a potential friendship simply because I picked out the wrong clothing or said something wrong. I think everyone deserves the chance to make a second impression.*

*If we all based our final opinion of others on first impressions, it would be hard to get to know anyone. There is always more to people than meets the eye. If we don't give someone a chance, we may be missing out on meeting a life-long friend. That would truly be a shame.*

95	AD	Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People are never satisfied with what they have; they always want something more or something different. Use specific reasons to support your answer.
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*I think it's probably true that people are never satisfied with what they have. They always want something more or something different from what is theirs. This just seems to be part of our human nature. Look at a toddler. Give her a toy to play with and she's happy—until she sees something else. Then she wants that other toy to play with. If she and her brother are each given a cookie, she'll look to see whose cookie is bigger. She'll protest loudly if she thinks her brother is getting more.*

*"The grass is always greener" is an old expression, but it's a good expression of how many of us feel. We're always striving for a better job, a nicer place to live, a fancier car, or more expensive clothes. Part of this reaching for more and better is because we care about what other people think and want to impress them. Part of it is trying to make ourselves feel successful. But there's also something in our nature that tells us we can do better and reach higher.*

*This isn't always a negative quality. There's another saying: "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?" It's a good thing to be constantly*

*pushing ourselves and looking for something different. If we don't try for more and different things, we begin to stagnate, like a pool that doesn't get any fresh water.*

*The problem comes when we won't let ourselves be satisfied with anything we have. If we have a comfortable life and still feel as if something's missing, then we need to look inward. The something that's missing may be in our spirit.*

96	AD	Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People should read only those books that are about real events, real people, and established facts. Use specific reasons and details to support your opinion.
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### ***The Importance of Fiction***

*How could anyone suggest that people should only read about real events, real people, and established facts? For one thing, that means people wouldn't be reading half of all the great books that have ever been written, not to mention the plays, short stories and poetry. For another, it would mean that people's imaginations would not develop as children and would remain dulled throughout their lives.*

*Reading stories as a child helps develop our creativity by teaching us a lot about how to use words to create mental images. It opens our world up, exposing us to other times and different ways of living. Reading histories of those times would serve kind of the same purpose, but it probably wouldn't stick in our minds as sharply. Reading an essay about poverty in Victorian England is not the same thing as reading Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*. The images of a small boy being sold are more horrifying than simply reading the statement, "Children were sold into labor" because a novel makes that small boy seem real to us. Reading fiction makes a more lasting impression on our minds and emotions.*

*Besides, storytelling is an emotional need for human beings. From earliest times, humans have taught their children about life, not by telling them facts and figures, but by telling them stories. Some of these stories show what people are like (human nature), and help us experience a wide range of feelings. Some make us think about how we should act. Telling a child that it's wrong to lie will make little impression, but telling him the story of a little boy whose nose grows longer every time he tells a lie will make a big impression.*

*Fiction is too important to our culture, our minds, and our emotions. How could we ever give it up?*

97	AD	Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? It is more important for students to study history and literature than it is for them to study science and mathematics. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.
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*I think it's more important for students to study history and literature. These subjects help us understand the human race and feed our spirits and our imaginations. That's more important than understanding how to split the atom or do algebra.*

*People talk about a crisis of spirit in our country. They mean we've forgotten how to believe in and understand our own better natures. I think part of this is because we've become too excited about facts and not enough about things we can't see and measure. Reading books from our own culture helps us understand our roots. Reading books from other cultures helps us understand the way other people think and react to situations. It also teaches us that we're not so very different from others, and that leads to better relations between cultures.*

*Reading literature also feeds our spirits. Even when the material we're reading is about terrible sadness and hardship, it still brings us in touch with our inner selves. It makes us think about issues other than the new car we want to drive or how much money we're making.*

*Studying history gives us more information than just who died when or who won which war. It tells us about how human beings have related to each other at different periods in our development. It gives us the big picture. So often, when international crises occur, we only see the problem of the moment. We have no idea how something that happened twenty years ago was the beginning of this current problem. Without that information, we can have only a shallow understanding of what's going on in the world.*

*Both history and literature are necessary subjects for students to prepare for more than just careers. These subjects prepare students for the way they want to live their lives.*

**98 AD**

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? All students should be required to study art and music in secondary school. Use specific reasons to support your answer.

*I agree that all students should be required to study art and music in high school. I've read that young children who study art and music in grade school do better in their other studies. That argument aside, we should study art and music for its sake alone. We should study art and music to learn more about ourselves, our culture, and our world.*

*Both art and music feed students' imaginations and help them express themselves. There's a reason our ancestors in caves drew on the walls and made music with drums. Wanting to express ourselves is natural. It gives us an avenue for our emotions and fears. It may not always be music other people want to hear or art others will appreciate, but the activity itself is enjoyable. It shouldn't matter if the end result isn't perfect. In the process, we learn what we like and dislike.*

*Studying art and music means more than drawing or playing an instrument. Students usually go to art galleries and concerts, too. By studying the pictures on the museums' walls or by reading the program notes at a recital, students will learn what society has decided is worthy of praise. They learn what is important in their own culture.*

*Students may also learn about other cultures by looking at art and listening to music from other countries. When they do that, they'll see similarities and differences with their own. They'll learn about what is important in other societies. Students will also learn how the art and music of other cultures affect our own.*

*By studying art and music in high school, students begin to understand themselves as well as their own culture and other cultures. What could have more value than that?*

99	AD	Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? There is nothing that young people can teach older people. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.
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*Many of us believe that young people have nothing valuable to teach older people. However, that is not always the case. Young people can teach older people about technology, youth culture, and youth-related social issues.*

