

DISCUSSION ESSAY (DISCUSS BOTH SIDES/VIEWS)

Responsibility for Plastic Packaging

Some people think the manufacturers and shopping malls should sell fewer packaged products while others argue that people have the responsibility to buy products with less packaging.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

The issue of excessive packaging has sparked debate regarding the responsibility for its reduction. While some argue that corporations and retailers should lead by selling fewer packaged items, others contend that the onus lies on consumers to make conscious choices.

Advocates for reducing packaging assert that manufacturers and shopping malls have the most significant role in addressing this issue. For instance, manufacturers can enforce sustainable packaging practices by using biodegradable and recyclable materials, such as compostable plastics or cardboard. They can also employ innovative packaging designs that minimize materials while ensuring product safety. Relatedly, shopping malls can collaborate with manufacturers to establish refill stations, where customers can bring their own containers and refill products like detergents, spices, or personal care items, reducing the need for excessive packaging. By taking these initiatives, those who sell consumer products can effectively reduce waste and contribute to a more sustainable future.

On the other hand, proponents of consumer responsibility emphasize that individuals have the power to drive change through their purchasing decisions. Consumers should actively seek out products with minimal packaging, such as bulk foods, where items are sold in loose quantities, allowing customers to bring their own containers. They can also support businesses that offer alternatives to single-use packaging, such as stores that provide reusable bags or incentivize customers to employ reusable bags. These lifestyle changes may also involve actively participating in recycling programs and supporting initiatives that promote waste reduction, such as community composting or zero-waste campaigns. Truly dedicated individuals can even join local environmental groups or online communities to share tips and strategies.

In conclusion, the reduction of packaged products necessitates effort from primarily consumers. Through specific actions like seeking out minimal packaging options, and supporting businesses with sustainable

practices, consumers can collectively contribute to a healthier planet for future generations.

Athletes as Role Models

Some people believe that professional athletes serve as positive role models for young people, while others argue that their behavior both on and off the field has a negative influence.

Discuss both sides and give your opinion.

While some argue that athletes are positive role models, inspiring young individuals to pursue their dreams and excel, others contend that their behavior is harmful on the whole. In my opinion, despite the negatives, sports professionals are still generally positive role examples for younger people.

One legitimate criticism of athletes concerns incidences of aggressive behavior and substance abuse. These high-profile stories can have outsized influence on young and impressionable minds. Well-publicized scandals involving certain NFL players, for example, have highlighted the importance of addressing the anti-social behavior exhibited by athletes and its potential impact on fans. A fan who reads articles about athletes arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs or charged for domestic violence assaults may over time become desensitized as to the serious nature of such offenses. In rare instances, they may even intentionally or unconsciously emulate these actions.

However, a more compelling argument in favor of professional athletes serving as positive role models relates to their character. Athletes generally possess unwavering dedication and perseverance. For instance, Serena Williams, a tennis legend, showcases her relentless work ethic and determination to overcome barriers in a public setting, inspiring countless young athletes to push past obstacles and achieve greatness. Moreover, athletes often demonstrate the importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, and fair play. Kobe Bryant, a basketball icon, was renowned for his commitment to team morale and his ability to uplift his teammates in pressure-filled moments. His leadership qualities and dedication to the game have left an indelible mark on aspiring basketball

players and ordinary fans alike, encouraging them to embrace the values of collaboration and respect.

After considering both perspectives, I firmly believe that professional athletes do serve as positive role models for young people. Nonetheless, by providing specific examples of inspiring athletes and addressing any drawbacks, a balance between admiration and critical thinking can be maintained.

Low-Cost Airlines

The increasing availability of low-cost airlines now lets people travel around the world. Some feel this is a positive development while others think it is negative overall.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

The rise of low-cost airlines has made it possible for the public at large to travel abroad with relative ease. In my opinion, despite the advantages this creates for less affluent citizens, it is a net negative given the repercussions of the tourist industry to local nations.

One positive aspect of this development is the increased accessibility of travel. In the past, air travel was mainly reserved for the wealthy and the middle class, however, with the advent of low-cost airlines, even those on a more limited budget can afford to go on vacation domestically or to foreign countries. For example, a round-trip flight from London to Barcelona can now be purchased for as little as £20, making it possible for even students and young adults to explore new places. This equitable phenomenon is particularly valuable in less developed nations where in past generations only the truly wealthy could afford to travel regularly.

Nonetheless, the expansion of low-cost airlines has also led to issues of overcrowding and overtourism in certain destinations. For example, locales like Ha Long Bay in Vietnam and Boracay in the Philippines have struggled to cope with the influx of domestic and international tourists, leading to concerns about the impact on local communities and cultural heritage. Many of these communities now almost exclusively cater to tourism and there is less interest in older means of making a living, such as by producing a local handicraft or traditional garment. This has led to

calls for more sustainable tourism practices and greater regulation of the industry to ensure that it benefits and sustains local communities.

In conclusion, although increased accessibility is an equitable development, it has also contributed to issues of overcrowding and overtourism. It is important for the aviation industry and governments to collaborate to address these negative impacts while continuing to make travel available to a wider range of residents.

Prioritizing Healthcare

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of oil drilling operations in remote locations around the world. This has brought economic benefits to some countries, though it has also raised concerns about the environmental impact of these operations.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

There is ongoing debate about whether or not nations should drill for oil in remote locations. While some argue that it is necessary to meet our ever-increasing energy demands, I would side with those who contend that the potential environmental damage to local communities outweighs any economic benefits.

On the one hand, drilling for oil in remote locations can facilitate energy production. For example, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska is estimated to contain up to 12 billion barrels of oil, which could help to reduce America's dependence on foreign oil. Other nations have similar reserves that can meet pressing demands for the average person. The drilling operations in these remote locations will simultaneously create jobs and stimulate economic growth in the surrounding area. As economic conditions improve, energy needs will concomitantly rise and increased drilling can potentially create a cycle that benefits both locals and a given country at large.

On the other hand, drilling for oil in remote locations has significant environmental consequences. The process of extracting oil can lead to the release of greenhouse gases and other harmful pollutants into the atmosphere, contributing to climate change. For instance, the Canadian

oil sands, which are located in unpopulated areas of Alberta, are one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the world. Relatedly, drilling can have negative effects on the health and wellbeing of nearby communities, particularly indigenous populations. In the above-mentioned example, some of the oil has been extracted through the controversial practice of fracking which contaminates local water supplies where native population rates are high.

In conclusion, while drilling for oil in remote locations may provide temporary economic benefits, the long-term costs to the environment and local communities are too significant. Instead, governments should prioritize the development of sustainable energy sources that will help to ensure a cleaner, healthier future for all.

University Students and Main Subjects

Many university students want to learn about different subjects in addition to their main subjects. Others feel it is more important to give all their time and attention to studying for their qualification. Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Many university students are now inclined to divide their time between studying for their major and pursuing interests in unrelated subjects. In my opinion, it is crucial for undergraduates to learn about a wide range of disciplines in order to best prepare themselves for the future.

Those who support prioritizing one's major argue the importance of specialization. At university, there are a range of potential distractions related to social life and living on one's own. If a graduate wants to be successful in a future career, the most logical pathway is to prepare diligently in a one specialization. For instance, an undergraduate learning about chemical engineering will be a better potential candidate for well-paid positions if they have acquired a solid theoretical foundation and accumulated whatever practical experience is available in their courses. Any diversions that detract from this focus could hinder their early career progression.

However, it is in fact more valuable long-term to view learning as an interdisciplinary experience. Many graduates will change or at least alter

their professions as they begin working. Even those who remain in the same industry will benefit greatly from studying a variety of subjects. The above-mentioned engineer might be able to study about figure drawing outside their main courses and come up with more creative ideas that combine multiple subjects in their main work. Even if the other subjects are not directly applicable to work, at the minimum they are likely to feel they have become a more diverse and well-rounded individual on a personal level.

In conclusion, though time spent on one's university major can lead to an improved discrete skillset, there is far greater value in possessing a breadth of knowledge. This range of information will serve as the foundation for a potentially more creative and fulfilling career and personal life.

Early Language Learning

Some believe that students should begin learning a language very early in school while others think these subjects should be taught later.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Many have argued that the earlier students begin learning a language in school the better. Although this can pose challenges for schools, I am in complete agreement with this opinion.

Those against early foreign language courses contend it is not always practical. In many school systems, the cost of such courses can be prohibitive. More specifically, in more remote areas, teachers will often not have the ability to teach another language and it may be difficult to recruit foreign native language speakers. If the schools teach a foreign language anyway, then they will have to rely largely on textbooks and the classes are not likely to be as productive. This reality can create a situation where wealthier school districts receive a disproportionately superior education.

However, even when the conditions are not ideal, there is tremendous value in learning a language early relative to learning it later in life. Studies have shown that languages can be acquired far more easily early

in one's education. As a person gets older, the muscles in the mouth become more fixed making it more difficult to pronounce sounds from another language similar to a native speaker. Their brains are also less flexible and this is clearly evidenced in the considerably slower progress for adults when learning a new language. Attempting to acquire another language younger therefore has greater overall value for any given individual.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of early language acquisition justifies its inclusion in curricula at all schools. This educational reform should be a priority.

Newspapers and Other Media

Some think newspapers are the best method for reading the news while others think other media is better.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

In recent years, many have argued that the best way to read the news is no longer in newspapers. In my opinion, though there are sentimental reasons to prefer newspapers, newer forms of media are far superior.

Those who continue to value newspapers tend to be older individuals. They have typically maintained this habit for years or even decades. Over such a long period reading newspapers, it is logical that they will have developed an emotional attachment to the act of buying and reading a physical copy of the news. For example, The New York Times continues to publish and sell physical copies of their paper in select markets. The people buying these papers could save time and money by reading the same articles online, but might be attracted to the feel and memories surrounding physical newspapers.

However, new forms of media allow audiences a wide range of choices that enhance the overall experience. A user accessing a media website can not only read an article from the convenience of their phone or laptop, but also take advantage of features like automatically generated text-to-speech, videos, links to related content, the ability to share an article, and more. All these features are also complemented by the ability to select a diversity of news sources. Instead of reading a single news outlet that

might have a liberal or conservative bias, a discerning reader can seek out multiple viewpoints and find the news that is most trustworthy over time. In conclusion, despite the respect due to the history of journalism, there are now a wide array of better options online. Individuals should nonetheless be wary of less trustworthy sources.

Roads

As the number of cars increases, more money has to be spent on road systems. Some people think the government should pay for this. Others, however, think that drivers should cover the costs.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Some today have argued that the funding for road systems should be the responsibility of governments instead of individuals. In my opinion, although maintaining roads can be considered a public service, private motorists should pay in order to more generally benefit society.

