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Rhetorical Precis

In the article “Op-Ed: We’re teaching kids to follow their dreams. Maybe teach them to be helpful instead”, Joel Stein stresses the difference between a figure who leads change rather than a figure who helps create change, that being someone who advocates and takes action is someone more helpful than one who is a leader of change. Stein develops his viewpoint using his son’s 4th grade class, where all the students had to choose a famous person to become in a “Living Wax Museum”. Through Stein’s observations, most of the students choose people that weren’t labeled as “problematic” or “evil”, but rather more “heroic”, even “virtuous”. He found this very infuriating because he found out that his son wanted to go as Nixon or Trump, “but was told that he had to pick a person who was admirable.” (Stein 4). This was even more angered when he saw a student dress up as Ghandi while also spreading false information about a man who wasn’t as heroic as textbooks say he was. Stein’s opinionful article reveals that exposing children to certain things will only prevent them to do greater things. His frustrated tone appeals to readers with interest in doing rather than leading.