*Young people are usually better at using new forms of technology than older people. Children these days become familiar with computers at an early age. Older people can learn to use computers from young people. This is true of other technology too. For example, I taught my grandparents how to use a video cassette recorder when I was thirteen years old. They didn't know what it could do until I showed them. Now they use it regularly.*

*Older people are usually not familiar with youth culture, and younger people can help here too. This is important because it can help older people live a more enjoyable life. For example, popular music is generally youth-oriented, and older people don't always listen to it. However, when young people teach them about it, they may come to enjoy it. My grandmother, for example, never listened to popular music before I introduced her to it. Now she and I listen and dance all the time. I plan to teach her about another piece of youth culture—rollerblading—very soon!*

*Of course, there are more serious issues about which younger people can teach older people. As with computers, today's children have grown up knowing about AIDS and school violence. That's not true for older generations. Here, again, children can teach older people about things that are important to everyone.*

*I know there are people who would say "you can't teach an old dog new tricks." However, it's plain to me that the young have plenty to teach the old if they take the time to try. When they do, I think both gain a new appreciation for each other.*

100	AD	Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Reading fiction (such as novels and short stories) is more enjoyable than watching movies. Use specific reasons and examples to explain your position.
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*Reading fiction, such as novels and short stories, is more enjoyable than watching a movie. Of course, the images in a movie are much more vivid, because you're seeing them on a large screen in a dark room. The images you "see" in a novel are only as strong as your own imagination. But the more you read, the stronger your imagination becomes. Reading exercises your imaginative powers. Watching a movie dulls them. Imagination, like a muscle, needs to be used. Otherwise it can disappear.*

*When you read, you're an active participant in your own enjoyment. That's one reason reading develops the imagination. You're reading the words on the page and*

translating them into images in your mind. When you're watching a movie, you're a passive viewer. The movie is giving you everything. Nothing comes from you except your reaction to what you're seeing, and even that can be given you by the movie. Some movie plots are so simple, you can predict what's going to happen before it does.

Reading fiction also develops your storytelling skills. The more reading you do, the better you become at creating plots and characters. The plots and characters in movies are often very simple, because the emphasis is on action rather than on language or character development.

Still, going to the movies is a great community experience. Sitting in a large theater with a lot of other people is fun. You experience the same reactions to what you're seeing together. Reading is a one-person experience. It's a chance to go into an imaginary world by yourself. Both experiences can be fun and rewarding, but I think reading fiction is more enjoyable.

101 PR

Some people say that physical exercise should be a required part of every school day. Other people believe that students should spend the whole school day on academic studies. Which opinion do you agree with? Give specific reasons and details to support your answer.

While physical exercise is important, I do not believe that it is the school's responsibility to provide physical training for its students. That is something that everyone can take care of on his or her own.

Many students get plenty of physical exercise as part of their daily life or recreation. A student who bicycles ten miles to and from school does not need more exercise. A good physical education program must take a student's outside activity into consideration. Otherwise, some students will spend valuable class hours repeating physical exercise.

If a school offers such activities, it also suggests that students will be graded on them. The range of possible physical activities is great: football, swimming, weight lifting, ballet, ballroom dance, yoga, skiing, horseback riding, and golf are just a few. However, the number that a school could offer is small. Some students could get bad grades in physical education simply because the school could not provide an activity they enjoy or do well. This seems unfair. Research suggests that participation, not excellence, in these activities determines the physical benefits the body will get.

Another issue is economic. Many schools do not have the money to provide gym facilities, playing fields, and athletic equipment for their students. Other schools are located in cities where that kind of space just isn't available. A few schools would rather keep money for academic purposes.

Schools can certainly encourage physical activity. They can provide space for notices about activities, events, and classes for physical activities. They can encourage students to plan time away from academic studies to get some exercise. However, I think that providing exercise should not be the school's responsibility.

**102 PR**

A university plans to develop a new research center in your country. Some people want a center for business research. Other people want a center for research in agriculture (farming). Which of these two kinds of research centers do you recommend for your country? Use specific reasons in your recommendation.

*The importance of agricultural and business research centers cannot be underestimated. Success in farming and success in business each can improve a country's standing. I think that agricultural research tends to improve the quality of individual citizens' lives, whereas successful business practices improve a country's economy in relation to other nations. Choosing between an agricultural and a business research center is a difficult decision. However, I believe that the agricultural research center would be most beneficial because its benefits are more widespread.*

*Business practices in the United States already serve as a model for many other countries. While we certainly have much to learn, the U.S. already has a fairly solid economic basis. Further, businesses are already well-connected internationally. They have the advantage of the Internet and other means of electronic information transmission. I think that a business research center would really only help a few directly. Businessmen would get richer. For the rest of the country's people, there might be little obvious benefit.*

*On the other hand, an agricultural research center would help all people. No country can survive without adequate means of food production. While the U.S. is able to produce or import enough food now, that may not remain the case if current trends continue. Natural resources are eroding, and more and more American farms are closing. Farmers need to build stronger networks across the country and internationally, much as businessmen already have done. Ultimately, better systems for farming will help all people. For example, food prices can be reduced as farmers discover more effective means of food production.*

*Morally, I believe that it is best to do what will benefit the most people. I believe that the university's decision to build an agricultural research center could do just that.*

**103 PR**

Some young children spend a great amount of their time practicing sports. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

*Most kids love to play sports. It's important to them, but for the majority, it's just one type of activity out of many that they do. For a small number of kids, though, a sport becomes their whole life. They spend almost all their time and energy practicing. This has both advantages and disadvantages.*

*Sports are good for young children in many ways. Kids who enjoy sports are likely to have better health. They develop good habits of daily exercise that will keep them healthy as adults, too. Today, many children and adults are overweight, but those who love sports stay in shape. Plus, by developing their physical abilities, they will learn how to work hard towards a goal. Their achievements in sports will make them feel good*

about themselves. They'll also make friends and learn teamwork. Sports, whether a little or a lot, can have positive effects.

