

#4 GRE 学生习作+美国老师点评+Fiona点评笔记

A nation should require all of its students to study the same national curriculum until they enter college.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the recommendation and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, describe specific circumstances in which adopting the recommendation would or would not be advantageous and explain how these examples shape your position.

‘Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world’. Quoted by Nelson Mandela, it emphasises the fact that education is the bedrock of social and economic development. Throughout the history, great philosophers like Aristotle have advocated the necessity of a proper education especially for children. The children are the future of a nation. Along with becoming independent and successful, they are the ones who carry the burden of their nation’s prosperity in years to come. Therefore, it is very important to form a strong base in their formative years so that they are not only successful in the personal front but also turn out to be good citizens. Hence, the education curriculum should be carefully chosen to fulfil these requirements. I believe that the curriculum being followed in a nation should be similar but schools should have some freedom to introduce or change it to a certain extent.

Having a uniform national curriculum is beneficial in many ways. As we know that massive production brought about by the same mould reduces the cost of production and increases product efficiency. Hence, providing children of different schools with the same national curriculum would aid in the reduction of the nation’s efforts in evaluation of the student’s study. Obviously, if different school follow different curriculum, then the nation has to establish complex evaluative system to assess and compare the knowledge base and talents of the students of different schools. Since different courses have different values in assessing a student’s ability, the evaluation systems must take the decision to determine the weight that is to be added to each of these courses. If some tremendous change occurs in one district, the nation has to change the original system to adapt to it. This tedious task can be avoided if all the schools follow the same national curriculum. Moreover, the same curriculum can lead to the massive production of the required books, teaching facilities, and even the training of the corresponding teachers, which certainly reduce the cost of education.

From a student’s perspective, the same national curriculum ensures a stable and universal learning pattern, making it easier to refer to it. There are many students who attend more than one school during their education. A common national curriculum is very important for such students who leave one school and join another at a different place. For example, consider the

people in a transferable job like the defence. They get transferred to different places and therefore their children have to change to different schools. If there is a lack of similarity in the curriculum, these students would have to face new and unfamiliar coursework wherever they go, thus putting the children at a great disadvantage. So, having the same curriculum is beneficial for the students as well.

Next, a national curriculum aids in the competition too. In order to find a place anywhere the students need to compete with each other. Therefore, uniformity is required at some level so that there is fair competition. Generally, students have to face an entrance test at the college level to secure a seat. This entrance test is based on the knowledge acquired by students in their high schools. If there is variation in the curriculum that they have studied, the entrance test will not be made on similar lines for everyone. Hence, it would benefit some students who have studied that curriculum while the others would be at a loss. There would be no way to judge their capabilities based on similar parameters. Hence, it is very important that uniformity be maintained in the curriculum at the school level to ensure an unbiased assessment.

However, I maintain that along with following the national guidelines for curriculum, schools should have certain liberty in choosing the format of courses it offers. Each student is different and so are his abilities. While there are some students who are fast learners, some are average and some are extremely slow. Moreover, the interests of students vary. Keeping in mind the interests of students, the curriculum should be moulded so that they retain their interest in studies altogether.

In the end I would like to conclude that a uniform pattern on the whole is very important at a national level. However, at the same time, schools should be able to make certain changes that benefit the students.

ESSAY REVIEW

Let me begin with an obvious point. You will get no points for repeating commonplace thoughts, and since cliches irritate some readers unreasonably, they are best avoided. The fact that children are the future, for instance, is a trite fact, and it's not even important to deciding the question about a national curriculum. Your opening paragraph as a whole seems mostly concerned with establishing the fact of the importance of education, which is not something you need to establish for this essay. (第一段是很多中国学生喜欢犯的错误, 就是介绍背景的时候, 一堆废话, 没有逻辑严谨度。这个和我们把GRE当语言考试这样一个误区有关, 以为写一些名言, 背会一些语言不错的句子, 就可以了) You should be focused from the beginning on whether there ought to be standard curriculum in a nation or whether curricula should be decided on a regional basis, or even on a school-by-school basis, or again whether students of a certain age should be given the freedom to choose their own courses. If you think a national curriculum would promote a higher educational standard, then by all means you can make that argument, but since there is so much else to argue about here, there's nothing to be gained by making a case for a point that's hardly arguable; you do not need to convince anyone that education is important.

