



独立写作范文

Question 1

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? “Overall, the widespread use of the internet has a mostly positive effect on life in today’s world.” Use reasons and details to support your opinion.

Most people agree that modern technology affects society in many different ways. In my opinion, access to the Internet is enormously beneficial to both individuals and communities as a whole. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, online investigative reporting helps to expose political corruption and keep politicians honest. In the past, there were only a limited number of news outlets, which often had deep connections to powerful politicians. As a result, they were extremely hesitant to criticize them. These days, however, there are many independent publications on the Internet that are willing to expose political misbehavior. For example, an online magazine recently published a story revealing that the mayor of my hometown had taken bribes from a property developer. The report was so detailed and well-researched that the mayor had no choice but to resign. Although the evidence was not difficult to locate, only this independent website was willing to write about it. This example demonstrates how the Internet helps to strengthen democracy in the modern world.

Secondly, people are more motivated than ever to become politically active because they can freely exchange ideas online. In countries all over the globe, people use social networking services to share their ideas and opinions. While in the past people might have thought that they were alone in their beliefs, today they realize that others share their ideas. My own experience demonstrates this concept. When I was a university student, I learned that a municipal park near my apartment was going to be demolished to make room



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for a massive parking lot. This bothered me a lot because I enjoyed spending my free time in the park. At first I thought that there was nothing that I, as an individual, could do to stop this from happening. However, I later joined a Facebook group dedicated to opposing the plan. When the members of the group learned how many people in the city loved the park we were happy to get together and enthusiastically protest in front of city hall until our voices were heard. I am convinced that finding each other on that social networking platform gave us the courage to actively protect our park.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that the Internet has a positive effect on our lives. This is because online journalism strengthens our democracy, and because social networking sites encourage people to get involved in local politics. (411 words)

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? It is better to use printed materials such as books and articles to do research than it is to use the Internet. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Question 2

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It is critically important that students use the best available resources when they do research. In my opinion, it is far better to use printed materials than online sources. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, printed materials such as books and articles are more reliable than websites. This is because websites can be edited by anyone in the world, regardless of



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whether or not they are qualified academics. As a result of this, even articles in popular online encyclopedias often contain incorrect and biased information. My own experience demonstrates the danger of relying too heavily on online sources of information. Two semesters ago, I was assigned a research paper in a freshman biology class. I cited data that I found on Wikipedia which later turned out to be completely incorrect. This data was so hopelessly wrong that my professor spotted it immediately, causing me to fail the assignment and receive a fairly low grade in the class at the end of the semester. If I had taken the time to compare what I had read online to a book or a scholarly article, I would not have included it, and would not have received such a terrible score in the class.

Secondly, books are superior to online articles because they cover topics in much detail. Textbooks are significantly longer than online articles, so they are more useful to students. Students who use them when doing projects can also look at the detailed indexes which they include to focus on very specific topics. For example, I was assigned an essay last semester in a history class and the very first book that I consulted contained a long description of both the underlying causes and long-term effects of the historical event I was writing about. In contrast, most of the online articles that I consulted contained little more than superficial facts and dates. I based my research on the book rather than these articles, so I was able to write a very insightful paper.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that printed information is more useful than online resources. This is because books and printed journals are less likely to be biased or contain errors, and because books provide a superior level of detail. (383 words)



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Question 3

Grades encourage students to work harder at school. Do you agree or disagree? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

It is critically important that students work as hard as possible when they are at school. Personally, I believe that teachers can motivate students to work hard by giving them grades. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, students who are graded achieve more comprehensive knowledge of academic subjects. When a student has an opportunity to earn grades, he will spend more time working on his assignments and will therefore absorb more information and will achieve more comprehension. On the other hand, students who do not have to worry about their grades won't work very hard and will only superficially understand their subjects. My own experience as a student is a compelling example of this. During my sophomore year I had to complete a major assignment in a political science class I was taking. According to the course syllabus, the assignment would make up about half of my total grade in the class, so I approached my work with diligence and care. I wrote an amazing speech and spent hours preparing for every possible question my classmates might think of. If the presentation had not been graded, I would not have spent so much time preparing for it. I am sure that students all over the world today are motivated to work hard by the chance to achieve high grades from their professors.

Secondly, grades motivate students because they are a way to determine which people in a group are objectively most intelligent. Grades are assigned in a systematic way, so they clearly demonstrate which students in a class are the best and brightest. For example, in my freshman year I took a literature class where students merely got a "pass" or "fail" at the end. Since only a moderate amount of effort was required to pass the class, I completed my assignments and presentations quite halfheartedly. In contrast, when I took a graded class on the same subject in my junior year, I spent hours in the library researching my papers so



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that I could show my professors that I was intellectually superior to my classmates. This may appear somewhat shallow, but in today's competitive academic environment it is absolutely necessary for people to distinguish themselves.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that grades encourage students to learn. This is because they force students to learn as much as possible, and because they give young learners a way to distinguish themselves from their peers. (412 words)

Question 4

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People in today's world have become too dependent on automobiles. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Over the last few decades, as automobiles have become affordable for more and more people, cars have become a very controversial topic of discussion. I am of the opinion that people in the modern world have become far too reliant on automobiles. I feel this way for two main reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, many people have become disinterested in the amount of pollution that their vehicles create. It is a well-known fact that automobiles are one of the biggest sources of deadly greenhouse gases, which are the main cause of global warming. However, it seems that many individuals simply do not care about how much damage they do by driving their cars. For example, my uncle drives an extremely large sport utility vehicle to work every day, even though he commutes alone. This vehicle is not energy efficient, and I think that he ought to take a carpool to his office instead of using it. When I asked him why he continues to drive such a harmful vehicle he responded that even though he is aware of how much fuel it uses, he does not care because of how happy it makes him feel to drive an



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expensive car. This example demonstrates how neglectful many members of modern society have become as a consequence of their love of automobiles.

Secondly, our current obsession with automobiles has caused public transportation systems to be neglected by government officials. Because people are obsessed with their personal vehicles, governments have felt justified in failing to develop bus and rail networks. My city, Toronto, is a compelling example of this. Despite being the largest city in Canada it has only two subway lines and just a handful of underdeveloped bus routes. While this frustrates me quite a lot, most people simply do not care and, regretfully, the issue is never considered or even studied by our municipal government. If more people were to demand better public transportation, of course the government would snap into action and improve the local system. The fact that this has not happened makes it evident to me that our current dependence on automobiles has resulted in a lower quality of living for many people in Toronto.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that people today are too dependent on automobiles. This is because our love of driving has contributed to global warming, and because it has resulted in shoddy public transportation systems in major cities. (412 Words)

Question 5

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? In my country, young people have a better life today than their parents enjoyed when they were young. Use reasons and examples to support your answer.

The world has changed in many since my parents were young. In my opinion, my lifestyle is superior to the one they enjoyed at that time. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.



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First of all, my generation enjoys a lot more leisure time, which makes our lives more fulfilling and enables us to follow our passions. People today take longer vacations and have more paid time off from their jobs than either of my parents did while they were still employed. Similarly, we have much shorter working days than they did. For example, nowadays I receive five weeks off from my job each year. I can schedule these holidays as I wish, and even use all of my vacation days at the same time. As a result, I have been able to pursue my love of travel. Unlike earlier generations, I have been able to maintain steady professional employment for my whole life so far, and have also been able to visit every continent on earth. My parents, in contrast, were only able to travel following their retirement. At that time, however, their age and physical conditions limited their range of experiences.

Secondly, society provides many more opportunities for women and minorities these days. In the past, disadvantaged groups had a tough time achieving personal and professional success. While this is still something of a concern, it is now much easier for members of such groups to follow their dreams. My own experience is a compelling example of this. When I was a young woman I was encouraged to attend university and later enter the workforce. On the other hand, my mother was expected to raise children and be a homemaker. She dreamed of being a business executive and making a lot of money, but her parents and teachers discouraged her from doing that. Unlike me, she was pressured to give up all of her professional aspirations. Her example demonstrates why my life is preferable to the life which she lived when she was young.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that I have an easier and better life than my parents had just a few decades ago. This is because I enjoy much more leisure time than they did, and because women today have many more opportunities than they did in the past.

(392 words)



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Question 6

Movies and television strongly influence the way people behave. Do you agree or disagree? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

Most people agree that all forms of entertainment affect society. In my opinion, movies and television shows really do influence how people behave. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, films and television provide society with a lot of negative role-models, which many people are willing to emulate. These days, the so-called “anti-hero” is a big part of popular culture. This is a type of character who acts badly around other people, ignores the rules of society and has a really misanthropic attitude. Commonly, these characters glorify excessive violence and drug use. My own personal experience is a compelling example of this. When I was in high school, a close friend of mine was a huge fan of characters like this. While he started high school as a straight-A student, he later began to watch a lot of films which gave him the impression that taking drugs and fighting with his classmates was amusing and even desirable behavior. As a result, he barely finished high school and is now unemployed. Moreover, he has few job prospects. Had he not watched so many terrible movies, he would not be in such a desperate situation today.

On the other hand, TV shows and movies also provide people with a lot of positive role models. For people who desire to watch wholesome shows, there are many family-friendly options to choose from. Programs of this type showcase functioning and stable families. They don’t just show traditional and conservative families, but caring, loving people from many different backgrounds and with many different beliefs. For instance, my own family often takes inspiration from the parents and children we see on our favorite family drama, “The Bosby Show.” We are not always able to live up to the ideals the show presents to us, but they positively influence the way we behave every day. We are really thankful for the influence it has on our lives.



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In conclusion, I am of the opinion that television and movies influence the way almost everyone behaves in modern society. This is because some movies cause us to act in detrimental ways, and because other shows inspire us to emulate and embrace positive values. (370 words)

Question 7

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People communicate with each other less than in the past because of the popularity of television. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

These days almost everyone spends a lot of time watching their favorite television programs. However, I strongly believe that the advent of televised entertainment has not had a negative effect on interpersonal communication. I feel this way for two main reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, I contend that television actually helps people to have more meaningful conversations. In the past, people mostly talked about what they had in common. Often, talk of this sort was quite limited because people lived fairly simple lives. These days, in contrast, individuals can enjoy spirited discussions about the wide array of current events and world affairs that they hear about on television every day. For example, I have a regular Friday lunch date with my work colleagues at a local restaurant. We do talk about office affairs, but most of our conversations are about the wide world around us which we learn about from watching television. We talk about everything from political developments in distant countries to sports results from entirely different continents. I strongly believe that without television to supply us with topics, my colleagues and I would talk mainly about banal office gossip.



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Secondly, I am of the opinion that television has mostly replaced solitary activities, rather than interactions with others. It appears that television has mainly taken the place of hobbies like reading and exercising that we used to do alone. My own experience is compelling evidence of this. I grew up in a very rural area without access to stable television signals. As a result, I spent my time either hanging out with friends or just reading books and magazines. When I started university, however, I moved to a big city and suddenly had access to one hundred channels. Almost immediately, watching shows and movies replaced reading as my primary hobby, but I still had time to do things with my classmates. I now read almost no books, but I still have meaningful conversations with friends on a regular basis.

In conclusion, I disagree with the idea that the advent of television has harmed communication between friends and family. I feel this way because television supplies us with a variety of topics which we can discuss with our friends, and because television-watching has mostly replaced solitary hobbies rather than social activities.

Question 8

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? It is better for children to grow up in the countryside than in a large city. Use specific reasons and examples to develop your essay.

It is critically important that all children be raised in a supportive and healthy environment. In my opinion, it is more advantageous to raise young people in major city, than to raise them in a rural area. I feel this way for two main reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, cities include a vast number of academic and cultural facilities, all of which help the intellectual development of children. A child who visits such places on a regular basis will undoubtedly become extremely interested in some of them. My own experience is a



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compelling example of this. When I was young I lived in a major urban area, so my parents could easily take me to a cultural event almost every weekend. We attended book readings at the local library, art openings at many of the galleries throughout the city, and literary festivals during the summer. As a result of attending these outings I developed a strong interest in artistic expression, and decided to major in music at university. Now I enjoy a successful career as a recording artist. Had I not visited so many stimulating places as a youngster, I would not be thriving like I am today.

Secondly, children who live in cities are exposed to people from many walks of life, while those in the countryside communicate with only one type of person. Cities are usually magnets for new immigrants to my country, and are populated by individuals from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. I think it is useful for children to have friends who come from different walks of life. For instance, my young cousin is growing up in New York, which is the largest city in my country. By the time she was ten years old, she had made friends from five different continents. Although she is still just a college student, she is comfortable interacting with people who speak a variety of languages and who have religious beliefs that are different from her own. Moreover, she recently mentioned that she was able to find employment at a company looking for workers with an international perspective. Accordingly, I think that people who live in cities can enjoy a variety of beneficial interactions.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that it is better for children to grow up in cities than in rural areas. This is because cities are home to a variety of educational venues, and because they have very diverse and cosmopolitan populations. (415 words)



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Question 10

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Human activity is making the earth a worse place to live. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

The world is changing at a rapid pace nowadays due to the actions of human populations. I am of the opinion that humanity has had a mostly negative effect on the planet. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, industrial development has caused major air pollution, which has a terrible effect on our health. Every week we can hear news reports about how horrible air quality is in major cities all over the world. Additionally, it is often reported that chronic lung diseases are on the rise and that there is a connection between these two trends. I am reminded of the years I spent living in Beijing, which is home to many massive factories. After having spent most of my life living in the Canadian countryside where the air is mostly clean, I immediately noticed the smog and pollution of urban China. Within months I began suffering from a variety of respiratory illnesses and had difficulty breathing. As a result, I spent quite a few afternoons at a local hospital being treated for various throat and lung infections. A majority of the population of the Earth now resides in cities, and they often suffer from similar consequences of industrial development.