We admire the talent and dedication of young athletes, but we also wonder if they're losing something. Their focus is very narrow. If they devote most of their time to sports, are they neglecting schoolwork? What about other interests? Children should try out many different activities. In addition, many young athletes are pressured by parents or coaches to succeed. Kids whose drive comes from inside usually do okay, but others can be unhappy and have health and emotional problems. So sports, like anything else in excess, can have negative effects too.

When I was young, I liked books and hated sports. I saw other people who loved sports and hated school. Now that I'm older, I've found a better balance. People have to figure out what's right for them. Is there such a thing as too much sports? There is no right answer, because there is no "right amount." Everyone is different.



<b>104 AD</b>	Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Only people who earn a lot of money are successful. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.
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Many people believe that a large income equals success. I believe, however, that success is more than how much money you make. Some of those measures of success include fame, respect, and knowledge.

Most people assume that famous people are rich people, but that isn't always true. For example, some day I would like to be a famous researcher. Few scientists are rich by today's standards. Still, I will feel myself to be successful if I am well-known. Additionally, there are many famous humanitarians who are not rich. Mother Theresa was one. Certainly, no one would say she was not successful.

I also believe that being respected by coworkers indicates success. Without that respect, money means little. For example, I once did some work for a top attorney in a law firm. He made a very good salary, but he wasn't a nice man. No one ever did work for him willingly. He ordered everyone around, and we didn't respect him. In contrast, however, I had a wonderful band director in high school. He had to take extra jobs just to make enough money to support his family. However, his students had great respect for him and always listened to what he said. As a result, we were a very good band. In my opinion, my band director was more successful than the attorney was.

Finally, I think one of the most important indicators of success is knowledge. Wealthy people don't know all the answers. For example, in the movie Good Will Hunting, the only person who could solve some complex problems was the janitor. He knew a lot, and decided what he wanted to do with that knowledge rather than just think about money. In my opinion, he was extremely successful.

When we think of history, there are few people that we remember simply because they were rich. Overall, we remember people who did something with their lives—they were influential in politics, or contributed to science or art or religion. If history is the ultimate judge of success, then money surely isn't everything.

**105 MA**

If you could invent something new, what product would you develop? Use specific details to explain why this invention is needed.

*If I could invent something new, I'd invent a device or pill that could put people to sleep immediately and would have no side effects. The proper amount of sleep is important for our concentration, mental health, and physical health.*

*Getting enough sleep is a vital human need. For one thing, without sleep our concentration is strongly affected. We're easily distracted, we can't remember things, and we don't notice what's happening around us. For example, a lot of car accidents are caused by tired drivers. When we get enough sleep, our powers of concentration are sharper. We're more focused on what we're doing. We perform better.*

*Mental health is also affected by lack of sleep. It's easy to tell if people don't get enough sleep. They're on edge, cranky, and out of sorts. They lose their tempers easily and over-react to situations. In fact, experiments have shown that lack of sleep over a long period of time can cause a complete mental breakdown. When we get our proper rest, we're more alert and responsive. Our outlook is positive and we're much easier to get along with.*

*Our physical health shows the strain of sleeplessness, too. We have less energy, and everything seems like a major effort. Over a long period of time, we become slow and unresponsive. The wear and tear on the body from lack of sleep can be a very serious health problem. Every doctor will tell you that getting enough sleep is a basic factor in maintaining good health.*

*Wouldn't it be great to go to bed every night knowing you'd have no problem getting to sleep, no matter what's going on in your life? Getting enough sleep is always going to be an important part of how you respond to your situation. I think this device would be very helpful to all of us.*

**106 AD**

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? A person's childhood years (the time from birth to twelve years of age) are the most important years of a person's life. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

*I agree that a person's childhood years, from birth until twelve years of age, are the most important. All the information I've read about that time of life states that these are the years that form us. These years determine what kind of a person the child will become. During these years we learn about relationships, begin our formal education, and develop our moral sense of right and wrong.*

*The early years are the time when we learn about relationships. First we learn about our parents and siblings, then about rest of the world. We learn how to respond to others based the treatment we're given. If we're loved, then we know how to love others. If we're treated harshly, we may grow up to treat others harshly. We also form our ideas about our own self-worth from the way others treat us during these years. They can convince us we're worthless, or they can teach us we deserve love and respect.*



*These are the years when we begin our formal education. We acquire the basic skills—reading, writing, working with numbers—that we'll use throughout our lives. We need a good foundation in these subjects. Otherwise, anything we try to do later will be undermined by our lack of skills. Perhaps the most important thing we can learn during these years is how to analyze information and use it. These are skills that will always be useful.*

*Most important, from my point of view, these are the years when we develop our moral sense of what's right and wrong. Others teach us about good and bad, but later in our early years we begin to decide for ourselves. It's also during this time that we begin to develop the self-discipline to live according to our morals.*

*I believe a person grows and changes for the better throughout the many stages of life. However, the foundation is laid in those first few years of life.*

**107 AD**

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Children should be required to help with household tasks as soon as they are able to do so. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

*In the past in America, children were valuable workers. For example, they helped on the farm or in the family business in order to bring in money. Just a couple of generations later, attitudes have changed. Now, children are hardly expected to work at all. Modern children often don't even do household chores. This is sad, because I think that they are missing something if they don't help out at home. Sharing in household tasks benefits children of all ages.*

*First of all, household tasks build skills. Very young children learn motor skills and classification skills when they pick up their toys and put them away. Talking about how to do things helps them learn to analyze situations. Older children learn skills they'll need as an adult. Cleaning and cooking may seem dull, but knowing how to do them well makes life a lot easier. How many young adults leave for college unable to do their own laundry or cook anything besides a frozen microwave dinner? It's amazingly common.*