Proponents of governments assuming road costs argue this is a basic service tax-payers expect. In all countries, working adults must pay a certain percentage of their monthly salary to the government. From these contributions, individuals justly feel entitled to a variety of public services ranging from police and fire departments to affordable hospitals and safe infrastructure. Roads are a key component in this contract as most people drive in order to go to work, see friends, and take holidays. The government will itself benefit not only from fulfilling this mandate but also in terms of the financial byproduct of consumers being outside actively contributing to a market economy.

However, forcing drivers to pay these costs will greatly discourage private automobile ownership. This disincentive is crucial today because cities are overcrowded and private vehicles contribute to rising pollution levels. In large cities such as New York City and Tokyo, it is nearly impossible to traverse the city by automobile at peak rush hours. If there were fewer cars on the road, then people could travel more freely on bicycles, on foot, and using public transportation. Additionally, private vehicles are inefficient. Other forms of travel leave relatively small carbon footprints but cars, often carrying only one or two passengers, use more

petrol than would normally be required to transport people. Replace cars with more efficient transport options and there would be a marked decrease in the consumption of fossil fuels.

In conclusion, despite the strong argument that tax-payers deserve public infrastructure such as roads, it is more important to discourage individuals from purchasing cars. In the long-term, this will greatly benefit cities and the world as a whole.

Responsibilities

Some people believe that children of all ages should have extra responsibilities (for example, helping at home or at work). Others believe that, outside of school, children should be free to enjoy their lives.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many today have argued for the importance of children having greater responsibility in the home. I am generally in agreement with this position, though it should naturally not be taken to extremes.

Critics of such an approach maintain that it can overburden young children. In many societies around the world today, children are under immense pressure at school to perform well academically. In many Asian countries, for example, young children must study at school until the late afternoon, have dinner, and then take additional classes before doing their homework each night. If these students were also tasked with cleaning the house or washing their own clothes, they simply would not have enough time to complete all their responsibilities and rest for the next day.

However, increased responsibility encourages greater maturity and self-reliance. A child who must ensure their room is clean and takes part in either cooking or cleaning up afterwards better understands the importance of time management and how to run a household. In contrast, some parents are overly protective of their children and do not instill traits related to independence. If a child grows up and attends university without a variety of life skills or the maturity that comes from looking

after themselves, then they will likely struggle to adjust and may be viewed as childish by their peers.

In conclusion, though there must be logical limits to the amount of work that children should do in the home, it is an advisable approach overall to increase a child's sense of responsibility. The benefits later in life justify any potential fatigue.

Preventing Crime

Some people believe more actions can be taken to prevent crime, while others think that little can be done.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Many concerned parties today feel that crime has already been reduced as much as is realistically possible. While I agree this may be true in nations where security is prioritized over privacy rights, there is still tremendous progress that can be made globally.

Those who argue crime no longer needs addressing point to technological innovations. This situation is most apparent in authoritarian nations. Security surveillance can include the use of street cameras, digital tracking, and eavesdropping on private communications. For instance, in South Korea the crime rate in most urban areas is negligible and the average person reports little anxiety about possible criminality, in contrast to periods in the past when there were more instances of robbery, assault, theft, pickpocketing, and so on. These technological shifts have greatly aided law enforcement in prosecuting criminals thereby also increasing the deterrence of potential offences.

However, crime still exists and can be countered by addressing the deeper, societal roots. The main cause of all crime is poverty. When individuals earn a wage sufficient to maintain a decent standard of living, the entire motive for most crimes disappears. The evidence for this is that in wealthy countries where there is a relatively even distribution of wealth, the crime rates are low and the police do not require draconian punishment or surveillance techniques. Beyond income, it is also possible to invest in improving mental health. Many people today spend too much time online and are vulnerable to extremist views. A still significant

proportion of crimes could be eliminated by encouraging people to spend more time outdoors in their community.

In conclusion, though technology has reduced certain kinds of criminality greatly, it is still possible to lower crime rates by embracing a holistic, societal approach. The complete eradication of crime is likely impossible and therefore there will always be a need to make progress.

Patriotism and War

Some argue that patriotism is the primary cause of wars globally. Others feel that it serves to prevent less ethical politicians from running a country and starting wars.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Many feel that patriotic feelings do more to foment, rather than prevent, conflicts and potential wars. In my opinion, though patriotism can be a positive force in a nation, it is more likely to serve as the justification for armed conflict.

Those who value the benefits of patriotism argue that it is a tool to oppose international interventions. This is most often the case in countries where it is possible for citizens to voice their opinions publicly. A standout example of this would be in the United States as the government is often engaged in unpopular conflicts abroad such as the wars in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Many critics make the argument that the US was originally isolationist and should not now interfere in the affairs of other countries. This appeal to the patriotic roots of the country is persuasive. However, it is more common for politicians to encourage nationalistic feelings to justify foreign wars. There are examples of this from both the modern era and past historical epochs. For instance, in Medieval Europe there were frequent wars of aggression between France, England, and Spain. The rulers of these countries used both religious and ethnic or nationalistic justifications for either expansion or defensive measures. Over time, patriotism came to be considered a method to distract residents from the domestic situation and motivate them towards a common goal.

In conclusion, despite the legitimate potential advantages of patriotism within a country, I feel that it is more likely to serve as a catalyst for international conflict. In fact, individuals have very little overall impact on whether or not their country enters a war.

Urban Infrastructure

Some believe that traffic problems in cities can best be resolved by investing in urban infrastructure while others feel there are superior solutions.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Many policymakers feel that the optimal counter to traffic issues in urban areas is increased funding for infrastructure. In my opinion, though this funding may have a marginal effect, there are other, potentially more impactful, regulations.

Supporters of investment in infrastructure contend it is a direct and pragmatic solution. As cities become larger, they face inevitable traffic problems caused by overcrowding and deteriorating roads. Improving the existing infrastructure can include repaving these roads to reduce accidents and slow driving, building additional public transportation lines for subways, creating biking lanes, widening streets, constructing overpasses, and so on. Combined, the theoretical result of these changes will be an alleviation of current strain on transport systems. However, in practice, in large cities such as New York City, rarely produce any actual difference in traffic conditions as they cannot keep pace with growing populations.

Instead, governments must consider more drastic policies. The first such reform would be to ban or severely limit the use of private vehicles. A good example of this would be in certain European cities that have enacted single day bans or raised taxes on automobile purchases. Since cars occupy the majority of the space on roads, while often only transporting one or two individuals, they are the least efficient and slowest modes of travel. Secondly, governments can subtly shift housing policies to engender dramatic effects. Instead of allowing cities to build upwards, through skyscrapers and tall apartment buildings, they can

limit the number of floors on buildings to encourage a more horizontal cityscape. The result of this would be to spread out workplaces and lower congestion levels generally.

In conclusion, there is little doubt that improved infrastructure could alleviate traffic congestion in cities to an extent; however, the best remedy is to pass laws concerning private vehicles and housing. Governments should implement these long-term policies over short-term fixes.

Car-Free Days

Some people believe that car-free days are effective ways to reduce air pollution. However, others argue that there are other ways that are more effective.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many today feel that designated car-free days are the optimal method to reduce rising levels of air pollution. In my opinion, despite other viable options, car-free days would be the best remedy.

Critics of this policy argue that governments could instead create laws related to industrial production. Except for automobiles, the main causes of air pollution are resource mining, consumer electronics manufacturing, and textile fabrication. If governments legislated strict controls on production methods, there would be a concomitant decline in air pollution figures. For instance, in many European nations, companies have limited carbon emissions thresholds they can utilize in production and exceeding these numbers results in heavy fines and other penalties. This forward-looking solution is also appealing since it would encompass the entire calendar year, whereas car-free days are more limited in their scope.

However, car-free days would have greater impact due to their far-reaching implications. Firstly, banning cars would massively reduce air pollution figures since cars contribute more harmful gases into the atmosphere than any single industry. Secondly, banning cars would force motorists to find alternative modes of transportation that might then become habits. A person who cannot drive to work once a week, may

consider working at home or utilizing public transport. If they find these options more efficient, then they may willingly abandon using their car on other days. Over time, this could begin to shift mindsets in society and individuals might become less obsessed with car ownership as a symbol of wealth and success and start prioritizing efficiency and a cleaner environment.

In conclusion, though regulation of particular industries would also aid in the reduction of air pollution, the banning of automobiles on certain days is the single best solution. Governments should consider implementing and expanding existing policies that prohibit private vehicles.

Economic Progress

Many governments think that economic progress is their most important goal. Some people, however, think that other types of progress are equally important for a country.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Many today have made the argument that governments are overly focused on economic development to the detriment of more valuable areas of progress. In my opinion, though economic progress is often the catalyst for different forms of growth, the other areas are at least equally as important.

Supporters of economic progress point out its importance for individuals and societies generally. A thriving economy allows the average citizen to increase their quality of life in various ways. Individuals who are provided good jobs and lucrative opportunities are able to afford better healthcare, own a home potentially, purchase luxuries, and take holidays. In the aggregate, all these minor additions combine to ground a satisfied and happy life, though they are naturally not absolute guarantees. The clearest evidence of the value of this approach is that voters in democratic nations like the United States typically base their decisions primarily on economic factors.

However, economics is the basis for other areas of progress. This relates to education, standards of living, infrastructure, and, most importantly in the 21st century, the environment. In past centuries, individuals could be forgiven for considering economics to be the most important duty of governments. Today, the possibility that the Earth will face cataclysmic changes in the next century has dramatically shifted that calculus. Most researchers agree that overpopulation and the manufacturing and consumption of consumer goods are greatly exacerbating climate change and may lead to seismic disruptions for all life on Earth. Therefore, simply prioritizing the economic causes of a degrading environment would be short-sighted.

In conclusion, though economics is the basic foundation of modern civil societies, governments today should not neglect equally as crucial aspects such as the environment. The economy is means for enacting other reforms, not an end in itself.

Taxing Industries

Some people believe that increasing tax on various industries will reduce pollution whereas others believe that there are better alternative ways.

Discuss both the view and give your opinion.

Many today argue that the environment can be best protected by heavily taxing various industries. In my opinion, though this has worked in certain cases, taxation is not as effective as more positive reforms.

The case for taxing industry is that it will discourage the worst practices of companies. This has been evidenced in the European Union where enterprises are taxed at higher rates, oftentimes depending on their relative carbon footprints. The result is that businesses are incentivized to adopt cleaner energy practices. The companies that are greener can therefore enjoy both the benefits of reduced taxes and the public opinion boost concomitant with eco-friendly initiatives. The caveat to this approach is that many multinationals are able to simply move their production facilities and waste to nearby nations.

Moreover, there are more positive policies that can encourage, rather than discourage, the corporate world. Taxation is a fundamentally reactive measure that supposes companies would not wish to inherently protect the planet. A more proactive approach would involve funding green industries. For example, companies such as Tesla have received billions in government subsidies to build stability for a green industry. Over time, more companies will be able to establish themselves and turn profits and there will be less of a need to use taxes to discourage industries from polluting. This solution will be longer lasting as it rewards good behavior instead of punishing bad behavior.