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Secondly, human development has led to a massive accumulation of trash, which spoils the natural beauty of the planet. While in the past products were often made of biodegradable materials like paper and wood, today most manufactured goods are made of plastic that never breaks down. Such materials sometimes find their way into permanent landfills, but often they just end up as litter. When I traveled to the island of Borneo last summer I was impressed by the beauty of the place, but I also noticed that the natural environment was marred by an accumulation of plastic bags and water bottles that were strewn everywhere. Had I visited the island a century ago I would not have found it tainted in such a way.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that human activity has made the planet a less pleasant place to live. This is because people are more likely to suffer from the effects of pollution than in the past, and because humans create garbage which has destroyed the natural beauty of our world. (386 words)

Question 11

“In twenty years there will be fewer cars in use than there are today.” Do you agree or disagree?

Most people agree that cars will always be an important part of society. In my opinion, in the near future there will be many more vehicles in use than there are nowadays. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, the developing world is rapidly urbanizing, which means that in the future more people will need to drive to their workplace. In the past, most people in developing nations engaged in agricultural labor near their homes. In contrast, today people are more likely to live in apartment buildings far from the businesses and industries where they work. My friend Simon is a compelling example of this. His parents and grandparents worked on farms in northern Sokovia. Occasionally, they traveled short distances on foot, but



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most of the time they stayed fairly close to the village where they were born. Simon, on the other hand, moved to a city last year to work in a steel plant and drives almost thirty kilometers from his home to the plant every day. All of his co-workers do the same. I can see no indication that this trend will halt in the future. In fact, it seems likely that even more people will experience this.

Secondly, incomes are rising all over the world, which means that in the future automobiles will be affordable for even more people. In the past, owning a car was a privilege enjoyed only by those living in the developed world. Now, however, consumers in developing countries like China and India purchase millions of cars every year. Simon's experience is also typical of this trend. At the moment he does not own his own car, but instead gets to work by carpooling with a neighbor. However, he dreams of owning a vehicle of his own. While it might make financial sense for him to continue carpooling or take public transportation, he views car ownership as a symbol of affluence. Simon has even indicated to me that someday he hopes to own two automobiles, just like many people in the west.

In conclusion, I am of the opinion that in the future there will be more vehicles on the road than there are today. This is because the world is rapidly urbanizing, and because rising incomes will open up even more markets for automobile companies. (391 words)

Question 12

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People today spend too much time on personal enjoyment, and not enough time on more serious duties and obligations. Use details and examples to support your answer.

It is important that we use our time in a way that matches our lifestyle and personal goals. Personally, I feel that people today do not spend too much of their time on



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personal enjoyment. I feel this way for two main reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, people today spend more time working than ever before, which means that they are spending a lot of time fulfilling serious obligations. Studies indicate that we spend more time at our offices than ever before, and that smart phones and internet access force people to continue working even when we are at home. My own experience is a compelling example of what I mean. I work for a large investment banking firm where my scheduled workday is from nine o'clock to five o'clock, but I actually average about eight hours of overtime every week. I do not do this because I enjoy it, but because I feel obligated to serve my company and earn money for my family. Moreover, almost everyone else at my firm does the same thing. We often compare ourselves to our parents, who almost never worked overtime nor received calls from their bosses on the weekend. For this reason, I think that the present generation emphasizes professional obligations over personal enjoyment.

Secondly, many popular leisure activities include a degree of self-improvement, which means that even our hobbies fall into the realm of duties and obligations. People these days seem to be really into endurance sports like long distance running, which are incredibly beneficial for our health. For instance, I spend most of my free time working out at a local gym. Although this is certainly enjoyable for me, part of why I do it is that it keeps me strong, healthy and fit. This makes me both a better parent to my children and a better employee for my boss. I consider these two aspects of my life that I should be deeply concerned about.

In conclusion, I firmly believe that people do not spend too much time on personal enjoyment. This is because people work around the clock nowadays, and even our leisure activities are connected to personal improvement.



Question 13

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Sometimes it is better to be dishonest with people than to always tell them the truth. Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

Maintaining healthy relationships can be very difficult in today's world, and there are many aspects of our interactions with others that we need to worry about. In my opinion, there are times when it is better to not tell the truth to others. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, telling small lies can sometimes motivate the people we care about to excel. Humans are very competitive and want to be the best at whatever task they have been assigned. Whether they are involved in an athletic event or taking a test at school, they feel more motivated if they think it is possible that they will achieve an impressive result. In cases like these, sometimes lying about their potential can encourage them to perform well. My own experience is a compelling example of this. Last year, my husband signed up for a marathon in our city. I knew that he would struggle to even finish the event, but I wanted him to feel confident about his ability. Accordingly, when he asked me for my opinion, I lied and said that he had a chance of finishing in the top ten. This gave him a lot of confidence and he dedicated himself to training for the marathon. Even though he did not win the race, my small lie was enough to maintain his motivation both before and during the race. Had I told him what I really thought, he might have given up altogether.

Secondly, being honest all of the time can lead to high levels of anxiety. If we tell unpleasant truths, we may spend days or hours worrying about the possible consequences of what we have revealed. For instance, last week a colleague asked me what I thought of her new hairstyle. I was honest, and said that I thought it looked terrible. Though she did not express any anger at my remarks, I could see that she was really hurt by what I said. As a result of this, I spent the rest of the day worrying that I had jeopardized our friendship. My



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emotional state greatly reduced my productivity that day, and I am still a bit nervous that my colleague will hold a grudge against me. Had I simply said that her hair looked wonderful, I could have avoided all of these feelings.

In conclusion, I believe that there are times when it is best to not tell the truth to others. This is because lies can motivate people to perform well, and because always being honest can sometimes cause personal turmoil. (438 words)

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Question 15

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Parents are the best teachers.

Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

These days, homeschooling is becoming a more and more popular alternative to traditional learning methods and many parents believe that they can do a better job than professional educators. Personally, though, I do not feel that parents are the best teachers. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, parents are biased when it comes to their own children. To be specific, most parents think that their children are the smartest kids in the world. As a result,



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they often teach them at an inappropriately quick pace, and mistakenly assume that they will be able to keep up. Over the course of an entire school year this can have serious consequences. An old friend of mine is a compelling example of this. Rather than attending his local public school, my friend was taught at home by his mother. His mother had good intentions, but she failed completely at teaching him math. She made the assumption that her son was able to grasp basic concepts right away and moved on immediately to advanced lessons that were above what he would have been learning at the public school. When it came time for my friend to take the annual state-mandated competency tests, he was wholly unprepared and he shocked his mom by earning a failing grade. This example demonstrates that parents are not always the best teachers.

Secondly, parents are not aware of modern teaching methods, and therefore use antiquated and ineffective methods to educate their children. Parents have children at increasingly advanced ages nowadays and when it comes time to teach them, they have been out of school for ten or twenty years. Professional teachers, in contrast, have time for professional development every year of their careers, and work in a collaborative environment where older teachers are kept up to date by their younger colleagues. This means that trained teachers excel at teaching youngsters of all backgrounds, while parents struggle to educate even their own children. While my friend's mother eventually overcame her difficulty teaching math to her son, the next year she had a lot of trouble motivating him to keep up with his language lessons. She was proactive, though, and sought help from her local school board. The officials at the board put her in touch with a young teacher from a nearby elementary school. He showed her how to use the Internet to help her son find foreign-language resources more suited to his specific interests. Until she got help from that young teacher, she had no idea that the Internet included a wealth of videos, music and games that she could utilize with her son.

In conclusion, I strongly disagree with the idea that parents are the best teachers. This is because parents are biased when it comes to their kids, and because professional teachers benefit from modern techniques and training.



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Question 16

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Students do not respect their teachers as much as they did in the past. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

It is critically important that students learn as much as possible and thrive in all of their classes. Personally, I believe that young people do not have as much respect for their teachers as in the past. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, there are many more ways for students to learn nowadays, which means they are less reliant on teachers than in the past. A few years ago, children could only acquire new skills by going to school and attending classes, so they respected their teachers a lot. In contrast, now they can easily use technology to learn independently. My personal experience is a compelling illustration of this. For the past five years, I have studied English almost every single day. Although my native language is Korean, I am able to easily communicate in English without feeling any anxiety. I expand my vocabulary by using a smartphone application that teaches me new phrases twice per day, and I practice pronunciation by watching videos on the Internet. Consequently, I feel like old-fashioned classes with a teacher are not as important as they used to be. If I had tried to become proficient in English twenty years ago, I would have depended on a teacher and respected her a lot.

Furthermore, teachers are no longer strict, which means children don't fear them at all. If teachers fail to discipline students when they misbehave, they do not feel obligated to respect them. This problem is very common nowadays. For instance, a few months ago my little brother used profanity when addressing his math teacher. Surprisingly, he wasn't punished for this terrible behavior. His teacher was afraid of how our parents would react to my brother being punished, so he just ignored it. Since then, my brother hasn't respected that teacher at all, and is often quite rude. In addition, a lot of his classmates have picked up on the fact that



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they can get away with impolite behavior and have started acting up as well. Based on this experience, I strongly feel that young people do not respect educators like they did in the past.

In conclusion, I strongly feel that children do not respect their teachers as much as they used to. This is because teachers are not as essential as they were a few decades ago, and they are too nervous to enforce rules. (406 Words)

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Question 18

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The most serious problems in the world will be solved during my lifetime. Use details and examples to support your answer.

It is critically important that we attempt to deal with major problems that affect life in the modern world. However, I do not feel that the most serious problems in society will be solved in my lifetime. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, the influence of the Internet on the world will continue to increase, which will exacerbate a lot of situations. The widespread popularity of online social networks means that many people are exposed to misleading articles and dangerous propaganda every day. This creates a lot of conflict in society, and in the long run causes people to dislike and



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mistrust each other. For instance, when an election was held in my country last year, I was exposed to inflammatory articles every time I opened up Facebook or Twitter. The articles were designed not just to help certain candidates win the election, but to make readers actively hate opposing candidates. This trend will likely have disastrous effects over time, as it will probably divide the nation into groups of people who loathe each other. I am sure that social networks will continue to grow in prominence for the rest of my life; therefore, this problem will not be solved.

Second, it will take many decades for nations to collaborate enough to deal with serious environmental problems. Major environmental issues, such as global warming, can only be dealt with by nations working together. However, there is no evidence that world governments are serious about collaboration of this type, and I don't think I will live long enough to see world leaders change their minds. To date, every time our political leaders have come together and promised to reduce industrial pollution, they have failed to fulfill those promises. In fact, tensions around the world have risen over the past few decades, so international cooperation seems less likely than ever before. Perhaps when the threat to the planet becomes so severe that it cannot be ignored nations will set aside their differences and get to work, but that will not happen during my lifetime.

In conclusion, I am certain that the most critical problems in the world will not be solved during my lifetime. This is because the continued popularity of social networks will make people all over the planet hate each other, and world governments will not be able to work together to prevent major environmental catastrophes. (408 words)



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Question 19

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? “People should keep trying to reach their goals, even if they seem impossible to achieve.” Use specific reasons and examples to explain your position.

It is critically important that we have at least a few long term goals in our lives. Personally, I believe that it is important to never give up on those goals, even if it seems like we will never achieve them. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, we can learn valuable new skills as we strive to achieve impossible targets. Even if we don't reach our targets, our repeated efforts might help us to develop abilities that will pay off in other parts of our life. My own personal experience is compelling evidence of this. When I was in high school, my dream was to be a professional writer and to publish a bestselling science fiction novel. As a result, I spent every evening writing new stories. I gave a few of them to my teachers, and they provided feedback regarding my grammar, vocabulary and structure. Even though I worked extremely hard, I never managed to get any of my fiction published. However, I did manage to learn a lot about how to effectively and concisely express complex ideas in written English. Thanks to these skills, I eventually found work as a technical writer at an engineering firm, where I have been earning a substantial salary for the past decade.

Secondly, if we remain dedicated to our goals we can sometimes meet people who are willing to share their expertise and help us reach them. This is because hard work and continuous effort often puts us in the orbit of experts who have actually achieved what we desire. For instance, when my brother was young he wanted to be a computer programmer and work for a prestigious technology firm like Intel. Given his lack of academic credentials and work experience, this seemed unlikely. Nevertheless, he spent all of his free time writing his own software, and uploading it to his personal website. Eventually, a senior



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manager at Intel noticed one of his projects and was really impressed by his work.