*When everyone in a family helps out, the family is happier. Nowadays it's common for both parents to work. When they come home, they have more work to do. Life is stressful and there's no time for fun. By sharing household tasks, everyone gains. Children can help their parents with simple tasks such as picking up their own rooms, putting away their own laundry, starting dinner occasionally, or taking care of younger siblings. Then the family can relax together, and parents won't feel like servants to their "couch potato" offspring.*

*The most important thing children learn from helping with household tasks is responsibility. Handling everyday tasks teaches organization and time management skills. Children learn that chores have to be completed before they can play, or before they get their allowances. Children who understand that effort pays off will be more successful later in life.*

*Kids should not work all the time. A happy life needs balance. But if they can successfully handle tasks at home, they will handle life better too. They will know the*

satisfaction of doing a good job, be involved in family life, and become more confident and responsible adults.

108 PR

Some high schools require all students to wear school uniforms. Other high schools permit students to decide what to wear to school. Which of these two school policies do you think is better? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Many high schools, both public and private, require students to wear uniforms. I think that such a policy is an excellent idea because uniforms can make things more equal for all students.

First, uniforms make students equal on an economic level. With uniforms, students from poor families dress the same as students from rich families. This can prevent envy and jealousy about stylish clothes. It can also encourage students to form friendships based on personality, not clothes.

Second, uniforms can reduce unequal treatment by teachers. Research suggests that teachers often have higher expectations for more attractive students, which include those students with nicer clothes. This special attention can include providing more challenges and opportunities for these students. Uniforms help teachers make judgements based on ability, not appearance.

Finally, uniforms encourage the individual students of a school to feel like part of a bigger group. Their feelings of being together, working together and having something in common are all helped by uniforms.

It is my opinion that all schools should have a policy requiring uniforms. Uniforms give every student an equal chance.

109 AD

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Playing a game is fun only when you win. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

I agree with the old saying, "It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game." I don't need to win. I have fun playing all games because it gives me time to be with friends, learn new things, and work as a team.

Tennis is one game that I enjoy. It's a great opportunity to socialize. Of course, you can't carry on a conversation while you're playing, but my tennis partner and I talk a lot before the game. Since we have to reserve a court, we have to talk to one another to find a convenient time to meet. Then we have to make sure that the court is available at that time. This often takes many phone calls and, of course, we talk about many other things during the same conversation. Once we get to the court, we often have to wait. That gives us another opportunity to chat. After the game, we usually go out for a soda or a meal and talk some more. We don't even talk about how well or how poorly we played. Tennis is just an excuse for us to get together.

The board game Scrabble, on the other hand, is a real skill builder. It's a challenge to form words from the letters in front of you and on the board. I always

*learn a new word from my opponent, although sometimes I'm suspicious whether the word really exists. Often we don't even keep score. We just do it because it's fun and we learn new English words.*

*Soccer is the most competitive sport I'm involved in. I do my best, but it doesn't matter to me if my team loses. I enjoy just being with my friends and travelling to different schools in different cities to play. I learn a lot about teamwork when we practice. Our coach tells us the most important thing is to play well as a team. It seems she just wants us to have fun and not worry about winning.*

*All in all, I just enjoy having a good time. Presumably that's our purpose in life. Isn't that better than worrying about who wins and who loses all the time?*

**110 AD**

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? High schools should allow students to study the courses that students want to study. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

*I think high school students should be allowed to choose some of the subjects they study. However, the basic subjects, like mathematics, literature, and science, should be mandatory for all students.*

*When I was in high school, we were allowed to choose three electives each semester. Electives were subjects that weren't part of the basic curriculum. They included things like music, journalism, art, and various kinds of team sports. Choosing some of these subjects to study gave me a chance to experiment. I was able to get a head start on what I was going to study in college.*

*However, college preparation shouldn't be the main factor. I think all students should be allowed to take a certain number of courses just because they're interested in them. For many students, high school is the last chance to learn about things they're interested in. Maybe once they have a job there won't be time for studying.*

*Of course, it's also important that students study certain basic subjects. If I'd had a choice, I know I wouldn't have studied mathematics or science. I wasn't very interested in them. However, once I was in class, I found myself getting interested. I wouldn't have known this if I'd been given the choice, because I would have chosen not to take the courses.*

*High school students aren't always the best judges of what they'll find useful in the years ahead. They need the guidance of experts in the field of education. However, they also need some freedom to follow their curiosity and individual interests. They should be given the freedom to choose some courses, while being required to take others.*

**111 AD**

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? It is better to be a member of a group than to be the leader of a group. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

*According to my opinion, it's always better to be a leader than a follower. True leaders show initiative. They take action and they assume responsibility. A leader makes a decision. Some followers may approve of the decision; others may complain*

about it. However, these followers all chose to follow, not to lead. They chose not to make a decision. That's how I'm different. I'm not a follower. I want to make the decisions.

Good leaders will not react to events, but will anticipate them. A leader will start a plan of action and then will persuade others to follow. For example, a class president at a local college may feel that the relationship between the community and the campus is not a good one. The citizens may feel that the college kids make too much noise on the street, litter public areas, and shop in other communities. A good class president will recognize that the community and the campus depend on one another. The president will ask the student body to keep noise down, help clean up the neighborhoods, and work with businesses to attract students. A good leader takes the initiative.

Good leaders must be action-oriented. Having taken the initiative, they must see the job through. They have to take charge and lead the followers. They have to motivate and encourage the followers. The followers (in this example, the student body) must understand why good relations with the community are necessary. The followers must be persuaded to do something about it.

Good leaders must be ready to accept responsibility. They accept responsibility for their actions as well as those of the followers. In the end, any credit will be shared with the group; any blame will be the leader's fault. The leader who fails is always alone.