So your essay doesn't really get started until the second paragraph. Your first argument there is that a national curriculum would reduce the overall effort needed to evaluate students. You also point to the difficulty of fairly evaluating students who take different courses. These are reasonable arguments, though you could probably articulate them with greater clarity and concision. You conclude the paragraph with a claim about the savings that might result from a national curriculum (it's "mass production" by the way, not "massive production"). This point would be related to the earlier argument in the paragraph if the paragraph as a whole concerned the more general question of, say, efficiency. In other words, if you began the paragraph with a topic sentence about efficiency (e.g., "A national curriculum is a good option because it is the most efficient option"), then the paragraph as a whole would be more unified and coherent. (这个是英文学术写作规范，topic sentence在短首要清晰的交代。尤其是英语不是我们母语的情况下，说清楚更重要，而且一段，就围着topic sentence说一件事哈)The next paragraph, by contrast, is a good example of a unified paragraph that focuses on a single topic. The concluding phrase of the opening sentence ("making it easier to refer to it") is, however, pretty vague. (vague的语言在GRE里很不受欢迎哦)

Your paragraph on the question of fairness is also a good, single-topic paragraph, but again the point could be made with greater concision. The first half of that paragraph, for instance, could probably be well enough summarized in a single sentence (e.g., A national curriculum would make it easier for universities to create fair entrance tests). (一定要有一个清晰简洁的topic sentence)

The point you make in your penultimate paragraph is the least clear argument in your essay. The point about "format" seems to be irrelevant to the question about a national curriculum. If it is relevant, you don't explain how it is relevant. (一个与主题完全无关的点啊，问要不要统一教材，没有问具体的format啊)The point about differences in students' abilities is even less clear. On the one hand, it looks, from the way the paragraph is organized, that you want this point to relate to your argument about format, but you don't establish how different formatting (whatever that means exactly) (format这种很vague的语言，真的让人读不懂啊) can be used to meet the needs of students of different ability. On the other hand, the point about different abilities leads into a claim about keeping students interested. Presumably you intend to imply some relationship between the two claims here, but you don't articulate it. And, again, what those claims have to do with the question of whether there should be a specifically national curriculum is not at all clear. Again, for this kind of essay, it is important to remain sharply focused on the topic. You don't have the time, and the reader may not have the patience, for digressions. (每一段都要扣题，扣题，不扣题的都是废话，写长了反而影响分数)

You could, however, possibly use some of those points that you make in that penultimate paragraph in a paragraph that was clearly focused instead on the question of the possible disadvantages of a national curriculum. The GRE prompts are designed, I imagine, to allow you demonstrate your ability to analyze both advantages and disadvantages of given claims. I know that in some cases the instructions that come with such prompts specifically require you to consider both sides of an issue. In this case, perhaps the most obvious side of the argument that you don't address is the degree to which a national curriculum removes choice from students.

The prompt's claim specifies that all students would be required to study the national curriculum until they enter college. That seems to take a lot of freedom away from students, who might be forced to study advanced concepts in courses for which they have neither love nor aptitude and at an age when one would think they might be old enough to decide what to study themselves. A student determined to be an engineer, for instance, might well want the freedom to focus, in his or her last two years of high school, on the sciences and not waste time, as that student might see it, on poetry. Why should a government organization deny such a student the right to do that? Could one not even argue that introducing some degree of specialization in the final few years of high school would have benefits for colleges (who might have better prepared students) and society generally? (正确思路)

Fiona写在最后的话：

这也是一篇中国学生的习作，有很多中国学生普遍忽略的问题，所以挑出来给大分享，共同避免这样的错误：

1：是不是紧扣文章题目？？不是紧扣题目的话，就是废话，写了反而会留下不学术，逻辑不严密的印象，会扣分。

2：Topic sentence一定要有。一定要紧扣这topic sentence论证，最后一定要有concluding sentence 照应

3: GRE绝对是个两方面都要考虑的题目，绝对不能一边倒，无论任何一种instruction.