Accordingly, he gave my brother a job offer even though he lacked many of the formal qualifications for the position.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that we should always try to make our dreams come true, even if the odds are against us. This is because we will learn something new along the way, and we might be lucky enough to encounter people who will help us reach our targets.

Question 20

Neighbors are the people who live near us. In your opinion, what type of neighbor is the best to have?

-someone who is quiet

-someone who we are similar to

-someone who is supportive

Use specific details and examples in your answer.

Our lives can certainly be affected by the people in our neighborhood, even if we do not interact with them on a daily basis. In my opinion, it is critically important to have neighbors that are very supportive of us. I will explore the reasons why I feel this way in the following essay.

First of all, our lives are full of unplanned emergencies and supportive people in our neighborhood are likely to help us when they occur. Oftentimes, the people living close to us are the only ones who can provide essential assistance when things go terribly wrong. For instance, my family experienced a major house fire several years ago. It was a traumatic



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experience that happened in the middle of the night, and we lost many of our personal belongings. No one was injured, but we suffered an extreme amount of emotional trauma. However, the damage was reduced thanks to the quick thinking of a compassionate neighbor who immediately called the fire department when he saw what was happening, and who also provided us with clean clothes, food and a place to stay for the night. This example demonstrates how important it is to have kind and supportive neighbors when a crisis happens.

Secondly, it is a lot easier to raise a family in today's hectic society if our neighbors are willing to lend a hand. In addition to unexpected disasters, today we often have to face unplanned professional requests. My own experience demonstrates this reality. Five years ago, I was living with my wife and two sons in our apartment in Tokyo. My wife was at work, and I was home taking care of the children. All of a sudden I received a call from my boss who needed me to drive across the city to give a presentation to one of our company's new clients. I panicked at first because I knew I could not take the kids along; however I simply called the woman living next door and asked if she would keep an eye on them for the rest of the evening. She readily agreed, so I was able to meet the clients. Had she not been so supportive, I wouldn't have been able to fulfill my boss's request, and I would have faced some repercussions the next day.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that it is incredibly helpful to live near supportive people. This is because such people can help us handle life's unexpected emergencies, and can make it easier to deal with both family and work obligations.



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Question 21

When you face a difficult problem in life, what do you feel is the best way to solve it?

asking someone with more experience for advice about the problem

finding information about the problem using the Internet

taking a long time to think about the problem

Use specific details and examples in your answer. Do not use memorized examples.

We all face difficult problems in life, and everyone has their own approach to handling them. When I am dealing with a serious dilemma, my preferred solution is to talk to an older and more experienced person about it. There are two reasons why I feel this way, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, most of the problems people have are not particularly special and there are many individuals who have already dealt with identical issues. Therefore, when we have a crisis, there is always an older person in our life who has gone through the exact same thing. Not only that, but they have lived with the consequences of the actions they took to deal with it. My personal history is a compelling example of this. When I was a university freshman ten years ago, I once found myself falling terribly behind on one of my assignments. I could not decide between asking my professor for an extension, which may have made me look lazy in her eyes, or submitting poorly done work, which could have made me look like a terrible student. Fortunately, a sophomore in my department explained that most professors are happy to provide extra time when students ask for it in a polite manner. Moreover, he told me that none of my professors would view me as lazy for making such a request, as they all understood the pressures faced by students.

Secondly, simply vocalizing our problems can help to put them in perspective. Merely having someone to listen to our problems can help us to solve them, even if that person does not have a lot of advice to give us. For instance, after talking to my father about a problem I was having with my girlfriend last week I realized that it was not the end of the



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world. Just by talking about the fight we had out loud, I realized that I was overthinking it and that my girlfriend would eventually calm down. Additionally, when I explained to my father that we were fighting about a purchase I made that cost just \$50, I realized that we would both get over it pretty quickly. This came to me even before he voiced his opinion on the matter.

In conclusion, my approach to problem solving is to talk to someone about my problems. I do this because there are many people in my life who have endured the same things, and because vocalizing my issues helps me overcome my worries. (422 words)

Question 22

In general, people are living longer now. Which of the following do you think accounts for this phenomenon?

Technological improvements

Changes to education systems

Improvements to our diets

Use specific details and examples in your answer. You may choose more than one cause.

Without a doubt, people are living longer these days than ever before. In my opinion, this is a result of many helpful technological advances. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, developments in medical science have saved and lengthened many lives. Newly discovered pharmaceuticals and medical devices assist doctors in a wide range of ways. They help in the prevention of illness, in the diagnosis of disease and during treatment. My personal history is a compelling example of this. Several years ago I was diagnosed with skin cancer. Fortunately, my cancer was discovered at a very early stage and



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my doctor treated me right away. Moreover, I fortunately avoided experiencing any unexpected side-effects. All of this happened at a modern facility at a high-tech hospital close to my home. In contrast, several decades ago my grandfather passed away as a result of prostate cancer. He was diagnosed properly, but not soon enough to save his life. This was because there was simply no technology available to make the diagnosis at that time.

Secondly, modern technology gives individuals much more manageable working lives than people had in the past. These days a lot of tasks are automated, which means they are carried out by computers or robotic systems. This means that, unlike in the past, employees don't need to spend long hours at their workplace every day. For instance, I work just thirty-five hours each week. This gives me plenty of time in the evenings and weekends to get a lot of exercise and to relieve my stress by pursuing my hobbies. Moreover, most of my friends and colleagues have a similar schedule. I am quite certain that my anxiety-free life and healthy body will help me to live a long time. My uncle, who is much older than I, worked more than forty-five hours each week during his career. Without machines to pick up the slack for him, his duties were physically demanding and he developed a lot of mental health problems as he aged. The toll his work took on his body was a major cause of his early death by heart attack, in my opinion. The comparison of myself and my uncle demonstrates how today's employment conditions help us live longer.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that technology is the main reason why people today live longer than earlier generations. This is because it helps us to avoid serious health problems, and it makes our working lives a lot easier to bear. (425 words)



Question 23

People have a lot of opinions about the value of advanced education. Which do you think is the most important reason to attend college or university? Use reasons and examples to support your answer.

new experiences

career preparation

increased knowledge

Use specific details and examples in your answer.

Nowadays, more people than ever choose to attend university after completing high school. In my opinion, the single most important reason to pursue post-secondary education is to prepare for a career in the future. I feel this way for two main reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, a university degree is required in order to be hired at even the most basic jobs these days. Individuals who have only a high school diploma are employed solely in poorly paying and low-skilled fields. This reality is evident to young people all over the world right now, and so people feel quite a lot of urgency regarding their academic qualifications. For instance, my friends and I have noticed that recently it has even become necessary to have a graduate degree in order to begin a career; no longer is it possible to achieve professional success with just an undergraduate diploma. We all think that this trend will not reverse any time soon, and as a result students will continue to consider their career aspirations when making decisions about what to do when they finish their secondary education.

Secondly, universities provide wonderful opportunities for networking and these help young people find and create high-paying jobs following their graduation. The unemployment rate has been quite high for most of the past decade, and it is very difficult for



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even well-educated people to become employed. Many experts argue that the people we meet in university play a large role in our long-term professional success. My brother's personal experience is compelling evidence of this. He recently founded a lucrative online business which has provided him with a substantial income over the year. He co-founded the business in a partnership with two like-minded students that he met in a freshman computer science class. My brother often points out that the relationship which he formed with those students has been even more valuable than his actual degree. In contrast to my brother's success, many of my friends who chose not to attend university currently have a limited set of contacts as their social circles have not expanded since their childhood.

In conclusion, I believe that young people choose to enroll in post-secondary education mostly to prepare for their careers. This is because a university degree is a prerequisite for employment in the modern era, and because universities provide students with valuable opportunities to meet new people.



Question 24

Imagine you could improve the town where you live by changing one important thing about it. Which of the following would you choose to do?

Build additional parks

Construct more libraries

Improve public transportation

Use specific details and examples in your answer. Do not use memorized examples.

There is no shortage of things that could be changed in my hometown. However, if I had the opportunity to make one major improvement, I would choose to create more parks and green spaces. I feel this way for two major reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, parks help people to relax and find serenity, two things which are both in short supply in today's hectic world. Here in my hometown people are usually surrounded by high rise apartments made of dull grey concrete. Moreover, they often deal with long commutes, traffic jams and crowded sidewalks. These sorts of problems make residents of this town very anxious. In many cases, our anxiety gets so extreme that we experience health problems. I strongly believe that building parks could offer a permanent solution. My father is a compelling example of what I mean. For thirty years, he lived and worked in the same city that I do now, but several years ago he was forced into early retirement following a minor heart attack brought about by high blood pressure and workplace stress. However, after his retirement he moved to a more rural location, surrounded by trees, rivers and wildlife. In a short period of time, his stress was alleviated and he began to live a happier and healthier life. I am certain that by building some parks in the city where I live, my neighbors and I could enjoy similar benefits.

Secondly, the construction of parks will not just benefit our mental health, but will also encourage physical fitness among the population. Not everyone is able to afford a gym membership, and our crowded sidewalks and streets are not suited for jogging or



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bicycling. The construction of parks would provide children with a place to run around and adults with a location to participate in team sports. When my father moved to the countryside, it was not only his worries that went away. He also lost a considerable amount of weight because he made the decision to begin each morning with a brisk walk in the forest. Even if I wanted to follow his example, doing so would be impossible where I live as the streets are too crowded for casual walking. While my father is recovering from his illness, I fear that I might get worse and worse if things do not change soon.

In conclusion, if I could change one thing about my hometown I would choose to convert some of our concrete and steel surroundings to beautiful parks and green spaces. This is because such spaces would benefit both the mental and physical health of me and my neighbors. (446 words)

Question 25

These days, people enjoy a lot of time away from their work and school obligations. Many people use this time to visit new places and learn about them. What do you think is the best way to learn about a place you are visiting for the first time?

Going to a museum

Joining a guided tour of popular attractions

Visiting a popular shopping area

Talking to a local resident

Watching a local television station

Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer. Do not use memorized examples.

It is easier to travel than ever before, so more and more people take long vacations every year. I am of the belief that visiting a museum is the best way to get to know a city or



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country we are visiting for the first time. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, modern museums are very exciting and accessible, which means they are a great way to acquire new knowledge. These days, museums are designed to be inviting to the general public. In the past, they often contained stuffy and uninteresting exhibitions of boring artifacts, but today museums contain interactive and stimulating hands-on displays. My own experience while traveling last month in Canada is a compelling example of this. While visiting the city of Winnipeg last year, I spent an afternoon in Canada's National Human Rights Museum. This state-of-the-art facility contains touch-screen displays, and a plethora of sensor-activated exhibits all of which delighted me. I even attended a presentation given by an expert historian that I had read about on the museum's website the day before. My visit taught me an enormous amount about the history of Canada. I feel that there are many interactive museums all over the world nowadays and people can learn a lot from all of them.

Secondly, museums don't worry about making a profit, so they provide unbiased perspectives. These days there are a lot of guided tours available to tourists, but since the operators want to keep their customers happy they might ignore some of the negative aspects of a city or country. While it is relaxing to be guided by someone else, a tour won't teach us as much as a visit to a local museum. Ten years ago, I was fortunate enough to visit the European country of Sokovia. The person who guided my tour of the capital city there was a gregarious person and entertained my family with a lot of hilarious jokes, but I felt that his tour was a little superficial. When we visited the State Museum a few days later, we were able to see an exhibit about the Sokovian Civil War, which occurred in the early twentieth century. It honestly highlighted some of the negative actions taken by the country's government. Had I not visited the museum, I wouldn't have learned anything about that period of time.



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In conclusion, I strongly believe that people should visit museums when they take a holiday. This is because museums are usually designed to be fun and interactive, and because they can provide a totally honest picture of a country's history. (430 words)

Question 26

People in society work in many different settings, and for a variety of reasons. What do you think is the main reason why people have jobs?

to feel happier about their lives

to save money for the future

to develop new skills

Use specific examples and details to support your answer.

Only a very narrow minded person would suggest that making money is the single reason why people go to work each day. Personally, I believe that people find jobs to feel happier about their daily lives. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, having a job gives our life a sense of purpose, which is good for our mental health. The objectives of our job are something to strive for each day, and make it easy to establish both long and short term goals. Without a job, people often feel directionless. My own experience is a compelling example of this. In 2008, after ten years of working in a fast-paced corporate environment, I was laid off from my job. Even though I was financially secure and did not need to get another position right away I felt extremely depressed because I did not have an official job. Pursuing my hobbies was fun, but I lacked something to strive for each day. This is because at work I had always been given sales



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objectives and profit objectives to work towards and without those I felt depressed.

Accomplishing professional goals always gave me a great sense of satisfaction.