I enjoy taking the initiative, determining the direction, and being responsible for my actions. I don't want to suffer through other people's stupid decisions. If there are going to be stupid ways to do something, let them be mine. Wouldn't you agree?

112 EX

What do you consider to be the most important room in a house? Why is this room more important to you than any other room? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

The kitchen is my favorite room in a house, because it is where families gather. To me, that is the most important thing. So many of the memories people have of growing up revolve around the kitchen. My childhood memories concern the kitchens in my grandparents' homes.

My mother's family lived in a row house in the city. The rooms were all small, and that included the kitchen. In the summertime, when we'd visit, the back door of the house would be left open. People would be sitting on the back porch and in the kitchen, talking and laughing, while my grandmother made dinner. There was no air-conditioning, but I don't ever remember feeling too hot. There was always a breeze coming through, along with the sounds of traffic and kids playing ball in the street.

My father's family lived on a farm in the country, and their house had a huge kitchen with windows on three sides. It seems like the windows were always open and the curtains blowing with the breeze. The main door to the house was almost never used. Everyone came in through the kitchen, and sat at the big table in the middle of the room. When dinner was being prepared, all the women would hustle around, while the men sat at the table talking about farm prices. Sometimes my grandmother wouldn't even sit down during dinner, but would be refilling bowls of food and people's glasses. From outside, we could hear the cows in the field near the house.

*These two kitchens are the background for some of my happiest memories. From the beginning of time, human beings have gathered together near the fire where the food was being prepared. I hope that never changes.*

▼	<b>113 MA</b>	If you could make one important change in a school that you attended, what change would you make? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.
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*Most of the schools that I attended had excellent programs and instructors. Unfortunately, at one school this was not the case. The foreign language program there needed both better planning and better instructors. If I could, I would make changes in three major areas.*

*The first step would be to offer third and fourth year language classes. This particular school had no language programs above the second year level. Students who started language classes in the first year ran out of classes to take by the time they were halfway through the school. This was frustrating for those of us who loved learning languages. It also had bad effects when we tried to resume language studies in college after a two-year break.*

*Next, the foreign language program should be staffed with well-trained instructors. The current teachers in the program don't speak the languages well enough. In our classes teachers frequently made errors which the students repeated. If the teachers were well-trained, they would be good models for the students.*

*Finally, the materials in the language courses should be updated. They need to use modern technology. Even though the school has a computer laboratory, our language class never used it. We were limited to using the assigned textbook. If software was available, the students could search the Internet for current, real-life materials, such as newspapers from other countries.*

*Understanding people from other countries depends on being able to communicate with them. Poor language instruction makes this impossible. Improving the foreign language program would really make a difference to the students of the school.*

▼	<b>114 MA</b>	A gift (such as a camera, a soccer ball, or an animal) can contribute to a child's development. What gift would you give to help a child develop? Why? Use reasons and specific examples to support your choice.
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*When I was about 10 years old, my older sister gave me a present. It was my first real grown-up bicycle: a three-speed, yellow and black, shiny and new. I still remember how excited I was. That bicycle was very important to me over the next few years. If I wanted to give a gift that would contribute to a child's development, I would choose a bicycle.*

*Bikes are great exercise. They encourage outdoor play. Television and video games, which are the most popular children's activities nowadays, involve mostly sitting and staring. Riding a bike makes exercise fun.*

Bikes are convenient transportation, too. Without a bike you have to depend on an adult to drive you almost everywhere. With a bike you can go farther. You can ride to your friends' houses. If your school is close enough, you can take yourself to school. You have control over where you go, and you're not always waiting or begging for a ride. Now you can say "Can I go...?" instead of "Please take me!"

To me as a child, a bicycle meant independence. Not only could I go farther, but no one was watching where I went. The road went past the park, the pond, the woods, the 7-11 store, and more. I saw the network of little neighborhood roads from a different viewpoint. Everything was much more interesting up close than it was through a car window. I could stop anywhere and look at whatever I wanted. Everything was my choice. Bike riding was active, not passive.

My bicycle gave me fun exercise, easy transportation, and freedom. For all these reasons, I think that a bicycle is a special present for a child.

115 PR

Some people believe that students should be given one long vacation each year. Others believe that students should have several short vacations throughout the year. Which viewpoint do you agree with? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

I like the idea of students having several short vacations throughout the year. I'm a working parent with two school-age children. Every summer I have to come up with a plan for keeping my children safe and entertained for three months, while my husband and I are at work. Summer camps are expensive, and finding the one your children will enjoy can be a challenge. Getting rid of that one long vacation would make life a lot easier.

Having several shorter vacations would also make it easier to schedule vacations. My husband and I both work in small offices with other working parents. All of us need vacation time during the same three months. This is hard on our businesses and our careers.

We also find that wherever we go in the summer, it's crowded. It would be nice to go places throughout the year and find smaller crowds. I'm sure the attractions themselves would like that better, too. It would be better for the economy to spread things out, too.

I think my children would be more focused on their studies if their vacation time was divided up throughout the year. The final month of the school year, they're just not paying attention. They've been in school for nine long months and they don't have a lot of energy. Plus, they're anticipating vacation time. If vacations were throughout the year, they would concentrate better on studies.

Of course, many older school buildings aren't air-conditioned, because usually people aren't there during the hottest months. That might be a problem. I think, though, that new air-conditioning would be worth the cost. During the last few weeks of summer, my children are bored with their long vacation. I doubt that would happen if there were several vacations throughout the year.