In conclusion, despite taxing industries having an immediate effect, a greater impact would result from subsidies for various companies. Governments should pursue this more positive strategy.

Money for Computers or Teachers

Some believe that money for education should mainly be spent on better computers while others believe it would be better spent on teachers.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many feel that funding allocated for education should be primarily spent on computers rather than paying the teaching staff higher salaries. In my opinion, though technology is important today, teachers are still considerably more valuable and deserving of prioritization.

Proponents argue increased funding for computer technology reflects shifts in modern society. Expertise with computers is becoming essential not only for one's daily life but also most careers. At the moment, schools focus on a wide range of subjects that may not have any direct applicability later in a student's life such as history, biology, physics, literature, art, and so on. It is logical that focusing more on a useful area such as new computers will maximize funding for schools. However, this thinking neglects the key finding in numerous studies that a wide base of knowledge is more important than early specialization.

Moreover, teachers can potentially be a crucial influence on their pupils. Most adults are grateful to at least one teacher who serves as a lifelong

role model. This is because students can connect with a teacher emotionally and intellectually. For example, a teacher may introduce and elucidate a number of great thinkers and writers that later shape a student's political or moral philosophy. By providing greater funding for teachers, this simply ensures that more qualified teachers will apply for jobs. Additionally, teachers who are passionate about their work, and are underpaid at the moment, are likely to feel more motivated and appreciated with higher salaries.

In conclusion, those who argue in favor of computers are short-sighted as teachers have greater overall impact. Naturally, it is more difficult to measure and study the value of quality teachers and provide definitive evidence for this viewpoint.

Jobs and Studying Abroad

In an era of globalization, some people think that studying abroad is the best way to attain a well-paid job while others believe other options are better.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Some today would argue that the rise of globalization necessitates studying abroad if an individual desires a stable career path. In my opinion, though this is an ideal route to success, there are superior methods.

Those who argue in favor of studying abroad make the contention that it allows a person to network and understand the world better. The majority of students who study in other countries are leaving less developed nations to study in more affluent countries. When studying abroad, not only will they be exposed to other cultures and ways of living, but they are also likely to make key connections that can help them in the future. After graduation, they can rely on their network when applying for jobs, starting businesses, or simply seeking advice. Without these advantages, a person will have a more difficult time attaining a well-paying job.

However, the surest pathway to success is to gain experience in any given profession, regardless of the location. A person who is studying and

working abroad faces roughly the same obstacles when applying for jobs. If they remain in their country of origin, they will not only understand the local market better but also possess inherent advantages in terms of language, culture, and family support. Many of the most successful entrepreneurs in the world and highly-regarded executives studied and work in their native country. For instance, in Vietnam there are numerous start-up businesses that identify local needs and work to meet demand, oftentimes without the benefit of an education abroad or even an advanced university degree.

In conclusion, most individuals studying abroad are more likely to succeed because of other factors and therefore most individuals should pursue different means of securing stable employment in today's volatile employment market. Governments should naturally support individuals in these matters.

Professionals

Some people believe that professionals, such as doctors and engineers, should be required to work in the country where they did their training. Others believe they should be free to work in another country if they wish.

Discuss views and give your own opinion.

Certain groups today have argued that skilled professionals should be obliged to work where they did their initial training, while others feel they are owed the right to work anywhere. In my opinion, assuming that the qualifications translate, all individuals ought to have the freedom to choose their country of occupation.

Those who oppose this practice contend that professionals owe a debt of gratitude to the location of their training. Qualified professionals ranging from medical practitioners and engineers to scientists and teachers at some point likely relied deeply on governmental and educational resources in their local area. It is therefore logical that these individuals should remain at least in the same country and contribute their skills to bettering society as a whole. For instance, a doctor who has benefited

from quality schools and government aid in the United States can justifiably be asked to help their fellow citizens and train future doctors. However, the right to choose freely where one works and lives is paramount. Since many professionals will likely end up remaining where they did their training, this is rarely a pressing problem in most nations. Given that reality, workers should not be restricted in their movement and choice of living environment. When moving to another locale, they will likely have to ensure their standardization and certification are valid and learn the intricacies of working in another nation. However, these are simply individual impediments and should not be used as definitive counter-arguments. Preventing individuals from working in other countries would also considerably impair the sharing of expertise and culture across international borders.

In conclusion, though there are certain standards that must be reached, all working professionals should be free to work abroad. This policy is largely already in place for most occupations.

Before and After School

Some people believe that the experiences children have before they go to school will have the greatest effect on their future life. Others argue that experiences gained when they are teenagers have a bigger influence.

Discuss both views and give your own opinions.

Many would argue that experiences with the greatest impact occur before one becomes a teenager. In my opinion, the most pivotal stages of development in fact take place during one's teenage years.

The argument for the primacy of childhood experiences is supported by years of psychological research. In the early 20th century, researchers such as Jean Piaget began to analyze and perform experiments on young children in order to verify theories about how the human mind develops.

Over the last century, these studies have evolved and it is now commonly accepted in the field of psychology that very early experiences definitively shape one's later personality and identity. This is particularly the case when a child undergoes trauma such as abuse or neglect at home. These children are then more likely to have mental health disorders later in life and suffer generally from low self-esteem.

However, decisions made as a teenager are more directly impactful on the future. The arguments made above are compelling but also difficult to verify beyond the purely theoretical. The choices a teenager makes have tangible effects. Most teenagers begin to settle into distinct social groups that will help inform their future identity, take up potentially lasting hobbies, choose the sports they will play later in life, and may even decide on a future career. The experiences a teenager gains through these activities will in turn allow them to shift their focus in life, such as by pursuing a scientific rather than artistic field in higher education.

In conclusion, despite the research showing the impact of childhood development, there are more important practical life choices made as a late adolescent. Therefore, it is key that teenagers are supported fully by both parents and teachers.

Value of Old Age and Youth

In some places, old age is valued, while in other cultures youth is considered more important.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

In certain nations, the interests of elderly people are prioritized over younger generations. In my opinion, although young people are important for economic reasons, valuing an older population is a revealing commitment to human dignity.

Those who value the youth in a nation argue they form a country's economic base. There is little doubt that the majority of all workforces globally are comprised of young adults and middle-aged citizens. The average working age in nearly all industries is around 30. Young people have the energy, passion, and motivation to work hard and achieve not only for the good of society but also to establish a higher standard of living for themselves and their families. It is therefore logical that governments should ensure younger generations have ample access to education and the resources needed to become contributing members of society. They will contribute the most in all likelihood.

However, human progress is about more than simply utilitarian benefits. In the past, it might have been necessary for human civilization to cruelly neglect older populations when they were fighting wars and resources were scarce. That is no longer the situation. Most countries, even developing ones, can now afford to provide healthcare for all citizens and some degree of retirement support. By undertaking these kindnesses, humans distinguish themselves clearly from their basest and most animalistic instincts. This can be understood as the surest sign that humanity is an evolved species culturally, socially, and emotionally and trumps any materialistic concerns related to growing already mature economies.

In conclusion, though there are utilitarian reasons to support youth movements, it is more important and principled to value older people. This is already done in some cultures but should be more widespread.

Water

Some people think that the government should strictly control the supply of fresh water, as it is a limited resource, while others it should not be regulated.

Discuss both sides and give your opinion.

Many believe that it is crucial for governments to oversee public supplies of fresh water. In my opinion, this is an advisable strategy though there are natural risks that must be taken into consideration.

The most significant drawbacks to this proposal are the possibilities of government malfeasance and incompetence. Governments are notoriously bureaucratic organizations that often waste time and money while not greatly furthering the interests of the general public. A pertinent example of this would be the lengthy litigation battles concerning the cleanup of polluted reservoirs in many democratic nations. By the time any progress is made, the harm for some residents may already be irreversible. There is the chance that the government is corrupt. It is common for both elected and unelected officials to be vulnerable to bribery that results in prioritizing corporate and private interests above average citizens.

Nonetheless, government control of fresh water supplies is the best guarantee of public safety. Today, in many arid nations, such as those near Sub-Saharan Africa, finding fresh water is a massive challenge. Conflicts over limited water resources often contribute to political instability. In an ideal world, a just government could ensure water is equally and fairly distributed. Moreover, there are potential safety concerns. Water can easily be contaminated by industrial factors including rainwater pollution, landfill seepage, and new procedures like fracking. If governments regulate water with disinterested autonomy, they will be able to protect the general public from the excesses of corporate recklessness.

In conclusion, despite the potential that governments will poorly manage water supplies, they are still the best protectors of public health and safety. This is why the supervision of water authorities is also key.

Advertising to Children

In some countries, there has been an increase in the number of advertisements which try to persuade children to buy snacks, toys, and other goods. Parents often claim that these ads are unfair.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Some are of the opinion that it is unethical to advertise to children. In my opinion, although at certain ages these advertisements should be permitted, in general children are too vulnerable a segment of the population.

Those who argue in favor of advertising to children point out it is not necessarily unfair. There are situations when even these proponents would concede advertising is exploitive, such as when there are commercials for cereals with high sugar content during cartoon shows. However, this is only a single instance. Many children, especially as they get older, are capable of thinking rationally, controlling their need for instant gratification, and would therefore like to be informed about new products they are interested in. If a child who is 10 years old sees an advertisement for a water park or sporting event, they might convince their parents to enjoy a fun, outdoors activity.

Nonetheless, most children are negatively impacted by advertisements as they lack self-control. Adults are more capable of inhibiting their desires while children are not experienced enough and their cognitive development does not allow for higher-order reasoning. For instance, if a young child sees an advertisement for alcohol or a violent videogame, there is a strong likelihood they will want to try it. Even if they do not actually get an opportunity to use an age-inappropriate product, the appeal of these products has already been deeply implanted. Recent

research supports the contention that habits and impressions formed in early childhood are harder to leave behind later in life.

In conclusion, despite the feasibility of certain advertisements for older children, most marketing directed at impressionable children should be banned. This will be a difficult process to manage but many countries have undertaken it already.

Working Life and Job Security

Some people say that individuals should change jobs during their working life often while others believe that doing the same job has advantages to individuals, companies, and society.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Many are of the opinion that it is preferable for individuals, corporations and society more generally for workers to remain in the same position long-term. Although such a contention has transparent benefits, I am largely in disagreement.

Those who argue against employment mobility point out how it can facilitate consistent progress for all parties involved. Firstly, companies are the most likely to profit since they will not have to hire and train new employees and will be able to cultivate a positive company ethos. As companies flourish, it necessarily follows that individuals will be able to gain promotions and raises. This will enable a higher standard of living. Finally, society itself will benefit as the private and public world can achieve a balanced system of mutual benefits. There is then less likelihood of unemployment and civil unrest.