Secondly, jobs give us opportunities to meet new people on a regular basis, which can provide us with a sense of happiness. People who are unemployed interact mostly with their family and old friends, which can sometimes be boring. When I was in high school, I worked in a local supermarket. Although the job did not give me a very high salary, I often look back on that experience with fondness; indeed, in many ways it was the best job I have ever had. I was very happy to chat with the eclectic assortment of customers who came in each day. They all came from radically different backgrounds than me, and as a result it was stimulating to learn about their lives. Even though I now work at a job that pays me a much higher wage, I do miss my low-paying supermarket job sometimes.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that one of the main reasons people work is to feel better about their lives. This is because a job gives us goals to strive for, and it can also give us opportunities to make connections with interesting people. (385 words)

Question 27

Everyone wants to be as healthy as possible. Fortunately, in modern society there are many things that people can do to improve their physical condition. What do you think is the best way to stay healthy?

Get exercise on a regular basis

Eat healthy food every day

Visit a doctor for regular examinations

Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.



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Maintaining our health is one of the most effective ways of guaranteeing that we live a long and prosperous life. I do many things in order to stay fit, but the most important is maintaining a healthy diet. There are two reasons why I think this is critically important, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, eating healthy food prevents obesity, which is the cause of many very serious illnesses. Obesity is debilitating all by itself, but it also leads to a variety of other diseases, including diabetes, arthritis and cancer. If we are not aware of this connection when making decisions about the food which we eat, we will suffer serious consequences. My eldest cousin is a compelling example of this. While my cousin maintained a healthy weight throughout high school and university (despite eating a lot of unhealthy snacks and junk food), when he entered adulthood his metabolism changed and he began to rapidly gain weight. My cousin is not a particularly self-conscious individual and was never bothered by how his weight gain affected his appearance, so he continued on this course for many years. However, he was eventually diagnosed with diabetes, which has had a profound effect on his quality of life. As a result, he regrets not being more careful about his dietary choices.

Secondly, maintaining a nutritious diet gives us a lot of energy, which makes it easier to succeed in our personal and professional pursuits. It is no secret that people who lack certain vitamins and nutrients do not have the energy necessary to complete even simple tasks. For instance, when I was a university student I often skipped meals because I was extremely busy completing my academic work. As a result of not eating proper meals, I started to suffer from fatigue and lethargy. My grades began to drop because when it came time to write my tests I could barely keep my eyes open long enough to answer the questions. Moreover, my assignments were poorly done because my fatigue made me unable to keep up with deadlines. The following year, though, I was a bit more diligent about making intelligent food choices and my grades quickly recovered.



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In conclusion, the most important thing we can do to stay healthy is to maintain a nutritious diet. This is because eating the right food prevents obesity and related diseases, and because it gives us the energy to keep up with our academic and professional obligations. (414 words)

Question 28

The people we work with have many different characteristics and all of them affect the quality of our time at work. Of the following, what do you think is the most important quality for a boss or supervisor to have?

a serious attitude about their work

a lot of related experience

a tendency to always tell the truth

You may choose more than one. Use specific details and examples in your answer.

People today spend an enormous amount of time at their workplace, and how much they enjoy that time really depends on the attributes of their supervisor. I am of the opinion that there are two main characteristics of a good boss, which are his attitude and his experience. I will explore these two factors in the following essay.

First of all, we are more likely to learn from a supervisor who is very experienced in their field. When we are just starting out in our career we absorb new information like sponges, and even older workers can learn from supervisors who have a lot of related experience. My own personal history is a compelling example of this. When I began working as a teacher ten years ago, my supervisor, Simon, had been working in education for more than ten years. I was just out of college and knew very little about creating effective lesson plans, engaging with students or even how to complete my paperwork. Simon took the time to show me what he had learned over the previous decade, and therefore I was soon able



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to keep up with my office mates. In contrast, when I moved to a new school earlier this year, my supervisor actually had less experience teaching than I did. Moreover, when I struggled with certain aspects of my job, he couldn't suggest ways to improve. As a result, my professional development slowed down.

Secondly, a serious boss is more likely to maintain a positive office environment. This is because they encourage the people under them to act professionally. For instance, my sister once told me that her first job was difficult because of how toxic her office was. Workers often gossiped, tried to avoid doing their duties and even arrived late. This was acceptable because most of the supervisors in the firm behaved in the exact same way. My sister was miserable because she prides herself on her diligence and her ability to complete her tasks with care and enthusiasm. If her bosses had been more serious, this would not have happened.

In conclusion, I believe that experience and seriousness are the hallmarks of a good supervisor. This is because we can learn a lot from a knowledgeable boss, and because employees strive to emulate a supervisor who acts with professionalism. (387 words)

Question 29

All around the world, people are living longer than ever before. Which of the following do you think are the main causes of this phenomenon? You may choose more than one option.

The development of new technology

Changes to our eating habits

Improvements to our working conditions

Use specific reasons and details to develop your essay. Do not use memorized examples.



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There are many different reasons why humans live longer and healthier lives than in the past. In my opinion, there are two main reasons why people are living longer, which are improvements in medical technology and better working conditions. In the following essay, I will explore these two factors.

First of all, medical technology has developed a lot in the past few decades, and can both prevent and cure many different illnesses. Hundreds of diseases that might have killed us in the past can now be treated in safe and non-invasive ways. Not only that, but technology can be used to identify potential illnesses even before they occur. For example, I was told that my great-grandfather died of a heart attack when he was just forty-five years old, despite appearing outwardly healthy to his family. However, thanks to modern medicine, I now know that males in my family have a genetic tendency to develop heart disease. Thanks to this information I am very careful about my diet and get plenty of exercises. When I am older I will begin taking blood thinning medicine as a preventive measure. My great-grandfather did not have access to technology that could predict his illness, and was not able to protect himself.

Secondly, improved working conditions help us live longer, as humans today have safer and less strenuous jobs than people in the past. For instance, my great-grandfather was not the only male in my family to die at a young age. His brother passed away when he was in his fifties. His brother did not die from heart disease, but died from lung cancer caused by the years he spent working in a dirty coal mine. The physical toll of his work and the dusty air he breathed every day made him extremely sick. He was not the only person in his society to be killed by his job, as it was common for men and women to work in dangerous jobs in terribly unsafe factories. People back then had neither safe working conditions nor effective safety equipment. Modern rules and regulations, however, prevent the same tragedies from happening today.



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In conclusion, I believe that people live longer today for two main reasons. They are that doctors have access to a wide range of technology to both cure and prevent illnesses, and because our jobs are safer and less taxing than in the past. (399 words)

Question 30

During our careers, we work with many different kinds of people. All of them have unique characteristics and personality traits. In your opinion, which of the following is the most important characteristic of a coworker?

a serious attitude regarding their work obligations

a willingness to learn new things

the ability to make other people laugh

You may choose more than one of these options. Use reasons and specific examples to explain your answer. Do not use memorized examples.

Everyone in the world spends an enormous amount of time at their workplace, and how much they enjoy their job depends largely on how much they like their coworkers. I am of the opinion that there are two main characteristics of a good co-worker, which are a serious attitude and a willingness to learn new things. I will explore these two factors in the following essay.

First of all, coworkers who approach their tasks with a serious attitude are desirable because they help to maintain an efficient work environment. People who behave in a professional manner are less likely to be lazy and pass their responsibilities off to others. This always makes life much easier for everyone in an organization. For example, last summer the staff at my company felt overwhelmed by the number of assignments we had to complete. It was our busy season, and we had a number of unexpected orders come in from our international clients. Filling these orders required everyone to focus intently on their specific areas of responsibility. While this meant that some employees were working longer



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hours than others, no one complained about the situation. Instead, we all maintained a professional demeanor, and as a result we were able to get through the season.

Secondly, if workers feel comfortable learning new things, they will be more likely to adapt to rapid changes at their workplaces. The techniques and theories that people learned at school just a decade ago are quickly becoming obsolete. Employees who are unwilling to learn from their younger colleagues often create unpleasant workplaces. My own experience is a compelling example of what I mean. Last year my firm hired a new employee who had more than twenty years of experience in our industry. While at first glance he seemed like a perfect addition to our organization, his techniques were wholly out of step with the modern world. Not only that, but he became apprehensive and belligerent when younger staff members tried to show him about current trends in our industry. Eventually he was dismissed from the firm because of the negative effect he had on his coworkers.

In conclusion, I believe that professionalism and a willingness to learn new things are the hallmarks of a good employee. This is because a professional attitude is necessary to ensure a smooth and efficient work environment, and because in today's rapidly changing world it is always necessary to learn new skills and techniques. (409 words)



Question 31 (new)

Which of the following values do you think is most important to teach a young child?

Being honest

Being helpful

Being patient

It is critically important that we raise our children properly. Personally, I think it is very helpful to teach our children to be patient. I feel this way for two main reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, patient children are more likely to overcome struggles at school. A student who is patient will not give up when they face academic challenges, and therefore they will learn a lot in all of their classes. My personal experience is an illustration of this concept. When I was in third grade, I had a lot of problems in my mathematics class. In particular, I just couldn't figure out how to do long division correctly. At first, I wanted to give up and just quit doing my homework assignments. However, my mother encouraged me to be patient and try each question again and again until I found the correct answer. It took a long time, and I made a lot of mistakes, but thanks to my mom's lesson I didn't expect to get the answers quickly. This patient approach worked extremely well, and eventually I was able to master third grade math. If my mother had not emphasized the value of patience I still wouldn't know how to do long division.

Moreover, children who are patient can develop financial skills at an early age. Most youngsters are given an allowance by their parents nowadays, but patience is required in



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order to save enough money to purchase expensive things they really want. Being diligent when it comes to money will teach children the value of saving and the importance of thriftiness. For instance, when we were kids my brother and I were both given ten dollars per week by our parents. Most weeks I just wasted that money on candy and comic books. My brother, on the other hand, wanted to get an expensive video game console so he spent nothing and just put his allowance into a bank account every week. After one year his patience had paid off, and he had enough money to buy the system. More importantly, he learned about the value of not giving into his immediate desires and how money can grow in time if we have the willpower to wait. On the other hand, I learned nothing and am still struggling to make correct financial decisions.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that it is a wise idea to teach children how to be patient. This is because it will help them achieve academic excellence, and it will help them become financially independent. (430 words)

Question 32 (new)

When employees feel that the management of their company is doing something wrong, what do you think is the best way for them to respond?

Talking to the media

Speaking to the management directly

Discussing the problem with each other

It is critically important that companies behave ethically and responsibly at all times. Personally, if I notice that the company which I work for is acting inappropriately I



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will discuss the issue with my coworkers. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, a large group of determined employees can easily force a company to change its ways. Modern businesses require a satisfied and efficient workforce, and if they do not have one they suffer immediate consequences. This means that a group of determined employees can take collective action to ensure that their employers are ethical. In such a situation, I would probably create a website to share my views of the problem and email the address to all of my colleagues. The site would also include a private message board so we could talk about it privately. After reaching a consensus, we could share our opinions with the company's management and demand specific changes. It would be almost impossible for the company to reject our requests, as doing so might cause an undesirable escalation. Collective action like a strike would certainly reduce the overall profitability of the company, which is something they would unquestionably like to avoid.

Secondly, employees of an unethical business can easily share news of its actions with the general public and, as a result, negatively affect its public image. Nowadays, the media is reluctant to write critical stories about businesses. This is because they are owned by large multinational corporations and therefore are extremely biased. Each worker at my company, though, has a family and dozens of friends. If I can convince them to talk about what is going on, the news will spread extremely quickly. Accordingly, the company's public image will suffer and its sales will decline. In order to undo this kind of damage, the management will likely cease acting unethically. Accordingly, the overall problem will be solved. The other proposed methods of handling this dilemma would be much slower and inefficient, in comparison.

In conclusion, I believe that the best way to encourage a firm we work for to behave ethically and morally is to talk about what is going on with fellow employees. This is because collective action is always efficient, and workers can quickly spread stories about dishonest behavior. (389 words)



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Question 33 (new)

What do you think is the best way for the government of your country to improve the environment?

Increase public transportation

Reduce the construction of new factories

Build more parks

Most people agree that everyone in the world should live in a clean and healthy environment. Personally, I think that the government of my country should improve the environment by reducing the construction of new factories. I feel this way for two main reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, factories are a major source of air pollution which can seriously damage our health. Most factories emit numerous toxic gases which sometimes cause people who reside near them to develop respiratory illnesses. My own experience is an illustrative example of this. When I was young, I lived in a small village in southern Narnia. There were no factories near my home, and every day I played outside with my friends and breathed clean air. When I turned eighteen, I moved to Paravel, the capital city, to attend university. There are hundreds of factories in Paravel, and they pump toxic fumes into the air all day long. Right away, I developed a terribly sore throat. Moreover, I quickly became exhausted whenever I tried to play sports outside with my classmates. When I visited a local doctor for help, he mentioned that my problems were due to the poor air quality in Paravel. As a result, I had to remain indoors almost every single weekend.