<b>116 PR</b>	Would you prefer to live in a traditional house or in a modern apartment building? Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.
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*I know there are advantages to living in a modern apartment, but I'd prefer to live in a traditional house. My main reason is that I love traditional design. It's graceful and warm and inviting. I think modern design is very empty and sterile and not very inviting. So, because of the way it looks, I'd choose a traditional house.*

*I recognize the fact that a modern apartment is going to be in much better shape. Being new probably means all the plumbing works, the roof isn't going to leak, the windows are properly sealed, and the kitchen appliances are in working order. A traditional house can't guarantee any of that. In fact, it's likely that things will break down or need replacement, simply because of age.*

*Still, if the appliances are old, so is the wood, and that's a big advantage as far as I'm concerned. Very few new buildings have the kind of beautiful woods that were used years ago. It's something that can't be copied.*

*Space is always important to me, too. I need a lot of room for my home office, my clothes, and to display all the knickknacks I've picked up in my travels. I also like to have interesting space. I don't want all the rooms and windows the same size or a boxy design. A modern apartment usually comes in one size and shape. A traditional house is going to have a variety of spaces where I can put a little table or a window seat. And it will have lots of room, from basement to attic. These are all good reasons for me to prefer living in a traditional house.*

*Some people love modern design, but it's not for me. The space and beauty of a traditional home are more important to me than having everything new and perfect.*

<b>117 PR</b>	Some people say that advertising encourages us to buy things that we really do not need. Others say that advertisements tell us about new products that may improve our lives. Which viewpoint do you agree with? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.
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*The whole point of advertising is to encourage us to buy things we don't need. Advertisers are in the business of making money for themselves and their clients. If they manage to sell us something that's good for us too, that's fine. But their primary goal is profit.*

*It begins when we're children. Saturday morning children's television is full of commercials. Over and over again, children see images of toys and games. They see other children who are having the time of their lives. They watch these children and get the message that if they want to have that much fun, they need to buy those things. Thus, at a very early age, we're introduced to two ideas: that we want to be like everyone else, and we want to have what everyone else has.*

*This continues throughout our lives. We spend a lot of our money trying to keep up with our neighbors. We buy the latest model cars, have all the latest gadgets in our homes, and live a lifestyle beyond our budgets. Advertising encourages us to define*

*ourselves by what we own rather than by who we are. It encourages a competition of false values and shallow measurements of what matters in our lives.*

*Advertising can be damaging. However, it is also one of the ways in which our economy keeps growing. People need to buy products in order for other people to have jobs manufacturing, transporting and selling those products. Advertising also keeps us informed about new products that may actually help us in some way. For these reasons, you could say advertising is a necessary evil.*



118 PR	Some people prefer to spend their free time outdoors. Other people prefer to spend their leisure time indoors. Would you prefer to be outside or would you prefer to be inside for your leisure activities? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.
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### ***Enjoying Time with Mother Nature***

*If I had to choose where to spend my leisure time, I'd rather spend it outdoors. I spend all my working hours inside at a desk. When I have some free time, I want to completely change my environment. Getting outdoors gives me a new perspective and helps clear my mind.*

*Being outdoors gives me the opportunity to try new things, see new sights, and meet new people. Staying indoors means reading a book or watching television. Sometimes it involves visiting with friends. Those are all relatively inactive. Being outdoors means a chance to stretch my mental and physical muscles. I can go hiking in an area I've never been before. I can go swimming or rafting on the river. I can go on a nature walk with a ranger and learn about flowers and trees. I can visit all the outdoor monuments in my city that I've never seen before. In each case, I'm doing something that helps me relax while also enjoying the excitement of something new.*

*Of course, weather is a factor. I have a hard time functioning in extremely hot or cold weather and like to stay indoors when it's below freezing or the heat is scorching. At times like that, it's fun to sit inside with a good book or a good friend looking out at the weather and enjoying the comforts of home. But if the weather cooperates, it's fun to read that book outside on a park bench or go swimming with that friend.*

*Enjoying leisure time outdoors can also mean making new friends. Getting outside my own environment gives me the opportunity to meet new people. All in all, leisure time is better when it's spent with Mother Nature rather than a television set.*



119 MA	Your school has received a gift of money. What do you think is the best way for your school to spend this money? Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.
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*A gift of money is generous and welcomed at our school. There are many things that my school could use. To decide, one must consider the amount of the gift and understand that it is a one-time thing. Keeping this in mind, I think that my school could most benefit from new classroom fixtures.*



If you looked at our school, you would agree that nearly all of the classrooms could use new desks, chairs, chalkboards, bookshelves and cabinets. Our school is old and the people who live here aren't very wealthy. New equipment would provide students with the tools that they need to learn. It is hard to write papers if there aren't enough desks and chairs. It is hard to learn when the blackboards are so old that they can't be erased properly. It is also difficult to organize school supplies without proper bookshelves and cabinets.

Another plus that new equipment would provide is that it would make the school more attractive to the community. It is hard for a community to be proud of a school that is falling apart. If the community felt that our school was important, perhaps others would give more money in the future. That would allow us to further improve our school. In addition, maybe community members would feel encouraged to come and help out in the school. That would make it even better.

Students would be happier with new equipment. It would make them want to come to school and learn. There would be fewer dropouts. By continuing in their education, these students will be able to better contribute to our community in the future—perhaps even becoming future schoolteachers.

While there are many things that can be purchased with a gift of money at our school, I believe that new equipment is the best choice. New equipment would improve the learning environment, the community's attitude, and the students' feelings about their school.

120 AD

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Playing games teaches us about life. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Almost everyone, from little children to adults, loves games. The types of games may change and get more complex as we grow up, but our enjoyment never changes. Playing games is both fun and useful, because games teach us the skills we need in life.

First of all, playing games teaches us that everything we do causes something else to happen. If we hit a ball, it will land somewhere or someone will try to catch it. If we make certain combinations with cards, we'll earn points. So when we play a game, we learn there is always a cause/effect relationship. We learn to pay attention to what's happening around us and see how people react to what we do.