However, I would argue the opportunities that individuals may miss by not changing jobs are more significant. A worker who is unhappy in their job has the power to improve the situation. For instance, if a person is under-utilized and underpaid in their current position, they could apply for a new job or move to a new sector. If the move is successful, they will not regret their decision and if not they can always apply for another job. In the aggregate, citizens finding more satisfying jobs and taking full advantage of their latent abilities will lead to a happier society. This will in turn grow the economy and corporations are likely to be more productive with an engaged workforce.

In conclusion, the tangible impact of remaining in a single job does not outweigh the potential gain for individuals, and society by extension, when seeking a varied career path. There are exceptions to this but most workers should be willing to switch jobs when possible.

High School Students

Many people argue that in order to improve educational quality, high school students should be encouraged to question and offer criticisms on their teachers. Others think this will lead to a loss of respect and discipline in the classroom.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Some today contend that high school students should have greater latitude to critique and question their teachers, despite the risks this presents for classroom management. I am strongly in agreement as this enables the ideal classroom environment.

Critics of this shift in mentality point out that the teacher position requires respect. A teacher who is consistently being interrupted by students will not be able to lecture and assign and mark homework well.

Many students might exploit a rule that encourages questions in order to intentionally derail lessons and undermine the teacher. There is also the possibility that the negative attitude of some students will create general unrest that is not conducive to learning. However, I would argue that the appearance of respect, when in reality most students question their teachers in private, holds little actual value beyond preserving unwarranted pride.

Moreover, the free discussion of ideas is essential to the best learning. Students who are sitting quietly and feigning interest in class are likely to become less motivated. On the other hand, if a class is studying a work of literature or an event in history, students will engage more fully in lessons given the opportunity to ask questions. By asking questions, even if these queries are loosely defined as criticisms of what is being taught, they will suddenly have a reason to learn and the lesson will become more memorable for all students. The questions might also lead the class to novel insights as long as the teacher is confident enough to embark on collaborative explorations.

In conclusion, although certain educational institutions fear that questions may undermine teachers, they in fact are the foundation of a positive learning environment. Schools should embrace academic rigor in all its forms.

Change

Some people prefer to spend their lives doing the same things and avoiding change. Others, however, think that change is always good. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Many people feel that change should be embraced without qualification while others believe it is better to avoid new situations. In my opinion, though change can be positive in certain contexts, it should not be pursued as valuable in itself.

Those in favor of change argue it is nearly always positive. Examples of good changes might include moving to a new city, starting a new job, finding a new life companion, or even something as simple as getting a pet. Each of these decisions is a means of addressing a desire or feeling of dissatisfaction. One change that has become prevalent in recent decades relates to nutrition and exercise. Such lifestyle changes are based on research that has definitively shown the importance of a healthy diet and identified foods low in certain kinds of fats and carbohydrates. Combined with weekly exercise, the results are superior fitness and improved longevity.

However, change is, more often than not, a means of disregarding one's responsibilities. Many individuals change jobs or leave relationships simply because they feel they have lost their passion. This effort to re-energize is typically unsuccessful because outward changes do little to alleviate internal problems. Therefore, in the majority of cases, change is either an excuse to justify selfish behavior or a temporary and superficial solution. The best-known example of this would be the classic 'mid-life crisis' that particularly affects men as they age and decide their life is not fulfilling their most basic desires. Ultimately, most people would be better served by focusing on improving their current situation rather than seeking transitory and exaggerated new experiences.

In conclusion, change should not be sought as a means of escaping one's primary duties. Change should be an organic process and it is therefore advisable individuals do not pursue it as a goal generally.

Formal School Age

Some people think that children should begin their formal education at a very early age. Others think they should begin after 7 years of age.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many feel that children ought to commence formal schooling from a very young age while others feel classes should start after the age of 7. In my opinion, though there are social benefits to early schooling, many of these

can be replicated outside the classroom and there are emotional advantages to attending school later.

There are legitimate reasons for young children to enter school related to socializing. This can be best illustrated by the case of home-schooled children who often have underdeveloped social skills that can persist into adulthood. In contrast, children who are active members of a social group from a young age are far more likely to develop outgoing, positive ways of engaging with others. As they progress through normal childhood developmental stages and become less egocentric, the presence of other children, and teachers to some extent, has enormous benefits. However, parents can reproduce these advantages by ensuring their children have time to socialize with neighborhood friends.

Furthermore, entering school after the age of 7 can serve as a long-term boon for emotional health. When students begin formal schooling, they necessarily feel stressed not only from competition with other children but also due to the burden of homework and grades. If children remain home longer, they will form stronger familial bonds that will encourage healthy relationships later in life. Research has shown that the early years are essential in dictating how a child will develop interpersonally. A child who received adequate love and attention is considerably more likely to feel secure and establish healthy relationships with friends and family in adulthood. Academics can always be strengthened later but this is not always true for unseen emotional work.

In conclusion, despite the social benefits of schooling for young children, the emotional ramifications of remaining home in a supportive environment are more important. School administrators should consider this question carefully.

Moving

Some people are happy to stay in the same area for their whole life, while others prefer living in many different places.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Some individuals frequently move to new places to live and others would rather remain in one general area. In my opinion, there can be value in moving, however, it is on the whole more advantageous to integrate with a single community.

The benefits gained from moving relate to lifestyle. A person who lives in the same town their entire life is likely to have a similar circle of friends, take part in hobbies with limited variation, and not come in contact with diverse points of view. However, the person who moves to another part

of their country or travels abroad for an extended period, will broaden their horizons. For instance, a worker from the United States who spends a year living in an Asian nation is likely to learn basic competency in a new language, develop an appreciation for an authentic cuisine, and form meaningful bonds with locals.

Nonetheless, by remaining in one place, an individual can best impact their community. A person who moves from community to community will not be able to form as many deep connections and much of their energy will be spent moving and acclimating to a new region. In contrast, a person who lives in the same town or city their whole life will have a wide circle of friends and not need to spend time learning how to get around, speak a new language, or meet new friends. The time and energy saved can then be directed towards a number of pursuits that benefit their neighborhood. For instance, they might decide to invest time in renovating their house or organizing local litter collection campaigns, without having to sacrifice much time for friends, family, and work.

In conclusion, despite the broadening advantages of moving often, there is more value in having a substantial effect on one's local area. Travel and moving often disguise an inability to focus on one's own life and surroundings.

Animals

Many believe that it is important to protect all wild animals, while others think that it is important to protect some, not all of them.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Some have suggested that protection of wild animals should be selective. In my opinion, humanity has responsibility for all wild animals, though it is occasionally justified to divert resources towards more valuable species.

Those in favor of safeguarding certain wild animals argue the circumstantial factors. These factors can range from the threat the specific animals face to the value of the animal itself. For instance, tigers are an endangered wild animal and require intensive conservation efforts compared with animals such as rats and pigeons, which have adapted skillfully to urban environments. Most would admit that there is little logic in providing equal support to species in different circumstances. A more extreme critic could add that some animals are more deserving of preservation. The tiger, to continue the previous example, is greatly valued for its elegance. Other animals, such as bees, are valuable not for their beauty but their usefulness to humanity.

However, all animals should be protected as humanity has been the catalyst for their endangerment. Before the rapid industrialization and surging populations of the last several hundred years, humans and animals lived on relatively equal terms and shared the Earth. Since human development has outpaced nature and now threatens the habitats of countless species, it is a duty for mankind to enact safeguards for all animals. Without such forward-looking protections, there is likely to be a “domino effect” as species die out and impair fragile ecosystems globally. Therefore even if an animal is not on the verge of extinction, it might be important to maintain their population levels so as to not start a cycle of irreversible harms.

In conclusion, humans should endeavor to protect as many animals as possible although there are exceptional cases where some species may be prioritized. Governments and individuals should collaborate to ensure wild animals are not unduly threatened by human progress.

Grades and Testing

Some people think that schools should not test and grade students. Others think that grades are important.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Many believe that schools should test and grade students, while others feel these stressful evaluations can be counter-productive. In my opinion, although testing can be useful, schools could be improved if there were no grades and students could learn with less pressure.

On the one hand, standardized testing allows students to measure their progress. Students and teachers are both able to utilize grades to understand if a student is excelling or struggling in any given subject. For example, in most high schools, students take a test before being placed into a mathematics course. If they excel at math, they will be placed in an advanced class and if their math skills are weaker, they will receive the support they need at a lower level. Over time and through repeated testing, students can move up or down levels and receive relevant practice and individualized learning. This is the basis of most educational systems and facilitates the practical organization of levels.

On the other hand, schools with reduced focus on grades encourage healthier growth. This approach is common in certain progressive European nations like Finland and Norway, which are famous for their de-emphasis on grades. Schools in Finland attempt to foster a positive learning environment where students feel free to make mistakes, play, and develop a lifelong passion for learning. With less anxiety and less of a

burden to excel, students can focus on what they care about most and not become overly obsessed with gaining the esteem of their teachers and parents. The result is that Finland has consistently ranked as one of the strongest school systems internationally.

In conclusion, although grades are important for categorization, their elimination would allow students to learn better and flourish. Where possible, schools should seek to focus more on learning and less on testing.

Newspapers & Learning

Some people think that newspapers are the best way to learn about current events. However, others believe that they can learn news better through other media.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Many are of the view that news is best received through traditional newspapers while others feel that more modern media is preferable. In my opinion, despite the better habits engendered by reading the newspaper, it is impossible to argue convincingly against the convenience of newer mediums.

On the one hand, reading the newspaper allows for a healthy, distraction-free environment. This relates to both the content and the presentation of newspapers. Newspapers undergo rigorous editing and articles are necessarily published more slowly, allowing for better writing and fewer sensationalist headlines. An individual reading the newspaper can be compared to someone eating healthy foods or doing exercise. Similarly, newspapers are not vulnerable to the wide array of potential distractions on digital devices. There is less chance a newspaper reader will be distracted by social media or their personal communications.

On the other hand, there are a wide variety of functions only provided by more recent forms of media. Newspapers are primarily based on text, with images adding slight variety. In contrast, online media enables an individual to watch videos, listen to audio, cross-reference sources, consult primary sources, and generally take full advantage of the digital world. For example, a person who reads an article about a politician's remarks can then check for the video in order to hear their words in context and later visit a site such as Twitter to analyze reactions from the general public, journalists, experts, and the politician. This information can then be easily shared through online messaging services or social media.

In conclusion, there are definite advantages to non-digital news sources, however, these are overshadowed by the versatility of modern media. It is the duty of individuals to ensure they enjoy the positives without the drawbacks of spending too much time online.

Government Support for Artists

Some people think that governments should give financial support to creative artists such as painters and musicians. Others believe that artists should be funded by alternative sources.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many believe that artists are entitled to federal financial assistance, while others feel that they should seek different sources of revenue. In my opinion, in certain cases government aid is justified but for the majority, supplying their own income is a catalyst to create quality artwork.