Secondly, new factories ruin beautiful natural landscapes, which has a negative effect on our mental wellbeing. Everyone needs to spend time in nature to unwind. For instance, during my childhood, I often traveled to a beach near my village. Trips to the beach gave my family a chance to relax and forget about the things we were worried about. Last month, I took a trip to



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the beach with my own kids. Unfortunately, over the past ten years, numerous factories have been constructed just a few kilometers from the beach. While the area used to be quiet, now it is extremely noisy. In addition, the water is no longer crystal clear. Now it is brown and murky. Had the government restricted industrial development in the area, the beach would still be as beautiful as it was when I was young.

In conclusion, I believe that the best way to improve the environment is to limit the construction of new factories. This is because it will improve the health of residents, and it will preserve our precious natural landscapes. (396 words)

Question 34

Some students prefer classes with frequent discussions between the professor and the students with almost no lectures. Other students prefer classes with many lectures and almost no discussions. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Every student has their own preferred learning style, and therefore it is impossible to accommodate all of them. In my opinion, the best classes are those which include a lot of discussions. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, classes where we have the opportunity to speak help to develop our intellectual abilities. Classes where the teacher does most of the talking are very passive, on the other hand, and do not help us grow academically. They mostly involve the memorization of facts and details which do not help us in the long run. For example, I recently took a political science class that changed the way I think about the world. The cut and thrust of debate in the class made me consider where my political beliefs came from and if they were even correct. I was required to listen to the opinions of others, so I was a more open-minded person after the class finished. I believe that I would not have developed in



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such a way by just listening to lectures. This example demonstrates how valuable intellectual conversations can be.

Secondly, classes that involve a lot of interactions can help students develop the skills necessary to work well in groups. Many freshman students arrive at university very shy and unable to communicate well. Talking with their peers teaches students how to communicate effectively, and they can use this skill to excel in their future careers. My older brother's experience demonstrates that this is true. When he started university he was a very introverted person and did not enjoy collaborating with others. However, after four years of participating in debates, discussions and presentations in his classes he became a very confident public speaker. As a result, when he began his career after graduation, he excelled in group work and was seen by his co-workers and supervisors as a natural leader. He was promoted quickly and advanced through the ranks of his company. Without participating in discussions with his professors and classmates he would not have developed the skills necessary to succeed in this way.

In conclusion, I feel strongly that classes which are centered on discussions between professors and students are preferable to those in which the professor does all of the talking. This is because these classes help students develop academically, and because they teach students the skills that they need to achieve success in the future. (411 words)

Question 35

Some people like to travel with a companion. Other people prefer to travel alone. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

These days tourism is bigger than ever, and everyone has their own favorite travel style. Personally, I think it is a really great idea to travel with a partner. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.



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First of all, going on a trip with a companion is more economical than vacationing alone. As a result of leisure travel becoming more and more popular, hotel operators have raised their prices to astronomical levels. Discounts for solo travelers are fairly uncommon nowadays, so sharing a room with a friend is an effective way to cut costs. Not only that, but people traveling in pairs have better access to package deals on tours, entrance fees and other activities. My own experience is compelling evidence of this. When my girlfriend and I traveled together through Peru last year, we were able to rent an entire hotel room for less than the cost of two separate beds in a shared dorm. Over the course of our month-long trip, we saved several hundred dollars in this way. Because we saved so much money, we were able to change our plans and extend our trip for almost an entire week. Had we not taken the trip together, we would not have been able to do that.

Moreover, it is much easier to talk to local people when traveling in a pair, and this makes a trip much more rewarding. While a lone stranger can be seen as intimidating, a traveling couple is often considered more approachable. For instance, when my girlfriend and I took the trip to South America that I mentioned above, we were often welcomed into people's homes and businesses with open arms. The individuals who invited us often pointed out that they were willing to do so because we looked so happy, friendly and cheerful spending time together. In contrast, when I visited Bolivia by myself the previous year, I wanted to make the same kinds of connections, but it was almost impossible to achieve my goal. It is true that a solitary traveler may actually be quite kind and outgoing, this can be somewhat difficult to determine from a distance.

In conclusion, I definitely prefer to travel with a companion rather than alone. This is because there are significant financial benefits of doing so, and because traveling with a partner makes it easy to interact with strangers. (403 words)



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Question 36

Some people think that the government should use extra money to fund programs to improve the environment. Others think that it is better for the government to spend money to support artistic programs. Which option do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

In today's turbulent society, it is difficult for us to determine the best way to help the world. In my opinion, spending money to help protect the environment is more important than donating to the arts. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, environmental problems are a more urgent concern than issues surrounding the arts. While we are certainly living in a society where the arts are severely underfunded, the environment is a matter of life and death for many people. The consequences of environmental degradation not only hit close to home, but also affect human beings all over the planet. For example, I recently read a report in a major newspaper which pointed out that within three decades certain countries in South Asia will suffer from catastrophic flooding as a result of global warming. One country that was mentioned was Bangladesh, which just happens to be the poorest nation in the region. Public officials are trying to deal with the issue, but because of the poverty in that country they are wholly unable to do so. This means that nations in the developed world need to fund programs that will help them deal with the looming crisis.

Secondly, it is possible for artistic and cultural programs to be privately funded. Many businesses and individuals are willing to donate to artists in exchange for promotional considerations. Not only that, but the Internet has made it possible for artists to fund their work through online "crowdfunding" promoted through social networking sites. For instance, there is a community theater group in my hometown which recently lost a significant portion of its public funding following recent budget cuts by the municipal



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government. While the situation looked dire at first, the group was able to attract financial support from companies who wanted to have their logo displayed on theater programs and in the lobby of their building. In addition, the company used the Internet to raise money from individual donors who were happy to help their favorite theater group. These examples demonstrate some of the methods that artists can use to attract funding to replace government support in times of economic trouble. The amounts of money needed to solve environmental problems, in contrast, cannot be raised using such methods.

In conclusion, I feel that if the government is forced to make a choice, it should choose to fund environmental programs rather than the arts. I feel this way because environmental problems are a more critical concern, and because the arts can often be privately funded. (431 words)

Question 37

Some people like to spend their money as soon as they earn it, while others think it is better to save their money for some time in the future. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. Do not use memorized examples.

Money concerns are a major cause of stress and anxiety in the modern world. In my opinion, it is a really wise idea to save money for the future. I feel this way for two main reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, older people are able to make better financial decisions than youngsters due to their experience and maturity. Young people, who have very little worldliness, are prone to spending their money on products that are mostly useless and which they quickly tire of. Older people, on the other hand, know which purchases will result in long-term happiness and satisfaction. My own experience is a compelling example of this. When I was young, I spent a tremendous amount of money on video games and comic books



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which I enjoyed only for a short time. Later, when I enrolled in university, I did not have enough savings to pay for my tuition, and was forced to take out a significant number of student loans. Even today, several years after graduation, I regret not saving much money as a teenager. These days I am a lot more conservative when it comes to spending, and carefully consider all of my future expenses.

Secondly, life is full of unexpected emergencies which can cause a lot of anxiety if we do not have a lot of money saved up. According to reports in the media, more than seventy-five percent of all bankruptcies in my country are the result of medical bills. I am totally aware that it is humiliating to lose our financial independence in this way. For example, last year my uncle suffered a major heart attack which required him to undergo very expensive cardiac surgery. He did not have enough money to pay for this procedure, so he had to ask his elderly parents for a loan. They were able to help him because they had resisted the urge to spend and saved money through their entire lives. He felt extremely embarrassed about begging his parents for assistance, especially as he could have avoided the situation by emulating their frugal behavior.

In conclusion, I believe that it is better to save money for the future rather than spend it right away. I feel this way because we gain the ability to make better financial decisions as we mature, and because saving money helps us avoid the humiliating effects of unexpected financial emergencies. (405 words)



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Question 38

Some people prefer to live in a small town. Others prefer to live in a big city. Which place would you prefer to live in? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

Everyone has different dreams when it comes to where they wish to live. Personally, I think it is very desirable to live in a large city. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, cities offer a great environment for raising children, and I am a person who values family above all else. Urban areas have numerous parks and recreation centers which encourage children to lead vital and healthy lives, and they also have well-funded community centers which contribute to the intellectual development of young people. My own experience demonstrates the value of such facilities. Both my husband and I work full time jobs, and are not home when our two sons finish school. This is not a problem, though, as both of them go directly to a local community center when their classes are over. Our eldest son participates in a computer club there, while our youngest son practices photography. Their participation in these programs sets my mind at ease, as without access to the community center they would just sit at home all alone. This situation compares favorably to a friend of mine who lives in a small town and recently had to hire an expensive babysitter to watch her children when they get home from school, as she was not able to locate any meaningful activities for them to take part in.

Secondly, large cities offer cultural experiences that adults can enjoy and appreciate. Most major cities have a plethora of museums, ethnic restaurants, libraries, theater groups and other stimulating and cosmopolitan facilities. My city is no exception. For instance, my colleagues and I spend every Friday evening visiting a new ethnic restaurant for dinner. Over the past three months we have enjoyed food from more than a dozen different national cuisines. Meanwhile, my sons and I go to a different museum once a



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month and I have found that I enjoy our visits almost as much as they do. These are the sort of outings that are only possible in a heavily-populated urban area. Small towns offer easy access to beautiful natural scenery, but I prefer the intellectual and cultural stimulation that my city offers.

In conclusion, I am of the opinion that living in a large city is preferable to living in a small town. This is because cities are better places to raise children, and because they offer stimulating intellectual and cultural experience that grown-ups can enjoy.

Question 39

Some students prefer to study and do homework alone. Others prefer to study and work on class assignments with a group of fellow students. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Everyone has different dreams when it comes to where they wish to live. Personally, I think it is very desirable to live in a large city. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

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In conclusion, I am of the opinion that living in a large city is preferable to living in a small town. This is because cities are better places to raise children, and because they offer stimulating intellectual and cultural experience that grown-ups can enjoy.

Question 40

Some people prefer to eat meals at restaurants, while others prefer to prepare and eat food in their own home. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

These days, people enjoy a plethora of dining options, as it is now possible to eat food at wonderful restaurants serving food from around the world, or to use modern technology to prepare great food in the comfort of our own homes. Personally, I prefer to eat at home,



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rather than going out. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, meals cooked at home are healthier than meals from restaurants, and I strongly value my health. While meals prepared at restaurants are certainly delicious, they usually include a lot of oil, salt and sugar. Over-consumption of unhealthy ingredients can have a profound effect on our health, and can even lead to chronic illnesses. When I cook for myself at home, I precisely measure the amounts of everything that goes into my food and try my best to limit unhealthy ingredients whenever possible. It is true that my meals may not taste quite as nice as those I might get at a fancy restaurant, but I still enjoy my creations. Rather than enjoying just the taste of the food, much of my pleasure is derived from the enjoyment that went into the cooking of it, and the peace of mind that I gain from knowing that I am taking care of my body.

Secondly, everyone knows that restaurants are incredibly expensive. I do not blame restaurant owners for this because I know they must pay a lot for labor, real estate and utilities, but it is true that a meal that might cost five dollars to prepare at home will cost ten times that amount when served to me at a restaurant. Moreover, my country has a tipping culture, which adds increased costs every time I eat out. For example, I remember last month how I paid about fifteen dollars for a simple meal of fish and chips. Potatoes are clearly one of the most inexpensive vegetables in the world, and since I live near the sea, fresh fish can be bought at a local market for just a few dollars a pound. I enjoyed myself, but the amount I paid for it made me feel like I was being irresponsible with my money.

In conclusion, I certainly prefer to eat at home rather than at a restaurant. I feel this way because eating at home is healthier, and it makes a lot more economic sense than going out for an expensive meal. (415 words)



Question 41

Some people think that they can learn much more by themselves than if they work with a teacher. Others think that it is always better to get help from a skilled teacher. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons to support your choice.

Everyone realizes that it is important to improve our skills and abilities. I am of the opinion that it is much better to study with a teacher than it is to study alone. I feel this way for two main reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, studying with a teacher helps us to stay focused and avoid distractions, which are two things that people today often struggle with. Nowadays, we have a lot of technological distractions right at our fingertips, including smartphones, social networking websites and streaming videos. Even when we make firm plans, it is difficult to stay focused on our studies because it is so easy to consume some frivolous entertainment instead. My own experience is a compelling example of this. When I was attempting to learn English for the first time, my studies faltered because I pulled out my phone whenever I hit a difficult part in my exercise book. When I switched to studying with a tutor, however, she scolded me whenever I tried to use a phone in class. Additionally, whenever I tried to begin some idle small talk in order to avoid hard work, she changed the subject back to learning English. I progressed much more quickly with her than I did while studying on my own.

Secondly, most of us have an inflated sense of our own intelligence, which causes problems when we try to study alone. Many people believe that with just a nice textbook they can master any topic on their own. They are of the opinion that they can create a curriculum all by themselves and formulate their own study plan. However, this is something that only trained experts are actually very good at. For example, when I first started learning English I studied all by myself. I wrote complicated lesson plans and schedules that I thought would match my progress. Sadly, I did not learn as quickly as I anticipated and my plans fell apart. When I started studying with a talented and experienced



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tutor, she immediately assessed my needs and ability level and created a more realistic timeline for me. As a result, I have been able to make realistic progress without feeling discouraged.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that studying with a teacher is better than studying alone. This is because teachers help us to avoid distractions, and because they can help us form realistic goals and objectives. (407 words)

Question 42 (new)

A company wants to train its employees to use new techniques. Which is the best way to train the workers?