Playing games also teaches us how to deal with other people. We learn about teamwork, if the game has teams. We learn how to assign tasks according to each person's skills. We learn how to get people to do what we want, and we learn that sometimes we have to do what other people want.

Game playing teaches us how to follow rules to achieve something. In a game, the rules have been worked out in advance and make the game go more smoothly. We find out that if we want to reach a goal, we need to know the rules. We learn how to go step by step towards a desired end. We also learn how to make adjustments when things change. We learn how to devise a plan for reaching our goal. We learn strategy.

Most people understand that "all work and no play" is bad for you. Learning all these things would be much slower if we didn't play games. Life would be much duller, too.

**121 MA**

Imagine that you have received some land to use as you wish. How would you use this land? Use specific details to explain your answer.

*Land is a valuable resource, and it is important to use it effectively. I think it would be most effective to create something that all people can enjoy. I therefore propose to use the land to build a campground. At the present time, there is little low-cost recreation in the area where I live. Building a campground would change that. Ultimately a campground would make a more enjoyable environment for everyone.*

*Local entertainment is simply too expensive. A nice evening out can cost as much as one hundred dollars. Even movies and other less expensive types of entertainment are no longer cheap. Further, there are no real recreational facilities nearby. There are no parks within 30 miles. There are very few basketball courts, and most of those are in poor condition.*

*Building a campground could change all that. Staying overnight at a campground is very inexpensive. It can cost as little as thirty dollars. Further, there would be a sports area and picnic tables for use by campers and also those who do not wish to stay overnight. A campground would provide a lot of activities for very little money. That would definitely improve this area.*

*The result of building a campground will be that many more people will be able to afford an enjoyable evening out. A campground also promotes healthy living. People can get out and breathe fresh air. They can walk and hike and play basketball or other sports. That is certainly better than spending an evening sitting down, eating buttery popcorn in a movie theatre.*

*A campground will make the area beautiful as well as functional. We have many wonderful natural resources but we need to cultivate them. In addition to all the other good things it can bring, building a campground will help us do just that.*

**122 EX**

What is the most important animal in your country? Why is the animal important? Use reasons and specific details to explain your answer.

*In the United States there are many important animals. They help us in a wide range of ways from food production to scientific research. An animal that is not only helpful to us but close to us emotionally is the dog. That is why I feel that dogs are the most important animal in my country.*

*Dogs provide a very important chance to learn or maintain social skills. Children who have dogs learn responsibility while caring for them. Dogs also help older people. The elderly often feel lonely as they get older and have fewer living friends and relatives. They are able to maintain a positive outlook and to feel needed because they are caring for a dog that needs them.*

*In addition to social benefits, dogs also provide some very important assistance. Seeing-eye dogs help the blind live fulfilling, fully mobile lives. Dogs that act as shepherds on small farms are also very helpful. Lost animals mean lost money for farmers, and that can mean going out of business. Police dogs help find illegal drugs, catch criminals,*

and protect their handlers. Dogs' intelligence and desire to please people made them ideal for all kinds of work.

Finally, dogs can save lives. Dogs have been known to find lost children. In extremely cold conditions, they have provided them with life-saving warmth. Dogs have alerted people to fires and other dangers. And we cannot forget guard dogs, which save many owners' lives and property each year by scaring off potential burglars.

Again, there are many useful animals in the United States. In terms of the numerous ways in which they can be helpful, however, I believe the dog is the most significant.



**123 EX**

Many parts of the world are losing important natural resources, such as forests, animals, or clean water. Choose one resource that is disappearing and explain why it needs to be saved. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

### ***Preserve Our Planet's Trees***

Many natural resources are disappearing or being wasted on our planet every day. One of the most important resources we are abusing is our trees. Each year, hundreds of thousands of acres of trees disappear in countries all around the world. In some countries, these trees are used for fuel. In other countries, trees are destroyed to build housing developments and shopping centers. Saving trees has become a major cultural and economic issue in many areas of the world.

Trees are essential to our survival. They are a major part of the process of photosynthesis. Photosynthesis is the process in which green plants use carbon dioxide to produce oxygen, and oxygen is something all of us need. The fewer trees there are, the more this affects our ability to breathe.

Trees are also important in the development of many medicines. The mainstream medical establishment did not recognize this for many years. However, those who use natural medicines have always known how important trees are. Now scientists are agreeing with them. Many drugs come from the leaves of certain trees, along with other herbs and plants.

In rural areas, farmers have always known how important trees are to soil conservation. This is why you'll usually see trees lining a field. Tree roots help keep the soil in place, and are also a factor in water distribution deep beneath the ground.

Finally, we should save trees from disappearing because they provide so much pleasure. "I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree," wrote a poet. That is the truth. A tall, stately tree is beautiful to look at, and pleasing to the soul. It is also a great place to find shade on a hot summer's day. For practical and emotional reasons, we need to preserve our planet's trees.

**124 AD**

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? A zoo has no useful purpose. Use specific reasons and examples to explain your answer.

*Zoos are often controversial because many people believe they are unnecessary or even harmful. If properly managed, I feel that zoos have a lot of value. In fact, I believe zoos are useful in two main ways: educating the general public and advancing scientific research.*

*Zoos can be wonderfully educational places. They provide a safe, controlled environment to learn about a specific species. Children can feel safe exploring the world of the chimpanzee there, and adults can learn about and see types of birds they've never seen before. Unlike in the wild, there's no worry of being physically harmed by an animal.*

*Zoos are also important for the research opportunities they provide. Research is safer and easier to conduct than in the wild. Scientists can feel secure in the confined area of the zoo. For example, while conducting a medical experiment in an open field, scientists have to worry about both the animal they are working with, and also other animals nearby. In zoos, however, they need only worry about the research subject.*

*In the wilderness, animals are also much harder to track and monitor. Zoos make research less time-consuming and expensive. Long term follow-ups are easier too, since even with monitors, wild animals often are killed or disappear. In zoos, researchers can observe an animal's entire life span.*

*Overall, I feel that properly managed zoos provide excellent opportunities for education and research, and are therefore very useful.*

**125 AD**

In some countries people are no longer allowed to smoke in many public places and office buildings. Do you think this is a good rule or a bad rule? Use specific reasons and details to support your position.