Proponents of this policy argue that it can free artists to be more creative. If an artist is concerned about paying their rent and buying groceries, they will have less time and energy to dedicate to their artwork. Even more importantly, financial considerations will influence their work. Many painters, writers, and musicians are more likely to produce commercially viable artworks rather than artistically honest ones. There have been numerous examples in the past, such as during the Renaissance when painters, sculptors and architects received patronage from the government or wealthy citizens and artistic expression flourished. However, these instances are distant exceptions and most artists now operate in commercial fields.

The main reason this reform is unnecessary is that artists derive benefits from independence. An artist who must sell his or her artworks is motivated to strive for greater works. For example, an artist may begin creating specialized artworks and fail to find an audience. They might then modify their approach and still maintain a high degree of artistic integrity. This interplay with market forces can result in a better product. Noteworthy examples of this include the boom of the film industry in the twentieth century, the rise of stand-up comedians recently, and great works of literature that find large audiences such as the Harry Potter franchise.

In conclusion, despite notable instances of the success of government assistance, artists benefit from self-reliance. This will of course require them to carefully balance artistic and commercial considerations.

Shops

There is little difference in the shops now operating in various nations. Some people think this is positive development, while others believe it is negative.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many people believe that increasing ubiquity in terms of the selection of products in shops is a positive trend. In my opinion, this is advantageous for convenience, however its wider implications make it a negative overall.

On the positive side, this development guarantees a consistent customer experience. An individual who is traveling abroad, for example, can go into most major convenience stores and find the same basic necessities they would expect in their home country. The products themselves are also more consistent. Since they are manufactured and distributed globally, food products have the same safety standards and tastes and household items are similarly likely to be safe and effective. In contrast, a shop with completely different products, many of which may have been produced locally, complicates the decision-making process for shoppers. Nonetheless, there is also the risk that corporations will become powerful monopolies. The first implication of this would be that many local shops are likely to go out of business. The local owners of such shops will then be forced to find less desirable work. Replicated globally, this means that profits that were previously directed towards millions of local shop owners are now being funneled to a select number of companies and their shareholders. As these companies become larger and more powerful, it is easier for them to enter new markets, lower prices to dominate the competition, and then establish an unhealthy monopoly.

In conclusion, despite the wide range of consistent options available for consumers, the rise of corporate power is damaging generally. It is therefore important for individual nations to curb this trend when possible.

News

Some people focus on news in their own country, while others think it is more important to be aware of international news.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Many readers now feel it is more important to stay informed concerning international news items, rather than local ones. In my opinion, though international news can be interesting, local stories contain greater relevance and are therefore more important.

Consumers of international news point out its entertainment value. The majority of people reading news from other countries recognize it has essentially no impact on their own life. However, for many articles from abroad also tend to hold greater appeal. An individual in the United Kingdom, for example, might become bored of local politics and repetitive, provincial stories. There is likely to be more excitement gained in reading about global conflicts, trade disputes, foreign elections, political unrest and environmental catastrophes in distant nations. The reader may not be aware of their own intentions, but these stories are primarily a way to pass the time and be entertained.

However, the entertainment value of international news is less important than relevant local reporting. For example, local news has become essential reading during the recent Covid-19 pandemic. Individuals have little choice but to read articles about the particular strain in their nation, the number of active cases, and the restrictions being urged or mandated by public authorities. If an individual is unaware of such news, they may violate a rule and put themselves and others at risk. The value of local news applies to less pressing emergency situations as well and may include stories about local elections, corruption in politics, crime rates, and various other stories of interest.

In conclusion, despite the value of international news as a source of entertainment, local news should be prioritized given its actual significance. Individuals should strive to ignore as much news as possible and only stay informed about pertinent issues.

Recycling

Some say that children should be taught at school to recycling and avoid waste. Others say they should learn this at home.

Discuss both views and give your opinion

Many feel that school, rather than the home, is the optimal environment to teach children about recycling and avoiding excessive waste. In my opinion, though schools can provide ideal social pressure, habits instilled at home are more likely to be long-lasting.

Those who would prioritize the duty of schools in this matter point to social factors. At school, students are first exposed to group dynamics and the expectations placed on them by institutions. Later in life, teachers will become bosses and school will become work. Children are especially vulnerable to the social pressures exerted by teachers and peers. For example, most young students will follow school rules without considering the possibility of disobeying. However, there is a likely

turning point that will occur later in one's schooling that may render progress achieved as a child less effective.

In contrast, the behaviors that a child learns at home can help form their identity. For instance, members of a family are likely to have similar tastes in food, entertainment, and various hobbies. Recycling is simply another habit that can be acquired and maintained over years. A child who reflexively recycles from a very young age will probably continue this action as they get older and learn the solid reasoning behind it. There is a chance that for other rules and habits they may rebel and actively work to change their identity but this is unlikely to occur with recycling since it is universally regarded as positive and progressive.

In conclusion, the home is a superior location to build habits related to recycling because schools often fail to instill lifelong behavioral changes. Therefore, a committed approach by parents is paramount to protecting the environment in the future.

Success

Some people say that individuals who make a lot of money are the most successful. Others think that those who contribute to society like scientists and teachers are more successful.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Many would argue that those who contribute significantly to society, such as artists, teachers and scientists, are more successful than the affluent. In my opinion, although earnings can be a sign of success, one's worldly impact should be held in higher esteem.

On the one hand, wealth allows an individual to enjoy their life to the fullest. It is common in popular culture to elevate values related to altruism, however, most honest individuals would admit that success can be equated with what one can afford. The wealthy can afford the possessions and lifestyle they desire and also have the free time and peace of mind to completely enjoy their leisure. In past centuries, such people were admired as shameless examples of personal enjoyment. Therefore, this financial freedom can be viewed as the strictest and more direct definition of success.

However, money itself does not always engender a feeling of satisfaction in the same way as more active pursuits in life. Many wealthy individuals feel that they have contributed little to society and this diminishes their enjoyment of their gains. Such dissatisfaction is less present in individuals who, as long as they are not living in destitute poverty, pursue meaningful outlets for their energies. For example, renowned scientists throughout

history are often not extremely wealthy, yet they are considered great successes due to their contributions and the personal joy they derive from the full exercise of their abilities. This fact can be extended to all other professions that involve determination, creativity, and the growth of one's influence.

In conclusion, despite the material benefits of wealth, it is clear that one's ability to shape the world is a surer symbol of success. Every individual and society must locate a balance between these two ideals.

Jobs and Personal Information

Employers sometimes ask people applying for jobs for personal information, such as their hobbies and interests, and whether they are married or single. Some people say that this information may be relevant and useful. Others disagree.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Many are of the opinion that there is little value to the sensitive personal information that employers may inquire about during job interviews. In my opinion, though there are certain logical limits, I believe these questions are generally useful as it helps employers understand candidates better.

On the one hand, applicants may rightly feel these questions can be uncomfortable. An employer who asks questions about family background, sexual orientation, and medical history is certainly violating all ethical bounds. If the candidate feels triggered or uncomfortable, there is the chance an interview could become the catalyst for a mental health setback or result in the candidate deciding not to apply for the position. A hypothetical example of this that shows the potential harm is that if an LGBTQ candidate must continually disclose their orientation, and the environment is very traditional or homophobic, they may find themselves frustrated and feel unfairly discriminated against.

Nonetheless, as long as inquiries are within acceptable limits, these questions aid potential employers in constructing an accurate picture of a potential employee. Naturally, an employee can lie about personal questions if they have a particularly disturbing private life, however, that might itself be of some value. Interviewers likely have experience and can detect the presence of lies and make judgments accordingly. For candidates who answer honestly, the interviewer will be able to compare their responses with past employee performance. For example, there is a strong likelihood that socially competent individuals with lots of friends

and active hobbies will be outgoing and morale-boosting additions to a staff.

In conclusion, despite the risks of causing offense, these questions have value in forming a general opinion of a candidate for any given position. Employers should therefore continue asking such questions.

Violent Entertainment (Games and Movies)

Movies and computer games containing violence are popular. Some people say they have a negative effect on society and should be censored. Others say they are just harmless relaxation.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Some feel that violence in entertainment is a root cause of problems in society and should thus be censored. In my opinion, while there is legitimate cause to establish reasonable boundaries, such content has little actual negative impact.

On the one hand, there is a general level of acceptance that gratuitous violence should be restricted. This is particularly the case if films are being broadcast on public channels or it is possible to gain easy access to violent games. In most nations, programming during the daytime has higher thresholds for acceptable content due to fears of influencing impressionable children. The worry is that very young children and teenagers will become desensitized to violence and potentially establish either a confrontational way of interacting or, in extreme cases, a pattern of behavior. Studies have not shown much evidence for these claims however they possess a commonsensical logic.

On the other hand, the majority of individuals have no difficulty distinguishing between fiction and reality. Consumers of violent entertainment are simply passing the time or experiencing a vicarious thrill. There is even the slight chance that by watching violent entertainment, audiences will be dissuaded from such behavior or feel their need for violence has been sufficiently expressed. For instance, an individual who plays violent computer games or is obsessed with horror films, according to research, is no more likely to commit a violent crime or display abnormal behavior. The actual causes of problems in society relate to employment, economics, discrimination, income inequality, and various systemic barriers.

In conclusion, though there are certain levels of violence that should be censored depending on the context, most explicit content ought to be

permitted in games and movies. Efforts to heavily censor would be short-sighted and misguided.

Happiness

Some people think personal happiness is directly related to economic success, while others believe this depends on other factors.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Many are of the belief that happiness is a result of financial success, while others feel there are more crucial factors. In my opinion, a certain degree of financial stability is a basic requirement for happiness but is less important overall than one's family and health.

Those who claim that happiness correlates highly with earnings argue that it affords individuals a higher standard of living. A person with a considerable salary is able to buy a nice house, provide for their family, and purchase luxuries ranging from good food and frequent holidays to expensive vehicles and fashionable clothing. Each item taken on its own only contributes a small degree of pleasure, however, such purchases add up to a generally content, comfortable and enjoyable lifestyle. If a person is inclined to equate pleasure with happiness, then there is a legitimate argument to be made for the pursuit of happiness being the pursuit of money.

However, the majority of individuals, wealthy and otherwise, would state that happiness is more a consequence of quality time with family and good health. A comfortable home filled with luxuries is enjoyable but the most sustained happiness comes from relationships. Someone who has lost touch with their family and has frayed interpersonal bonds with their relatives, is not likely to be able to fill such a void with physical possessions. Anecdotally, towards the end of life most people recognize that their happiest moments were spent in the presence of loved ones. Additionally, good health is a more powerful pre-condition for happiness since no amount of wealth can buy relief from chronic suffering.

In conclusion, happiness depends more on one's relationship with their family and physical health rather than financial success. There are, naturally, exceptions as happiness is subjective and can be defined differently.