Have all of them attend a training program together

Have some of the employees attend the program and later show their coworkers what they learned

All businesses want their employees to know the latest business practices. I believe that if a company wants to train its workers, it should send some of them to a comprehensive training program and later have those workers teach everyone else. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, the company can send only its most studious and diligent staff members to attend the program. Professional training programs can be long and boring, and not everyone has the personality traits needed to successfully complete them. Participants should be patient, and have the ability to stay focused on a single task for a long time. The managers of this hypothetical company will probably know which of its employees will be able to properly take advantage of the lessons. Once they finish them, they can share what they have learned with everyone else. The rest of the employees will have an easier time



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with this, since these lessons will be conducted by their friends and will be done in a more casual manner. Moreover, they will be able to avoid wasting time on any aspects of the program which are not relevant to their own work, or to the company as a whole.

Secondly, it is a lot more affordable to send just a few employees to an official training program. Obviously, companies must pay a fee to the organizers of the program. In addition, they have to pay to transport workers to the training site. If the program lasts for more than one day, they will also have to cover the cost of everyone's accommodation. All of these things can really add up. Needless to say, the costs will be lower if just a handful of people attend the program. In contrast, the cost of training a majority of the workers at the company's headquarters will be much lower. That's because it can be done during regular working hours, and no one will have to travel anywhere. They might have to pay overtime wages to a few employees, but that will still be cheaper than paying travel and hotel costs.

In conclusion, I think it is better for the company to send just a few staff members to the training program. This is because they can pick the most diligent people to participate, and they can save a lot of money. (400 words)

Question 43

The administrators of a university are revising their budget and have decided to change their funding priorities. As a result, the university will now spend more money on sports and athletic facilities than they do on the campus libraries. Do you think this is a good idea? Why or why not? Use specific reasons and examples to explain your position.

It is very challenging for university administrators to decide how to spend their money. Personally, I am of the belief that universities should provide more funding for



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athletics than they do for libraries. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, most universities offer identical academic programs, and are only able to set themselves apart from the crowd through the popularity of their sports teams. These days there are hundreds of universities across the United States which are almost entirely interchangeable, while only a few Ivy League schools are considered better than average. It may seem somewhat arbitrary, but a sports team can help a school stand out from the crowd and attract new students. For example, my cousin is a very average student. When he graduated from high school a few years ago, he chose to attend California State College based solely on the fact that he loves basketball and that school is known for its on-court success. This may seem superficial to some people, but it mattered a lot to him. Moreover, according to recent surveys he is not the only student who chose to attend the school for this reason. It is clear that the college earned his loyalty as a result of the care and attention it has paid to its athletic program.

Secondly, sports are very profitable and are a good source of revenue in today's precarious economic times. Schools across the nation are facing a funding crisis, but they still need to build academic facilities and dormitories for new students. University sports are a huge business in my country, and are even more popular than professional sports in a lot of areas. Therefore, athletic teams can generate money for their schools through corporate sponsorships, ticket sales, licensing and broadcast agreements. These profits can then be used to pay for academic facilities, including libraries. For instance, my school recently built a state-of-the-art biology lab using the money it made from its popular football team. It would not have been able to afford the construction without that revenue.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that colleges should provide more funding to their sports teams than they do to their libraries. This is because sports help universities stand out in today's crowded market of schools, and because the profits they generate can be used to fund other programs. (400 words)



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Question 44

Many people welcome the opening of shopping areas near their homes. On the other hand, some people are strongly opposed to the construction of such facilities. If the opening of a large shopping center in your neighborhood were announced, would you support or oppose its construction? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

The construction of a shopping mall in my hometown would have a profound effect on the people who live here. Personally, I believe that these effects would be entirely negative, so I would oppose any such plan. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

To begin with, a shopping mall would cause many small local businesses to shut down, which would have a negative effect on overall employment. It is true that a shopping mall would employ a lot of people from the community, but the jobs lost at small local retailers forced out of business would be greater in number. For instance, when a shopping mall opened in the small town where my parents live, it forced their favorite local hardware store out of business. Even though the hardware store located in the new mall was three times as large as the family store, it only employed half as many people. Not only that, but the small local store employed well-paid experts, while the shopping mall mainly hires teenagers who earn minimum wage.

Secondly, shopping malls often result in urban sprawl, which is something that reduces the quality of life in the surrounding area. While small local shops are usually located at the center of a city, shopping malls are usually found on the outskirts of town. It is possible for customers to walk to local stores found downtown, but it is necessary to drive to shopping malls. To make matters worse, after a shopping mall becomes successful, other retailers will open up nearby and patronizing them also requires driving. I am of the opinion that the ability to walk to shops and services is a part of a high quality of life. My brother's



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experience is a compelling example of this. Last year, a shopping mall opened in his city, and his favorite downtown bookstore closed as it couldn't compete with the new bookstore in the mall. He has told me many times that driving forty minutes just to buy a book is a real inconvenience, especially since he could just walk to the old bookstore.

In conclusion, I would strongly oppose the construction of a shopping mall in my hometown. This is because it would force small family-run businesses to shut down, and because it would cause my life to be less pleasant. (394 words)

Question 45

It is very important for students to learn as much as possible before their graduation from university. For this reason, many schools require students to attend all of their classes in person in order to achieve a passing score. Do you agree or disagree with this kind of policy? Use specific reasons and examples to support your argument.

As technology develops and ideas about learning change, there are many different opinions about whether it should still be mandatory for students to attend classes. Personally, I support policies that require students to actually be present for all of their classes. I will explore why I feel this way in the following essay.

To begin with, being physically present in a class makes it more likely that a student will participate in lively conversations and debates, and this will help him following his graduation. A university education is not just about writing essays and getting grades. It is also about spending time in a stimulating academic environment. It is critically important for students to share their opinions with their peers, and even to engage in healthy debates with their professors. Exchanges of this type shape young minds, and students who miss out on them do not get as much from their degree as they ought to. My own experience is a



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compelling example of this. I learned an enormous amount about effective communication by participating in classroom discussions as an undergraduate. Moreover, classroom discussions showed me how to support my opinions with facts, and also how to remain polite when talking with others. My finely honed communication skills were very useful when it came time for me to work a professional job.

Secondly, attending classes helps students to network with like-minded people, which also makes it easier to find jobs following their graduation. As I said above, students are likely to talk to their classmates during lectures. This not only helps them to become effective communicators, but also helps them form relationships and friendships with their classmates. For instance, after my graduation, I was able to get recommendations and referrals from classmates who had already been hired by prestigious firms. These connections were critical when it came to landing job interviews and eventual employment. Had I not developed close relationships with my peers, I would not be happy with my career today.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that it is still very important for students to attend classes. This is because doing so helps them to perfect their communication skills, and because the opportunities for networking that classes provide are extremely valuable.



Question 46

It is important to improve our skills and knowledge as much as possible. Some people prefer to learn from individuals who have more experience than they do – like teachers and supervisors – instead of learning from peers, like their colleagues and classmates. Do you think this is a good idea? Why or why not?

Almost everyone agrees that improving our skills and abilities is a great way to ensure a more prosperous life. Personally, I feel that it is people above us, like our teachers and our bosses, who can teach us the most. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, people with real-world experience can provide more complete and comprehensive lessons. Young people are usually full of bright ideas and plans for the future, but our ideas are all hypothetical or based on assumptions instead of hard facts. My own experience is a compelling example of this. Following my graduation from university, I drew up plans to start a small software development firm. My plans were exceptionally detailed, and I was confident that my business would be a complete success. However, when I consulted one of my former professors, his advice opened my eyes to the fact that my plan was missing key points. I had concentrated on all of the most exciting aspects of starting a business, but I had not given much thought to the more mundane details I would have to sort out, like how to rent office space or how to pay my taxes. His years of tangible experience opened my eyes to such topics.

Moreover, people who are above us are more likely to actually be trained as educators, which means they can more effectively provide instruction. A young person who is a master of his particular field of expertise may be unable to teach others about it if he lacks experience conveying information to beginners. For example, several years ago I shared an introductory physics class with Philip, a close friend of mine. Philip excelled in all of his classes, and achieved particularly impressive grades in the sciences. One week when I was



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struggling in the class Philip offered to tutor me so that I could keep up. Our tutoring sessions did not go well – try as he might, Phil was unable to help me understand even the most basic topics. In desperation, I visited our professor to seek assistance. To my surprise, she was able to correct my misunderstandings after only half an hour of conversation. It was not her depth of knowledge of the topic that permitted her to achieve this, but her training as an educator.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that we can learn more from individuals who are above us than we can from people on our own level. This is because older people tend to have more experience than younger people, and because they are more likely to have training in education and instruction. (449 words)

Question 47

Nowadays, the world is developing at a very rapid pace and we are constantly forced to make a lot of choices that can affect the rest of our lives. Do you agree or disagree with the idea that we should always ask someone else for help when we need to make an important decision? Why or why not? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

The choices we make today can profoundly influence our future. Personally, I feel that we should never make important decisions on our own. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, even if we think our lives are unique, there is always someone close to us that has been in a similar situation. By consulting someone who has made a similar decision in the past, we can more carefully weigh our options. My personal experience is a compelling example of this. When I graduated from high school five years ago I was forced to choose between enrolling in either a trade school or a university. I knew that a trade school



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would lead to more reliable employment in the future, but I also knew that a university would provide a more stimulating intellectual environment. I did not think that my old-fashioned and practical-minded parents had struggled with the same dilemma in their youth, but when I talked it out with my father I found out that despite his conservative nature he had considered studying the liberal arts. As we talked about his motivations, and some of the regrets associated with his ultimate choice, I was able to more fully consider all of my own options.

Secondly, when we make decisions alone, we are more likely to make rash and impulsive moves. Talking about a problem with another person takes time, and thus our decision making process is slowed down. For example, when I decided to buy a new car last year I made purchase the very same day that the idea popped into my head. It seemed like a wonderful idea at the time because gas prices were low and there was plenty of parking available on campus. However, when I told one of my classmates about my purchase she reminded me that gas prices always shoot up when we least expect them to, and that parking was only easy to find at that time because it was summer vacation and many students were away. Had I talked about these issues before buying the car, I might have reconsidered whether or not it was a wise idea.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that it is never a smart idea to make decisions without first talking to someone about them. This is because there is always someone in our life who has had to deal with a similar situation, and because talking about issues prevents us from acting impulsively. (416 words)

Question 48



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Consider a situation where you are asked by your supervisor to work with one of your co-workers on a project. This co-worker has opinions that are very different from yours and they feel very strongly about these opinions. Do you think this is a good idea? Use reasons and examples to support your answer.

It is always a challenge to collaborate with our colleagues on important projects. Personally, I believe that it is extremely beneficial to work on assignments with people who do not share our opinions. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, co-workers who do not share our beliefs can often show us solutions that we would not ordinarily come up with. We can sometimes get stuck in our ways if we spend too many years at a job, and this can negatively affect our problem-solving skills. However, if we are exposed to people with radically different perspectives we can make unexpected breakthroughs. My personal experience is a compelling example of this. A few years ago I was employed as an intern at a local magazine. I was given the task of getting new companies to buy advertising in the magazine. I was convinced that only large retailers would want to promote themselves in the publication, but when I called a few they just weren't interested. As a result, my boss assigned my colleague Jeff to help me out. He was of the opinion that local cafes would be more likely to partner with us. Right after we started calling them we quickly sold all of our advertising space. I was quite certain that I was correct in my original belief, and had it not been for Jeff's input I would have totally failed at my work.

Secondly, working with individuals who have different opinions is a wonderful way to improve our communication skills. In cases like these, we need to speak clearly and persuasively to win others over. For instance, when I was a graduate student I worked as teaching assistant together with a classmate. I thought that our students should be punished



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harshly for submitting essays after the given deadlines, but he was more liberal and wanted to give them generous extensions. To convince him to change his mind I had to debate his stance using effective reasoning and well-articulated logic. This helped me to be a powerful communicator, which has served me well in my career since then.

In conclusion, I feel that working with people who do not share our opinions is very advantageous. This is because they can improve the way we carry out tasks, and because such situations can really improve our ability to convey our ideas.

Question 49

Imagine that your city government has given permission for a major company to build a large factory near your neighborhood. Do you think this is a good idea? Why or why not? Explain your position using specific reasons and examples.

The presence of factories near residential zones is a very controversial topic in modern society. Personally, I would wholeheartedly support the construction of a factory near my town. I feel this way for two reasons, which I will explore in the following essay.