*Not allowing smoking in public places and office buildings is a very good rule. I believe this for several reasons. Not only will banning smoking improve people's health, it will also increase worker productivity and reduce conflicts.*

*We all know smoking is not healthy. Unfortunately, when smokers are able to smoke in public buildings, they can make other people sick. They may work with people who are allergic to smoking, for example. In that case, the non-smokers have no choice unless they want to quit their jobs. They can only get sicker, which is unfair. Of course, banning smoking in public buildings and offices will please non-smokers. It will also improve the smokers' health. They will have fewer opportunities to smoke, so they will smoke fewer cigarettes.*

*Banning smoking in office buildings can also increase worker productivity. Smokers won't interrupt their work all the time to smoke. There will also be fewer worker absences. When smokers cut down the number of cigarettes, they will get fewer smoking-related illnesses.*

Finally, it is a good idea to ban smoking in public places and office buildings because a ban can reduce conflicts. Non-smokers tend to get annoyed and jealous because smokers have an excuse to take frequent breaks. The most significant conflict, however, is over whether smokers have a right to smoke in public. As we have already seen, non-smokers feel they are not always given a choice. If smoking in public is allowed, they will be forced to breathe harmful air. This may violate their rights, and nonsmokers are angry with smokers because of it.

It seems clear that banning smoking in public places and office buildings is a good idea. It will reduce conflict and increase productivity. It will also benefit the health of smokers and nonsmokers alike. I believe that just about anything that improves our health is a good idea!

**126 EX**

Plants can provide food, shelter, clothing, or medicine. What is one kind of plant that is important to you or the people in your country? Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.

The coconut tree is a very important plant in my country. Coconut tree plantations are important sources of revenue, food and shelter.

Our country earns a lot of money from the export of coconut tree products like copra, coconuts, coconut oil, and coconut milk. This has been the main source of our foreign exchange for over a century. In fact, many of the coconut plantations were planted by various colonial powers and now, since independence, are run by our own citizens.

We not only export the food products of the coconut tree, we eat them ourselves too. The coco is the basis of much of our national cuisine. We are famous for our curries made rich by coconut milk. We also use the oil to fry our foods as well as to add shine to our skin and hair.

The fronds of the coconut tree are also used to cover the walls and roofs of temporary shelters. The breezes pass through the fronds and cool the interior, but the heavy rains, which fall daily, do not enter.

The coconut tree is a very versatile and useful plant. It is a tree that has served our country well.

**127 AD**

You have the opportunity to visit a foreign country for two weeks. Which country would you like to visit? Use specific reasons and details to explain your choice.

If I could visit any foreign country, I'd like to visit Ireland. The scenery there is so beautiful. Ireland has a lot of rain and that makes everything very green and lush. It hasn't become a completely industrialized country yet, so there are still areas where the countryside is unspoiled by pollution. Often, you can drive for miles without seeing another car or coming to a big city. I'd like to take my set of paints and several canvases and try to capture some of the scenes there. It seems every way you turn, you're looking at beautiful scenery. The area near the ocean is especially dramatic, with giant dark cliffs rising out of the water.

*I also think I'd enjoy the slower pace of Ireland. It's so different from the busy pace of my country. Of course, Ireland's big cities are just as hectic as any big city anywhere. But many of the Irish live in smaller towns or on farms in rural areas. Visiting these places is very restful. People don't feel the need to stick to a schedule. Things get done, but in a much more relaxed fashion. In my country, there's the feeling that you're always late for something. In Ireland, it feels like you're never late because no one stays on schedule.*

*Most of all, it would be interesting for me to meet the cousins in my mother's family. They live in Donegal. I could see the house where my grandmother grew up and where my cousins still live. This house is connected to a lighthouse. Visiting there would give me a clearer idea of what my grandmother's childhood was like.*

*Ireland would be a refreshing break from the life I lead in my own country. I wish I could go there.*

**128 PR**

In the future, students may have the choice of studying at home by using technology such as computers or television or of studying at traditional schools. Which would you prefer? Use reasons and specific details to explain your choice.

*If I had a choice between studying at home using computers and television or studying in a traditional school setting, I'd choose the traditional setting. Maybe it's just what I'm used to, but I don't think that technology can replace teachers and classrooms.*

*After all, technology can fail. Computers go down and computer programs crash. Televisions break, and the electricity can suddenly go off. In those situations, who's going to teach me? If I'm at school, and the television or the computers stop functioning, there's a teacher to step in and change the lesson plan. Teachers can draw on their teaching experience and be creative. Computers and televisions can't.*

*I'd also miss the chance to interact with other students if I weren't going to school. I think learning to play and work with other people is one of the most important lessons we learn in school. It prepares us for life, and for working with other people. Being with other people also helps us discover who we are.*

*Another concern I have about studying at home is getting distracted. It's strange, but I think being home alone is more distracting than being at school with a lot of people. At school, we're all focused on the same subjects. At home, it would be so easy to turn off the computer or the television and go do something else. I might tell myself that it's okay to play a computer game now and make up the study hours later. Chances are, I'd never make up the study hours.*

*I'm all in favor of using technology in the classroom. I think computers and television are great ways for students to have access to a lot of information. I just don't think they should be the only tools I have as a student. I also need teachers and other students to help me get a complete education.*