Healthy Lifestyles in the Countryside

Many people believe that it is easier to have a healthy lifestyle in the countryside. Other believe that there are health benefits to living in cities.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Some feel that the countryside is more conducive to a healthy lifestyle than the city. Though cities offer modern hospitals, I am in agreement with this sentiment as the countryside encourages greater activity.

Those who believe cities are healthier point out the access to superior medical care. In most cities, it is possible to find a variety of hospitals specializing in subdivisions of medicine and staffed with the best professionals. This is a result of urban populations, the demand for care, and the earning potential of cities. In contrast, in the countryside, there are fewer hospitals, with less modern facilities located further apart. An individual with a chronic health problem would naturally prefer to be in closer proximity to their primary healthcare provider. Similarly, in the event of an emergency such as a car accident or heart attack, being in the city guarantees a higher chance of receiving quality care.

Nonetheless, the situations above are exceptional and most individuals benefit more from an active life in the countryside. Cities residents are becoming increasingly sedentary and passive as the internet and services such as food delivery applications enable less activity. In the countryside, individuals are more likely to walk to school, spend time with friends outdoors, play a variety of sports, and work a more physically demanding job. All these small instances of activity combined over the span of days, months, and years contribute to better overall conditioning and health. This applies to physical and mental health since those outside of cities are less likely to be dependent on technology and suffer from concomitant anxiety disorders.

In conclusion, despite the modern medical facilities present in cities, the less passive living in the countryside makes it healthier generally. Individuals who prioritize health should strongly consider living outside of an urban area.

Choosing Classes

Some people think that students in high or secondary school can choose courses freely, others think that courses such as mathematics must be compulsory.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many feel that it is essential students be able to choose all their own courses in secondary and high school. In my opinion, certain important classes must remain mandatory.

Those who argue for complete autonomy on that part of students believe it will encourage commitment. A well-known example of this would be free democratic schools popular in various affluent communities in the United States. At these institutions, students have no required classes and are free to choose all their activities on a given day. The result is that students become more independent, motivated, and passionate about certain subject areas. They are then able to translate that passion into dedication because of the freedom allowed. However, it should be mentioned that the success of such schools could also be related to the socioeconomic status of many attendees.

Nonetheless, traditional core subjects are foundational for later integration into society. One of the keys to a cohesive society is a shared education. In most nations, students learn a similar curriculum that focuses on history, math, science, and art. Although students will not use most of what they learn for a practice purpose in the future, it will serve as a basis for their later studies, work, and interactions. An individual who grows up without classes in history, for example, may not understand certain cultural references and feel alienated from the culture at large later. The wide range of subjects in most schools prepares students to become well-rounded, functioning members of society capable of interacting and choosing among multiple career paths.

In conclusion, the utopian ideal of unfettered choice for students may be possible in some contexts, but most should learn from a standardized curriculum to become part of society at large. When possible, students should possess a degree of choice within clear limitations.

Freedom to Make Mistakes

Some people think children should have the freedom to make mistakes, while other people believe that adults should prevent children from making mistakes.

Discuss both sides and give your opinion.

Some are of the opinion that children should be allowed to make mistakes, while others feel that adults should take a preventative approach. In my opinion, there are limits but it is nonetheless essential for healthy development to permit children their errors.

Proponents of reduced freedom for children argue that mistakes can lead to a pattern of misbehavior. This argument is often advanced by over-

protective parents who believe human nature naturally trends toward anti-social activity. For example, a child who is mean to classmates and performs poorly in academics and athletics will only continue this behavior if enabled by understanding adults. To counter the child's wayward impulses, parents should instead either punish or reward in order to motivate more socially acceptable behavior. The theory is that children will then recognize the boundaries set by parents and society and later fit into the adult world as well-functioning members.

Regardless, a sense of autonomy is crucial to mature development. Children who are shielded from making mistakes often lack the skills that encourage healthy growth. The majority of learning, for instance, is achieved through mistakes. A child who is learning a sport makes mistake after mistake but does it with a positive attitude and eventually improves. Later in life, the attitude may become more negative but the process remains the same for all disciplines, private and public. Parents and other adults must therefore seek to impart unconditional support and ensure children do not develop self-esteem problems based on their mistakes. This approach of fostering a cheerful self-sufficiency will serve them best throughout life.

In conclusion, although some adults may feel that are preventing children from making mistakes for the public good, they are in fact doing great harm to their child's mental well-being. If larger segments of society accept this perspective, it will benefit all of society.

Children and Sports

Some people believe that children should do sports so that they will grow up as healthy adults, but others feel sports are just about enjoying yourself.

Discuss these both views and give your own opinion.

Some feel that the primary reason young students should participate in sports is to establish healthy habits for adulthood, while others feel they are simply for fun. In my opinion, the later health benefits are an added bonus and sports are mainly an enjoyable pastime.

Administrators who argue sports are a means of ensuring healthy future habits believe school must be efficient. Sports are therefore no different from normal subjects such as the sciences and humanities in that they offer potential future benefit. While athletics are unlikely to become a career, they can at least form the basis of a lasting passion for and understanding of physical fitness. Such fitness not only guarantees higher quality of life but will also likely have a concomitant effect on healthcare,

allowing governments to redeploy finite resources into other vital sectors.

Those who claim sports are simply for enjoyment argue that future aims should not be subordinate to the present moment. The entire purpose of education is to guarantee a higher standard of living and thus happiness. For most, playing sports achieves that goal on its own. Children enjoy playing a sport far more than most adults will savor any aspect of a comfortable life later on. If a school must choose between offering fun sports during P.E. lessons and educating children about physical fitness, it is counter-productive to choose the less enjoyable latter option. This desire to sacrifice current happiness for an often elusive future goal betrays an inflexible valuation of social stability above the desires of the individual.

In conclusion, despite the long-term advantages of sports, their inclusion in the curriculum can be justified purely for the enjoyment they engender. It is unnecessary for every single subject to have a clear future goal.

Dependent and Independent Individuals

Some people think that individuals today are more dependent on each other. Others believe people have become more independent. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many are of the opinion that people today are less self-reliant than at any point in the past. In my opinion, there exists the possibility to be completely independent but the most are justifiably more reliant on each other now.

Those who believe people today are more independent argue technology is liberating. In the past, a person who wanted to do research or enjoy a movie would have to leave their home, interact with others, and engage more with the community at large. However, it is now possible to live a largely insular lifestyle. Users can sign up for educational courses online, order food by delivery, and access mass amounts of information freely. Those who take advantage of these modern conveniences can theoretically become more independent and self-reliant. The question of whether this ideal is often achieved is still a matter of debate.

The main reason people are less independent today is this quality is no longer considered unequivocally positive. The traditional importance placed on keeping one's composure, enduring difficult situations, and not requiring the help of others has been replaced in recent decades with a more progressive outlook that elevates vulnerability and dependence on others. It is now more common, for men especially, to be open to revealing

their own weaknesses and asking for help. This social shift in turn has led to an increased reliance on the community, both online and in person, as well as a modern acceptance of wellness, therapy, and the importance of a compassionate support network for long-term mental health.

In conclusion, though many people have the potential to lead a more independent lifestyle thanks to advances in internet technology, most are now more dependent than ever before because of seismic shifts in society. This change has its positives and negatives but its reality is undeniable.

Children Visiting Museums

Some people think that children can learn about history by visiting museums, while others feel that there are better ways to learn about history.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Some believe that visiting museums is the best method for learning about the past. I am in agreement with this sentiment, although such trips cannot become the most common approach.

The long-term study of history must remain in the classroom. This is due to logistical concerns and the efficiency of textbooks and lectures. The average student at high school, for example, might be assigned several pages of reading which are then reviewed in class. The teacher can next move on to covering topics in greater depth or proceed with the curriculum to other historical periods. This regular pattern ensures steady progress. Traveling to and learning in a museum is more interactive but there are tradeoffs related to the amount of material that can be learned. A museum visit, in contrast to the classroom, involves travel time and its focus is limited to the specific items on display.

However, museum learning promises greater depth of learning. A good example of this would be the many museums in urban areas such as New York City. Students who visit and view real artifacts from the past at The American Museum of Natural History are likely to remember not only the objects, but also their significance to history. Researchers have demonstrated that the human brain learns retains more information visually and the combination of readings before and after a trip, conversations with other students, and commentary from teachers contributes to a formidable and memorable lesson. There is thereby a greater chance that students who spend time learning at museums will internalize facts and dates for both standardized tests and later in life.

In conclusion, museum visits are a memorable and ideal approach to the instruction of history, though the classroom must remain standard

practice. Whenever possible, school systems should fund field trips to museums.

Mixed Schools with Boys and Girls

Some feel that schools should be mixed with both girls and boys attending while others feel the genders ought to be separated.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

While certain concerned individuals feel that education is superior in single-sex schools, others value the integration of genders. In my opinion, though there are advantages related to focus from segregating the sexes, students benefit socially from mixed schools.

Those who are in favor of separating the genders argue students will be more dedicated to their studies. The reasons for this are largely self-evident as many of the interactions between boys and girls after they reach puberty can be distracting. There is even strong evidence that girls-only schools engender better standardized results. A recent study of institutions in Europe indicated that students at female-only schools scored higher on average on national exams. There might be a variety of reasons for this but many have seized on gender segregation as the primary catalyst for increased concentration and thus improved overall academic achievement.

However, the single study mentioned above does not discount the social value of schools featuring both genders. School is a place to develop not only academically, but socially as well. The fact that there may be uncomfortable interactions between girls and boys while they mature is not a drawback but a learning experience. Boys and girls, as they become men and women, will slowly learn how to talk with the opposite sex and find themselves in a better situation upon graduation. Without the opportunity to integrate socially with another gender there is a strong chance they will have difficulty communicating later and this may promote a lifelong habit of centering their social interactions on rigid gender groups.

In conclusion, despite the positive impact on attention that separating boys and girls can have, the maturing effect of mixed classrooms is more important. There is a place for single-sex institutions but the majority should include both.

Preventing or Living with Climate Change

Some believe that people should make efforts to fight climate change while others think it is better to learn to live with it.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many are of the opinion that individuals should accept the reality of climate change rather than try to combat it. In my opinion, certain levels of acceptance are pragmatic but it is still important to take meaningful steps.

Those who argue a passive approach point to the ineffectual impact of individuals. The vast majority of problems related to climate change cannot be countered by individual action because they primarily involve corporations and governments. For example, companies that produce packaged foods, such as potato chips and instant noodles, create far more plastic waste and industrial pollution in one day than a single person will in their entire life. Governments can make a greater difference by enacting regulations to ensure that the methods of production and materials employed are more environmentally friendly. It thus follows that the average person is justified resigning themselves to the facts of climate change and living in an area that is not especially affected.

However, the combined impact of individuals highlighting climate change will influence key policy decisions. The best examples of this are in European countries such as France and Denmark where green parties hold tremendous sway in government. Individuals empower these political parties not only by voting but also through protests and consumer decisions. Even governmental bodies that are not as eco-friendly must take the environment into account when passing laws. Furthermore, corporations are now cognizant of changes in consumer behavior. Massive conglomerates such as Starbucks frequently advertise their environmental policies. This has only happened because individuals have demanded these reforms.