First of all, my community desperately needs the jobs that a factory would provide. I live in an economically disadvantaged region which has suffered from high unemployment rates for more than fifty years. This has had some very serious effects on the town, including high rates of child poverty and crime, as well as poorly developed public services. This makes me think of my brother's situation. He lives in the same country as I do, but in a different city. Several years ago, a manufacturing plant actually was constructed in his region. There was, indeed, an increase in pollution, noise and traffic after the factory



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opened, but everyone agrees that this was an acceptable trade-off for declines in crime, graffiti and homelessness that occurred at the same time. I believe that my brother's example demonstrates why it would be a great idea to construct new industrial sites in my town.

Secondly, modern industry is not as bad as a lot of people think. Here in Canada, factories come equipped with modern technology that removes the most dangerous chemicals from their regular emissions. Moreover, advances in public transportation can alleviate some of the traffic-related concerns that most people have when they think about industrial development. For example, when that factory was constructed in my brother's town he and many of his neighbors were quite surprised at how little air pollution they noticed. There was some effect on their air quality, but it was not nearly as bad as they thought it would be. Not only that, but the construction of the factory caused the local government to invest heavily in public transportation for the workers, and this has made life more convenient for everyone in the city. This example describes another reason why I would love for a factory to be constructed in my hometown.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that a factory would be a wonderful addition to my community. This is because it would create a lot of employment, and because factories are not as dirty and inconvenient as many people think.



综合写作范文样本

Television Appearances by University Professors (casting doubt)

The reading and the lecture are both about the value of television appearances by university professors. The author of the reading argues that they are very worthwhile for academics and their universities. The lecturer casts doubt on the claims made in the article. He believes that these appearances are not particularly useful.

First of all, the author claims that television appearances help university professors broaden their audience, and also help them to be viewed as experts in their fields by more people. The author believes that this can increase their importance as academic professionals. This point is challenged by the lecturer. He says that professors who go on television are viewed by their peers as entertainers rather than as true educators. The lecturer claims that being a celebrity could even affect their ability to get funding for their work.

Secondly, the author states that television appearances can be beneficial for the universities themselves. It is argued that the prestige of a university is increased when one of its faculty members makes a high profile media appearance. The lecturer rebuts this argument. He suggests that universities can suffer because celebrity professors do not have much time for their research and students. He argues that rather than carrying out their duties, they spend a lot of time rehearsing, traveling and getting made-up for their appearances.

Finally, the author mentions that there is a net benefit to the public when a professor appears in the media. It is suggested that television is usually quite shallow and that professors can provide a very useful remedy to this problem. The lecturer, on the other hand, feels that television networks are just interested in the academic titles of the professors. He says that the abbreviated presentations that professors give on television are no more useful than what a regular reporter could deliver.



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Portrait of an Elderly Woman in a White Bonnet (casting doubt)

The reading and the lecture are about a painting called “Portrait of an Elderly Woman in a White Bonnet,” which may have been painted by Rembrandt. The author of the reading believes that the painting was not done by the Dutch master. The lecturer casts doubts on the claims made in the article. She thinks that it was, in fact, painted by Rembrandt.

First of all, the author claims that the woman’s outfit is inconsistent, as it pairs a servant’s cap with a luxurious coat and fur collar. It is pointed out that Rembrandt would not have made such a mistake, as he paid very careful attention to detail. This argument is challenged by the lecturer. She says that the woman’s fur collar was added to the painting by another artist at a later date. She asserts that this was likely done to increase the value of the painting.

Secondly, the author states that the depiction of light and shadow in the portrait is poorly done. He argues that Rembrandt was a master of light and shadow, and would not have made the mistakes which are seen in this particular painting. This argument is rebutted in the lecture. The lecturer observes that when the aforementioned fur collar is removed, no mistakes with light and shadow remain. She notes that the original version of the painting is up to Rembrandt’s usual standards.

Finally, the author mentions that the portrait was painted on a series of panels which were glued together. It is noted that while Rembrandt often painted on wood panels, there is no evidence that he ever used panels that were glued together in such a fashion. The lecturer casts doubt on this by arguing that the wood panel was expanded many years after the painting was originally done. She puts forth the idea that this is evidence that the painting was originally completed on just a single panel like other works by Rembrandt, and that the panel came from the same tree used to make panels for his other works.



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Incan Fortress of Sacsayhuaman (casting doubt)

The reading and the lecture are both about Sacsayhuaman, which is a walled fortress built by the Inca people near the city of Cuzco. The author of the reading believes that the fortress was not built for defensive purposes. The lecturer casts doubt on the claims made in the article. She thinks that the fortress was built to defend the Inca against invaders.

First of all, the author claims that the walls in the fortress are not solid. It is noted that the fortress actually consists of a series of walls with great gaps in between them, which invaders could have passed through. This point is challenged by the lecturer. She says that the gaps were left in order to conserve building materials. Furthermore, she points out that natural barriers would have provided sufficient defense in the areas where the gaps were located.

Secondly, the author states that the wall contains various entryways. The article argues that these passages were not defended very well and that aggressors could have entered through them. This argument is rebutted by the lecturer. She suggests that the entries were left because the Inca needed to see the invaders as they approached in order to plan their strategies. She elaborates on this by mentioning that the entries were mostly windows which were too small for invaders to fit through.

Finally, the author mentions that no wells have been found behind the walls. The author's opinion is that if the fortress had been blockaded by invaders the defenders would have died of thirst. The lecturer, on the other hand, feels that because of the high altitude of the fortress, invaders would not have been able to sustain long attacks. She puts forth the idea that defenders could have resupplied when their attackers fell back as a result of the altitude.



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Iron Fertilization (solution and problem)

The reading and the lecture are both about Sacsayhuaman, which is a walled fortress built by the Inca people near the city of Cuzco. The author of the reading believes that the fortress was not built for defensive purposes. The lecturer casts doubt on the claims made in the article. She thinks that the fortress was built to defend the Inca against invaders.

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Moai of Easter Island (includes a full lecture and reading)

The reading and the lecture are both about the Moai of Easter Island. The author of the reading believes that the construction of the Moai led to the collapse of the civilization located there. The lecturer casts doubt on the claims made in the article. She thinks that the society on the island did not suffer as a result of the construction of the Moai.

First of all, the author claims that the people of the island cut down vast amounts of valuable trees in order to build the statues. He notes that the Moai were moved across the island using wooden tracks and log rollers. This point is challenged by the lecturer. She says that islanders used a series of ropes to walk the statues to their intended locations. Furthermore, she points out that this method did not require any trees and has even been replicated by teams of modern researchers.

Secondly, the author states that eventually every tree on the island was cut down. He argues that without any trees, migratory birds stopped visiting the island and the people were no longer able to feed themselves. This argument is rebutted by the lecturer. She suggests that palm seeds that date from the time period show evidence of having been chewed on by rats. She elaborates on this by mentioning that the original inhabitants of the island brought rats with them as food, and that they were the main cause of deforestation on the island.

Finally, the author mentions that the problems described above eventually led to a major population collapse. He is of the opinion that the population of Easter Island fell from a high of twenty thousand down to a low of just two thousand when European explorers first arrived. The lecturer, on the other hand, feels that Easter Island never supported a population of twenty thousand. She puts forth the idea that this estimate was based on an old misunderstanding of when the island was originally settled and that there were never more than two thousand people living there.



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The Usefulness of Coal (casting doubt)

The reading and the lecture are both about the effectiveness of coal as an energy source. The author of the reading believes that coal remains a very useful source of energy. The lecturer casts doubt on the claims made in the article. She thinks that coal has serious effects on both humans and the world around them, and therefore should no longer be used.

First of all, the author claims that prices of other energy sources, such as fossil fuels, have increased dramatically. He notes that we have limited reserves of such fuel sources, but that coal exists in huge quantities. This point is challenged by the lecturer. She says that coal is an inefficient means of energy production in comparison to all other alternatives. She points out that for this reason coal should not be used, even though it is cheaper than other fuel sources.

Secondly, the author states that coal is a reliable fuel source which has been used for hundreds of years. He argues that because coal has been used for such a long period, humans have discovered the most effective ways to utilize it. This argument is rebutted by the lecturer. She suggests that coal is known to pollute water supplies. She elaborates on this by mentioning that coal must be washed and prepared using toxic chemicals which are injected into underground mines after use. This, she says, puts water supplies at risk.

Finally, the author mentions that coal has been put to use all over the globe. He describes how uses of coal include alumina refining, paper manufacturing, chemical production and the pharmaceutical industry. The lecturer, on the other hand, feels that coal can cause major damage to the human central nervous system because it emits carbon monoxide when used in industry. She puts forth the idea that technology is simply not advanced enough to make it safe to use.



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Monarch Butterflies (casting doubt)

The reading and the lecture are both about whether monarch butterfly populations are declining, and whether herbicides should be banned in order to save them. The author of the reading believes that herbicides should not be banned. The lecturer casts doubt on the claims made in the article. She thinks that herbicides pose a serious threat to the butterflies and should be outlawed.

First of all, the author claims that no overall decline in monarch butterfly populations has been observed in North America. He notes that populations in certain areas have dropped, but that these have been offset by gains in other locations. This point is challenged by the lecturer. She says because the butterflies are extremely territorial, it is very easy for biologists to count them. Furthermore, she points out that a very clear drop in monarch butterfly populations has, in fact, been measured.

Secondly, the author states that herbicides kill the milkweed that butterflies consume, but that plenty of it still remains in the wild for them to feed on. He argues that herbicides have not caused a general decline in milkweed availability, but just a decline on commercial farmland. This argument is rebutted by the lecturer. She suggests that it is a well-known fact that America is rapidly losing rural land because of urban sprawl. She notes that this effect has led to a very real decline of milkweed availability in rural areas.

Finally, the author mentions that the attempt to ban herbicides is based on emotion rather than evidence and research. He is of the opinion that people only want to ban the herbicides because they affect the food of their beloved butterflies. The lecturer, on the other hand, feels that the move to ban herbicides is based on a rational examination of the evidence available. She puts forth the idea that we know the herbicides affect milkweed and we know that butterflies consume milkweed, so we can logically assume that the herbicides are detrimental to the insects.



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Large Animals (casting doubt)

The reading and the lecture are both about why animals that existed in the “early earth” period were larger than animals today. The author of the reading presents three possible explanations for this phenomenon. The lecturer casts doubt on the claims made in the article. She thinks that none of the theories are supported by facts or evidence.

First of all, the author claims that animals were larger because the early earth had a greater supply of oxygen. He notes that high oxygen levels stimulate growth in certain species. This point is challenged by the lecturer. She says that the atmosphere of the early earth was full of poisonous gasses which made it difficult for animals to breathe. She points out that oxygen levels were not higher than they are today.

Secondly, the author states that animals that existed in the early earth period grew large as a result of having access to abundant plant life to feed on. He argues that animals grew large because they consumed high levels of nutrients and that they passed down their size to succeeding generations. This argument is rebutted by the lecturer. She suggests that plant life was in fact abundant, but that it was mostly low in nutrients. She notes that this is because plants rely on carbon dioxide to grow strong, but they did not have much carbon dioxide during the period.

Finally, the author mentions that warm climates caused animals in this period to grow large. He is of the opinion that because they did not have to use energy to stay warm, they were able to channel it into growing larger bodies. The lecturer, on the other hand, feels that in today’s era warm climates are mostly known for having small animals. She puts forth the idea that massive bodies are disadvantageous in warm climates.



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Wheat and Beer (from “Cracking the TOEFL 2016”)

The reading and the lecture are both about the consumption of wheat by humans in the pre-historic period. The author of the reading believes that bread was the first product produced from wheat. The lecturer casts doubt on the claims made in the article. She thinks that, in fact, beer was the first product that resulted from wheat production.

First of all, the author claims that early humans prepared wheat for consumption by grinding it between two stones. He notes that wheat was much easier to consume if it was ground into a thin paste in advance, rather than just being chewed raw. This point is challenged by the lecturer. She says that it was not necessary to grind wheat as it could be sprouted naturally in a moist environment. Furthermore, she points out that sprouted wheat is sweeter, softer and more nutritious than ground wheat.

Secondly, the author states that early humans would have easily discovered how to bake bread by exposing their ground wheat to fire. He argues that baked bread could be stored for long periods of time which would have greatly increased the value of wheat as food. This argument is rebutted by the lecturer. She suggests that humans during this period did not know how to cook food with fire. She notes that applying fire to food in order to make it more palatable was simply not an obvious idea at that time.

Finally, the author mentions that early humans would have noticed the effects of yeast spores landing on the ground wheat paste when it was left out in the open. He is of the opinion that the bubbles that formed when the yeast landed indicated to people that baked bread would be lighter and easier to eat than raw wheat. The lecturer, on the other hand, feels that fermentation happened very quickly when wheat paste was put into storage. She puts forth the idea that the nice taste of the bubbles that formed when fermentation happened would have been more likely to lead to beer production than to bread production.



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Forest Fires (from “Cracking the TOEFL 2016”)

The reading and the lecture are both about forest fires, and whether or not they should be deliberately suppressed. The author of the reading believes that it is beneficial to stop such fires from occurring. The lecturer casts doubt on the claims made in the article. She thinks that it is more advantageous to allow forest fires to occur.