In conclusion, the seemingly marginal impact of individuals belies their true influence over more powerful authorities. Concerned citizens should therefore continue to vocally curb the hastening of climate change.

Crime Amongst Youngsters

In many countries, crime rates amongst younger people have been rising.

Discuss the causes and solutions for this problem.

Criminal rates among younger offenders have been rising in certain countries. In my opinion, this is largely due to individual economic factors

and the best solutions are related to ensuring stable employment for the majority of citizens.

The primary reasons for rises in youth crime are economic. There has been a persistent global recession in many nations since the world economic crisis of 2008. For example, countries such as Greece have been struggling for many years to reestablish core industries and stimulate economic growth to sustain high living standards. When the economy is in decline and fewer jobs are available, crime rates naturally rise as a result. This has been exacerbated in the last 2 years as Covid-19 has decimated national economies and put millions out of work. Young people with little savings are often the most vulnerable since they have fewer employable skills and less work experience.

Crime rates among younger individuals will recede with economic stimulus plans directed at job creation and education. The countries that have been able to survive and prosper during economic uncertainty tend to be those with mature economies, flexible governments, and a well-educated populace. In northern Europe, for instance, welfare states were able to support the underprivileged and many citizens with university degrees only had to wait in order for business to stabilize. The result of individuals having jobs is the motive for crime disappears in the vast majority of cases and police can focus on less common causes such as mental illness, greed, and jealousy.

In conclusion, the rise in youth crimes in a period of imperiled economies can be countered by government initiatives aimed at this same underlying cause. Addressing the symptoms of crime is simply a short-term solution.

The Role of Sports in Society

Some people think that sports play an important role in society.

Others think they are nothing more than a leisure activity.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Many feel sports play an essential role in society while others believe they are simply for entertainment and relaxation. From my point of view, though their stated purpose is leisure, sports serve key social and psychological purposes.

The claim that sports are largely just a leisure pastime is based on self-evident facts. Most people watch or participate in sports to release pressure and do not take them as seriously as other parts of life. For example, in England, football is the national sport and many individuals will play in amateur matches, follow their local team, and discuss sports

with friends and family. Each of these activities can be broadly defined as a way of relaxing and a purposefully unproductive and enjoyable use of free time. If polled, the majority of individuals would state sports are an important yet entirely recreational part of their lives.

Nonetheless, sports in fact play the essential role of satisfying a number of deep psychological needs. The average sports fan invests a tremendous amount of time and self-esteem in the success or failure of their team. When the team wins, they can bask in the reflected glory and feel proud vicariously. Research has shown that even when a team loses, there is concomitant and addictive communal sensation of misery. Added to this are the variety of human drives that are satisfied by talking about the team, thinking about them in one's spare time, reading and watching sports media, and being outraged or excited about team transactions. This all takes place within a welcoming community of like-minded individuals that approves of and normalizes this social behavior.

To conclude, despite the ostensible purpose of sports to entertain, they actually allow individuals to satisfy a range of crucial human desires. This makes sports a healthy hobby when not taken to obsessive extremes.

Style of New Houses

Some people think the newly built houses should be the same as the old housing styles in local areas. Others argue that local authorities should allow people to build houses in their own style.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Many feel it is crucial that home owners possess the freedom to design their own property, while others feel there should be restrictions. In my opinion, the value of preserving the identity of a neighborhood outweighs the rights of property owners.

Those in favor of unfettered choice argue this can inspire and motivate. When an owner has the ability to express an individual vision, they are naturally more invested in developing their property. Examples of this abound in newer cities such as Shenzhen in mainland China. There is little history to disturb and therefore architects are encouraged to pursue a vision in concert with owners that is aesthetically pleasing and novel. The result is modern homes and offices that push the boundaries of design and in the aggregate contribute an energy and vitality that can enliven, or even revitalize in some cases, an urban area.

However, in the majority of communities it is more important to prioritize cultural preservation. This is because the unique character of many cities and neighborhoods is today under threat from the irreversible effects of

globalization. A standout instance of this would be the old quarter in Hanoi in Vietnam. The government has imposed strict regulations in recent years as a growing middle class has attempted to modernize their living conditions. To preserve the historic character of the city, many new homes must meet certain guidelines, including having classic wooden shutters, employing older building materials and not demolishing noteworthy homes. These efforts in Hanoi and similar cities conserve essential and unique aspects of history and culture.

In conclusion, despite endeavors to allow for freedom of expression in design, I believe that it is generally more valuable to preserve historically relevant design principles. Governments must naturally balance this with a desire to modernize.

Minority Languages

Some feel governments should invest in preserving minority languages, while others feel this is not a good use of resources.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many are of the belief that it would be worthwhile for governments to prioritise the preservation of various minority languages. In my opinion, despite limited potential efficacy this sentiment is justifiable.

Detractors of this proposal argue that investment is unlikely to have a major impact. In order for minority groups to earn a living and enjoy the conveniences of the modern world, they require knowledge of a nation's most widely spoken language. In fact, many indigenous peoples themselves desire to move away from their hometowns to live in large cities and join the modern workforce. For example, in the Hmong people of Southeast Asia, it is typically the older generation that seeks to communicate in their native tongue and preserve traditional ways of life. The younger generation, generally, would rather learn the most useful language and integrate with the dominant national culture. Therefore efforts by governments oppose what individuals desire and are unlikely to be successful.

Nonetheless, there is cultural value in preserving a language. A language uniquely represents and codifies the external world. Everything from the verb structures and choice of nouns to the intonation and rhythm of the language present a singular way of interacting with and deciphering the world at large. For example, in many languages there are words that are not precisely translatable and users therefore are more likely to see events and objects differently. As the world becomes increasingly globalised, I would argue that the importance of a plurality of

perspectives only becomes more crucial. If such languages die out, they will likely never be resurrected and the world will be poorer for the loss. In conclusion, regardless of the potential challenges faced in preserving minority languages, their continued existence is essential to diversity. Governments must therefore make every effort to ensure their survival.

Museums and Art Galleries

Museums and art galleries should show local history and culture instead of work from different countries.

Discuss both views and give opinion.

Some feel that museums and art galleries ought to primarily focus on showcasing local, rather than international, works. In my opinion, despite the importance of domestic pieces for national cohesion, there is greater value in international items.

Those who advocate for domestic art in national museums and exhibition halls point out the unifying effect. Students in every country are expected to learn their national history but these lessons can often feel impersonal and abstract. The chance to visit a museum and see authentic documents from the past revitalises history and can inspire patriotism. A standout example of this would be The Smithsonian in the United States, which houses key historic and cultural artifacts. Visitors from different parts of the country and disparate ethnic groups can potentially find common ground by reflecting on the struggles and achievements of their forefathers.

Regardless, the citizenry as a whole can learn more from international artworks. Most people have learned their own nation's history well but possess limited understanding of other cultures. Going to a museum featuring items from around the world is therefore an enlightening experience. For example, The British Museum in London famously contains one of the world's largest collections of culturally significant artifacts from around the world. By seeing and reading the plaques for a variety of artworks both young students and adults alike have the opportunity to broaden their understanding of the traditions, cultures, and events that underpin the modern world. Over time, this can lead to a more inclusive, culturally diversified society.

All in all, the patriotic positives of locally themed collections are outweighed by the educational benefits of globally sourced institutions. There must be a degree of balance but those in positions of authority should emphasise cultural diversity.

Society and Individuals

Some people think young people should follow the traditions of their society. Others think that they should be free to behave as individuals.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Many today feel that it is crucial for younger generations to follow the traditions of their country rather than their own individual inclinations. In my opinion, though there is value to such self-expression, upholding tradition is more important.

Those who are in support of younger people prioritising their individuality argue this is key to happiness. The true pursuit of happiness requires an individual to define their goals and accomplish them on their own terms. A counterexample illustrating this point would be the rigid, hierarchical societies of the past wherein women had fewer rights of self-expression. Most women in the past did not receive an education and were effectively blocked from having a career or life outside the traditional confines of a housewife. The narrow range of experiences on offer meant that most women were unable to struggle to find their own version of happiness.

However, since the stigmas of society today are less in conflict with individuals, it is logical to prioritise tradition. Traditions themselves may be forgotten if not respected and adhered to. For example, in many indigenous cultures, younger people are more interested in migrating from their ancestral homes to the cities to lead a modern life. If this occurs in enough numbers, then thousands of unique, distinct cultures will fade into the seemingly inevitable global monoculture. Once this happens, there will be no way to retrieve and enliven past traditions and they will become relics of history rather than living monuments to diversity, creativity, and human ingenuity.

In conclusion, though individual freedom is important, particularly for repressed segments of society, there is greater value in preserving past ways of life. This is difficult to enforce but governments should seek to encourage the latter instead of the former.

The Olympic Games

Some believe that the Olympic games help bring people from different nations together, while others claim that holding the Olympics wastes money which could be used for important issues.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

There are many who claim hosting the Olympics unproductively diverts money from more essential areas. In my opinion, despite these valid objections, there is still great value in the unifying impact of the Olympics. Critics argue there are urgent needs that should be prioritised over a sporting event. This applies to every nation but particularly developing ones. For example, the Olympics in Brazil in 2016 led to mass unrest and protests as locals felt too much money was being spent on the event and not enough on helping to alleviate worsening conditions among underprivileged segments of society. The government could have instead improved the infrastructure used by millions daily, invested more in education, or built more hospitals. These allocations of the federal budget would not only serve an immediate purpose but also have a longer lasting effect than the Olympics.

Nonetheless, most Olympic games are sponsored by developed nations and they occur very rarely which justifies their efforts to unify. The countries competing in the Olympics often have fraught international relationships and competition can counter-intuitively decrease tensions. Supporters may root against other countries at specific instances, such as when watching a football match, but they are united in their love of sports and the shared viewing experience. This has the subtle but powerful unconscious result of fostering greater empathy between diverse ethnic and national groups. When an individual roots for their country and their athletes, and sees other individuals partaking in the same ritual, they will realise that association within a larger tribe is an essential, common human trait.

In conclusion, despite the seemingly inefficient allocation of funds, the Olympics are a mass, cooperative effort that has tremendous value. Therefore, countries should consider hosting the games a great honor.

Food Science

Some people think students should study the science of food and how to prepare it. Others think students should spend time on important subjects.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Some today advocate the teaching of food science and preparation in schools as a key 21st century skill. In my opinion, though the expense is a potential obstacle, such a proposal is justifiable.

Opponents of this proposed curriculum shift argue that it would only benefit more affluent school systems. The majority of schools, particularly those in inner cities and remote rural regions, struggle already to

maintain quality facilities and employ experienced, dedicated teachers. The idea of building a kitchen for student-use and keeping it stocked with ingredients as well as the sophisticated equipment required to teach about and practice molecular gastronomy is simply unrealistic. Critics justly point out that such money would be better spent maintaining more essential infrastructure such as the fields, classrooms, and school buildings themselves.