First of all, the author claims that stopping forest fires can help to improve the overall health of trees. He notes that along the eastern seaboard where fire suppression systems have been used, huge canopies have been formed by thriving oak and hickory trees. This point is challenged by the lecturer. She says that such canopies block the light that young trees need to grow strong. Furthermore, she points out that as a result of this species that do not need much light will invade their natural habitat.

Secondly, the author states that stopping fires will allow vines and bushes to thrive at lower levels of the forest ecosystem. He argues that fires actually reduce the amount of nutrients available in soil. This argument is rebutted by the lecturer. She suggests that fires benefit lower levels of the forest by killing off plants before they grow into huge thickets. She elaborates on this by mentioning that huge masses of plants prevent young trees from reaching maturity.

Finally, the author mentions that stopping fires prevents animals from being burned to death. He mentions that deer are a specific species that can thrive when fires are stopped. The lecturer, on the other hand, feels that rising deer populations are also a result of recent limitations on hunting. She puts forth the idea that deer can harm forests by consuming oak saplings that already have a difficult time growing when fires are suppressed.



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Endotherms (from “Official Collection”)

The reading and the listening are about whether or not dinosaurs were endotherms. The author of the reading feels there is evidence to suggest that dinosaurs were animals of this type. The professor, on the other hand, is not convinced of this. He casts doubt on each of the theories presented in the reading.

The reading and the lecture are about communal online encyclopedias, which are unique because they can be revised and edited by anyone in the world. The author of the reading argues that they are less reliable than traditional printed encyclopedias. The professor casts doubt on each of the criticisms made by the author.

To begin with, the author notes that such encyclopedias are edited by individuals without academic credentials. He feels that this means their contributions are sometimes inaccurate or ill-informed. The professor challenges this point. He asserts that even traditional encyclopedias are not perfectly accurate. Moreover, he says that when errors appear in printed books, they remain in them for years, unlike error in online sources which can be quickly corrected.

Secondly, the author claims that vandals and hackers have opportunities to include false information in online encyclopedias, or to corrupt and vandalize correct information. He feels that unsuspecting users have no way of detecting when this has occurred. The professor casts doubt on these claims. He draws attention to the fact that the administrators of online encyclopedias have methods of protecting their content. He says that they have special editors who watch all changes and revert those which are obviously malicious.

Finally, the author points out that communal reference works tend to focus on topics which are trivial or unimportant. This can create a false impression of which topics are important and which are not. The lecturer, in contrast, says that because online encyclopedias have unlimited space they are free to cover a wide variety of topics. He argues that just because a considerable number of articles are written about popular topics, we should not assume that academic topics are not being represented.



First of all, the author points out that dinosaur fossils have been found in cold polar regions. It is noted that only animals that can maintain warm body temperatures, like endotherms, could have been active in such cold climates. The lecturer casts doubt on this claim. She observes that today's polar regions were much warmer during the time of the dinosaurs, and so non-endotherms could inhabit them. Moreover, she points out that such animals could have migrated or hibernated during months when the regions became cold.

Secondly, the author contends that the dinosaurs were endotherms because of the structure of their legs. The article points out that dinosaurs had legs underneath their bodies, just like all modern endotherms. On the other hand, the lecturer notes that the leg structure of dinosaurs served merely to support their massive weight. She contends that having legs under their bodies allowed the dinosaurs to evolve to very large sizes, which was advantageous in many ways.

Finally, the author makes a connection between endothermic animals and bone structure. The bones of dinosaurs contained bodies called Haversian canals, which helped them to grow to large sizes, which is a common characteristic of endotherms. The professor challenges the validity of this point. She notes that dinosaur bones also show evidence of growth rings. She says that these rings indicate that the dinosaurs grew in spurts, which is a characteristic of non-endotherms.



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Online Encyclopedias (from “Official Collection”)

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Buying a Franchise (from “Official Collection”)

The reading and the lecture are about the advantages and disadvantages of buying a franchise. The author of the reading believes that buying this kind of business can be quite advantageous. The professor casts doubt on this claim. She believes that a recent study calls this idea into question.

First of all, the author claims that first-time business owners often struggle to gain reliable access to the goods and services needed to run a business. It is noted that buying a franchise, however, eliminates this problem because the franchising company specifies which suppliers must to be used. The professor challenges the validity of this assertion. She notes that the approved suppliers tend to overcharge. She elaborates on this by noting that even if there are cheaper goods available, the franchise owner is forbidden from purchasing them.

Secondly, the author points out that owning a franchise can result in more affordable advertising and promotion. This is because buying a franchise means joining a well-established brand with a sophisticated marketing plan already in place. The professor, in contrast, points out that franchise owners are typically required to pay an amount equal to up to six percent of their total sales to the parent company for advertising services. She contends that the sort of advertising purchased by the franchise company results in less overall benefit to the franchise owners than what they would get if they paid to advertise their business directly.

Finally, the author observes that a franchise offers increased security. The article observes that many independent businesses fail during their first few years of operation, and that this can sometimes be avoided by starting a franchise business. The professor casts doubt on this assertion. She points out that buying a franchise is not the least-risky option for people who want to start a business. She points out that it is even less risky to purchase an existing business from an independent operator.



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Great Houses (from “Official Collection”)

The reading and the listening are about the mysterious “great houses” found by archaeologists in the Chaco Canyon area of New Mexico. The author presents three theories about the possible purposes of these structures, while the lecturer argues that each of the author’s theories is unfounded and that the true use of the houses is unknown.

First of all, the author says that the structures were used for residential purposes. It is noted that they are very similar to the “apartment buildings” located in nearby Taos, New Mexico, where people have been living for centuries. The professor casts doubt on this theory. She says that while the buildings may resemble such apartment buildings from the outside, their interiors do not. She points out that the great houses contain very few fireplaces, which would have been necessary if they had been inhabited by many families.

Secondly, the author mentions that the structures could have been used to store food. The article asserts that the Chaco people consumed great quantities of maize, which could have been stored in the houses for long periods of time without spoiling. On the other hand, the professor says that excavations of the sites have not turned up any signs of maize. She says that if the buildings had been used to store this crop, researchers would have found signs of either spilled maize or containers for maize.

Finally, the author states that the structures could have served as ceremonial centers. The author observes that archaeologists found a mound of broken pots near one of the houses, and that pots were used by people of the region during special occasions. The professor notes, in contrast, that the mound contained other materials as well, including sandstone and construction materials, which would not have been used in ceremonies. She feels that the mound was merely a trash heap left behind when the house was constructed.



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Smart Cars (from “Official Collection”)

The reading and the listening are both about smart cars, which are vehicles that are able to drive themselves. The author of the reading describes three benefits related to these cars. The professor casts doubt on each of the theories presented in the reading. He does not feel that the cars are as beneficial as the author assumes.

First of all, the author states that smart cars will save lives by preventing accidents. It is noted that the sensors and computer systems used in the smart cars are more efficient than human judgment when it comes to preventing accidents. The lecturer casts doubt on this assertion. He is of the opinion that smart cars will still get into accidents. Moreover, he believes that if smart car technology leads to denser traffic than before, certain types of accidents will be even worse than they currently are.

Secondly, the author claims that smart cars will lead to the end of traffic problems. The article says that this will result from the fact that smart cars can follow each other closely at higher speeds than regular cars. The lecturer challenges this theory. He states that if driving becomes more convenient, more people will opt to join in. He says that with an increased number of cars on the road, traffic congestion will actually increase.

Finally, the author points out that smart cars will reduce the cost of driving. As a result of the fact that smart cars are programmed to take very direct routes, owners will not need to spend as much money on repairs and replacement parts. The professor, on the other hand, points out that smart cars utilize a lot of expensive technology not implemented in regular cars. He says that repairing this sort of technology will be more costly than repairing the parts in a normal vehicle.



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Eco-Friendly Wood (from “TOEFL Quick Prep”)

The reading and the lecture are both about ecocertification of wood products, which is a way to show that they are environmentally friendly. The author of the reading believes that American companies will not adopt this practice. The lecturer casts doubts on the claims made in the article. She thinks that American wood companies will eventually certify their products.

First of all, the author points out that customers will likely ignore such a label. It is mentioned that many products are now given special labels, so shoppers no longer trust them. This point is challenged by the lecturer. She says customers actually do pay attention to claims when they are made by official agencies. Furthermore, she argues that Americans will be enthusiastic about products that are endorsed by a trustworthy organization.

Secondly, the author contends that it costs a lot to have wood inspected, so certified products will be more expensive. The article notes that American consumers are strongly motivated by price, and as a result will choose products that have not been certified. The lecturer rebuts this argument. She suggests that customers do not care too much about small differences in price. She elaborates on this by mentioning that certified products will only be about five percent more expensive, which will not affect the purchasing decisions of buyers.

Finally, the author states that certification only makes sense for companies that sell products outside of the United States. The article establishes that American firms sell most of their products domestically, and their customers are happy with their merchandise as it is. The professor, on the other hand, posits that American businesses should be afraid of foreign competitors. She puts forth the idea that foreign firms could flood into America and win customers by selling ecocertified wood to people who care about the environment.



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The Chevalier (from “TOEFL Quick Prep”)

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Wave Farms (from “Hackers Actual Test”)

The reading and the lecture are about wave farms, which some people think are an alternative to fossil fuels. The author of the reading believes that these facilities have many advantages. The lecturer casts doubts on the author's claims. He does not believe that they are particularly advantageous.

First of all, the author notes that wave farms are reliable sources of power because they utilize waves which are constant and predictable. As a result, it is possible to guess exactly how much energy they can produce. The lecturer disagrees with this assertion. He says that wave generators are not very reliable because they often experience technical problems because of the harsh environment they operate in. He points out that for this reason the amount of power they produce fluctuates wildly.

Secondly, in the article it is mentioned that wave farms do not harm the environment. It is pointed out that they do not burn fossil fuels, so no harmful gasses are emitted into the environment. This point is challenged in the lecture. The lecturer says that the convertors used in the stations contain damaging chemicals that can sometimes leak into the surrounding ocean. He asserts that these will have a very bad effect on marine organisms when this happens.

Finally, the author observes that wave farms do not affect the attractiveness of the surrounding area. It is mentioned that they float just near the surface of the ocean, so they cannot be spotted by local people. The lecturer, on the other hand, posits that they actually do clash with local scenery. He says that they are painted bright colors so they can be detected by ships, which means that tourists can also spot them from nearby beaches.



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The Anasazi (from “Hackers Actual Test”)

The reading and the lecture are both about the mysterious disappearance of the Anasazi people. The author argues that they abandoned their settlements due to a drought. The lecturer casts doubt on this belief. She does not believe that there is enough evidence to support this assertion.

First of all, the author notes that bones of Anasazi people indicate that they suffered from malnutrition. The author posits that this is a sign that there was not enough rainfall for them to grow enough crops to feed themselves. The lecturer challenges this claim. He points out poor nutrition was common among the Anasazi no matter how much food was grown. He notes that farmers gave most of their crops away to religious leaders so that they would perform ceremonies for them.

Secondly, it is mentioned in the reading that the Anasazi settlements were sealed up, so they must have intended to return to them after they were abandoned. This is exactly what they did during dry periods that occurred previously. This point is made doubtful by claims in the lecture. The lecturer observes that the dry period ended shortly after the Anasazi left the settlements, but they did not return. He says that if they had left because of a drought, they would have come back once it was over.

Finally, the author raises the point that the Anasazi people later ended up in areas with ample water supplies. This suggests that they were trying to escape drought conditions. The lecturer, on the other hand, points out that many of them moved to what is now Arizona, which is an area without much water and is not suitable for farming. He claims that if they were running from dry conditions, it is odd that they would move to a place which was even more arid.



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Trans Lunar Phenomena (from “Hackers Actual Test”)

The reading and the lecture are both about transient lunar phenomena (TLP), which are short color changes that are occasionally seen on the surface of the moon. The reading presents three possible explanations for this phenomenon, but the lecturer feels that none of these explanations are plausible.

To begin with, the author suggests that the TLP are caused by gas found beneath the moon's surface which is sometimes ejected into the atmosphere. It is argued that this theory is supported by the fact that TLPs are often seen near craters which the gas can escape from. The lecturer casts doubt on this claim. He says that it is just a coincidence that TLPs are seen near craters, which are the most common feature of the moon. He observes that a NASA probe which detected gas near a major crater only found a small amount of it.

Secondly, the author observes that the TLPs might just be bright clouds of dust floating above the surface of the moon. It is mentioned that this dust can reflect light and therefore cause TLPs. The lecturer, in contrast, says that dust clouds would have to be massive in order to be observed from Earth. However, there is no evidence of a large amount of dust on the moon.

Thirdly, the author posts that TLPs might be a product of solar radiation. The article notes that magnetic storms occurring on the sun release radiation which might illuminate certain sections of the lunar landscape. The lecturer challenges this assertion. He points out that the dates when TLPs have been observed do not match the dates of known solar flares. He observes that for the most part, there is no relationship between these two events.