Nonetheless, assuming government funding is available, this would be an ideal method of combining a practical skill with scientific theory. One of the most common complaints among students after graduation is that the vast majority of their studies were impractical and did not prepare them for adulthood. Learning to cook on its own would go a long way towards answering this criticism. However, the true gains would come from the linking of theory and practice. Many scientific theories are abstract and difficult to both understand and retain later in life. The practical application in cooking would not only help students grasp the concepts initially but repeated review from making meals in one's daily life would likely ensure permanent understanding.

In conclusion, food science may seem trivial and its application might pose financial hurdles but it is worth enacting in order to educate students well. Where possible, governments should allocate the necessary funding.

Transporting Children

Some people think parents are responsible for transporting their children to school. Others think it is the government's responsibility. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many feel that parents should take their children to school, while others feel this is a governmental responsibility. In my opinion, this is chiefly the duty of governments.

Those who feel parents should be in charge of transportation to school argue this is an important element of family life. Most people have fond memories of their parents driving, walking, or taking public transport with them to school and this is a potential time for bonding. Early in the morning on the way to school children and parents are likely to be at their most energetic. After a long day at school and work, both parties will probably be tired or busy. This therefore means the morning commute is an opportunity to catch up, make plans for the day, and enjoy each other's company.

Nonetheless, most families rely on government support in this area for a number of reasons. Firstly, many families lack the time to take their children to school in the morning. This is particularly the case if they have more than one child and they attend different schools. A parent living in a rural area, for example, might have to be at work early in the morning and simply does not have the flexible schedule to allow for multiple morning trips. Secondly, most people depend on school buses and consider this a key part of their tax contributions. This is particularly true for less privileged families, who might not have private transportation, or in single parent homes where time is at a premium.

In conclusion, the familial gains of a trip to school in the morning are outweighed by the very practical concerns of average citizens. Governments should continue to ease the burden on parents by providing transportation to and from school.

Advertising

Some feel that the effects of advertising are positive for individuals and businesses, while others think they are negative.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

As advertising becomes increasingly invasive, there has been an increase in debates concerning its effects. In my opinion, advertising is on the whole a negative due to its impact on the average individual, though it is clearly beneficial for businesses.

It is hard to argue against the positive boon that advertising has brought to a variety of industries. In the 1950s and 60s, the growth of American advertising in particular ushered in an age of rampant commercial opportunity. Corporations ranging from automobile manufacturers to airlines to soft drink companies took advantage of the emerging medium of television to reach wider audiences. By appealing to basic human psychology, they were able to tap into a nearly limitless market that eventually expanded globally and is now supported by ruthlessly efficient and profitable online marketing methods.

Nonetheless, advertising mainly serves to distract and entice. The purpose of advertisements is not simply to inform. Consumers can find information about products from a number of sources of their own volition. Advertising attracts individuals and creates new desires that distract from healthier modes of living. For example, the average person would be better served by eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly. However, ubiquitous advertisements for fast food make this difficult, in some cases impossible, to achieve. Generalised across a range of

consumer products, it is clear that people are being drawn unhealthily towards their worst impulses.

In conclusion, the benefits of advertising for the business world do not outweigh its psychological impact on the average citizen. A world without advertising is not feasible but it is still possible to limit one's exposure.

Climate Change and Business

Some think that climate change reforms will negatively affect business. Others feel they are an opportunity for businesses.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Some are of the belief that any prospective reforms to combat climate change will necessarily be injurious to businesses. In my opinion, despite the marginal market for eco-friendly companies, this is largely true.

Environmentalists often argue that green businesses can be profitable. There are numerous examples from all over the world of corporations excelling in fields such as eco-friendly foods, cars, energy and fashion. For instance, Tesla has become one of the largest automobile manufacturers over the last decade with a unique focus on stylish electronic cars. Their success is by far the greatest so far in the emerging sector of green energy consumer products and will doubtlessly inspire a generation of entrepreneurs to view protecting the environment as a potential catalyst for growth rather than a deterrent to profits.

However, the examples above are still dwarfed by most industries and governmental regulation will surely hurt large and small businesses. In the past, well-intentioned environmental policy has failed to take into account the far-reaching impact of even the simplest stipulations. For example, when nations band together to sign treaties such as the recent Paris Accords, nearly all countries eventually fail to live up to the standards laid out because of the economic downsides and how that could affect their popularity domestically. As soon as one nation begins to fall short of their commitment, other countries have no choice but to also prioritise corporations over the environment for fear of losing power in later elections.

In conclusion, though there is some potential in green business models, they will always have dire economic repercussions. This does not make them less justified but it is an important consideration to temper expectations of progress.

Choosing a Job

Some people say young people should be completely free to choose their future job but others think young people must be more realistic in their choice.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many are of the view that young people should prioritise pragmatic career choices over their passions. In my opinion, youth is an opportunity to follow pursuits with a low probability of success.

Many parents in particular are heavily invested in the idea of security. This is often the case if they had a difficult upbringing or were born into times of national upheaval. For example, many parents in Vietnam who grew up immediately after the American War, are still scarred by their experiences of deprivation. As a result, it is a common refrain in Vietnam these days for young people to complain about how much control their parents have over their choice of a major or career. Most students consequently work in safe, tedious fields like finance, banking, advertising, and law. They have job security and a basic floor on their earning potential in the event of an economic downturn.

However, failing at a particular career path early in life does not foreclose future success. Most can major in a subject they love, work for several years in that field and the likely results will either be some degree of success or modest failure. If they fail, it is possible to move on in one's twenties to study or work towards a safer, more lucrative position. This attempt is also justified by the rare instances of tremendous achievement including famous actors, directors, singers, and other artists. Therefore, choosing a career freely can be vindicated by the combination of potential fame, less transcendent but still respectable jobs, and the ability to transition to a new career before middle age.

In conclusion, the allure of security does not outweigh the myriad advantages of freely choosing a career one. Parents and students should both heed this advice or risk regretting the missed opportunity.

Bicycles

Some people say that the bicycles are a good, modern means of transportation. Other say riding a bicycle has clear disadvantages.

Discuss both view points and give your own opinion.

Many people today are taking advantage of the environmental and health benefits of using bicycles as a primary means of transportation. I am largely in agreement with this practice, despite potential safety concerns.

Critics often point out that cycling can be dangerous. This conclusion is based on numerous studies showing the fatality and serious injury rates for accidents involving bicycles are considerably higher than for most other vehicles. Even if a cyclist is wearing a helmet, the rest of their body is completely unprotected and bikes themselves do not stand up well to collisions. Added to this are the driving conditions in most major cities, where there might not be bike lanes or cars and motorbikes may not respect cyclists' right of way. The cyclists themselves contribute to the danger if they are overconfident and try to keep up with or pass motorised vehicles.

Nonetheless, the marginally increased risks involved in cycling do not outweigh its environmental and health benefit. Bikes are a modern, clean form of transportation because they do not burn any fossil fuels or require intensive industrial production methods for their manufacturing. This is the main reason many forward-looking, environmentally-conscious cities now encourage biking to work with bike lanes and bike-sharing schemes. The second advantage is health. Cycling is great cardiovascular exercise at a time when lifestyles are becoming increasingly sedentary due to advances in consumer technology. Riding a bicycle allows the average person to get in their daily exercise efficiently on their way to work.

In conclusion, bikes may increase the odds of serious injury, but these exceptions are dwarfed by health and environmental prerogatives. Cities should therefore enact laws to help cycling flourish.

Communicating with Other Life Forms

Some think scientists should be allowed to send messages into space to communicate with other life forms while others believe this is too dangerous.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Many are of the belief that contacting possible alien life is a desirable goal, while others are wary of the potential dangers. In my opinion, though this satisfies basic human curiosity, the risk is too great relative to the benefits.

The reason to try to communicate with extraterrestrials is to learn more about the universe. Some might claim alien life could have technology or insight to share, but the chances of this are too small to justify the effort. Instead, the average person and the scientist alike simply want to learn if there are other forms of life. Humans have dreamed of aliens in novels and films for decades and some feel every attempt to realise these dreams

is warranted. If alien life is discovered, not only would it satisfy this desire but it might also help humanity understand their own origins, place in the universe, and answer fundamental existential questions.

However, curiosity alone is not enough to condone accepting even the smallest chance of the danger inherent in alien contact. The likelihood of an alien life form turning against humanity like a scene from a science fiction film are infinitesimally small but the consequences are too great to ignore. In the event that aliens were found and hostile to humanity it could pose a serious problem and in the worst case scenario threaten the survival of the human race. This far-fetched but disastrous downside logically dictates the more sensible approach of continuing to develop human technology and wait until the distant future to venture to locate alien life.

In conclusion, the self-interested pursuit of other life forms has too much potential for species-threatening danger to be advisable. Instead, governments should focus on maximising resources for more advanced technology.

Salary

Some feel executives in large companies should receive high salaries while others think they are paid too much compared to ordinary workers.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many believe that high-ranking executive positions deserve their exorbitant salaries, while others feel they earn disproportionately compared to normal workers. In my opinion, outsized compensation is unreasonable in a vacuum but makes sense given market dictates.

Detractors often argue the ratios defy justification. Recent publications have quoted figures showing executive positions, and CEOs in particular, makes hundreds of times what the average worker does. This includes their various remuneration packages and bonuses. It is hard to claim this money is deserved. Many CEOs work longer hours and graduated from top schools but their tangible impact can be marginal relative to the key driving forces behind product development and the many hard-working employees required for a business to thrive. Even the most ardent supporters of these practices would not claim their output is hundreds of times higher than a normal employee.

Nonetheless, this practice follows basic principles of supply and demand. The simple fact is that there is a nearly endless supply of average individuals to staff entry-level positions but capable executives are rarer.

These high-ranking jobs require an extraordinary commitment in terms of hours that most are unwilling to invest and exceptional character qualities ranging from leadership skills to raw intelligence. Since the top positions in a company are hard to fill and the company has the finances to pay premium wages, it is logical that executive salaries outrage many workers and their bonuses that appear unjust. In fact, these payments have little relationship with justice and more to do with the economic realities of capitalism.

In conclusion, though their salaries seem outlandish, executives are more difficult to replace and deserve higher pay. This is an uncomfortable, but crucial, truth for the average person to accept.

Teenagers

Some people believe that the experiences children have before they go to school will have the greatest effect on their future life. Others argue that experiences gained when they are teenagers have a bigger influence.

Discuss both views and give your own opinions.

Many researchers claim that early childhood experiences are more formative than the later, teenage years. In my opinion, though this may be supported by studies, it makes more sense that adolescence shapes futures the most.

Those who believe in the primacy of the pre-school years can point out the effect of early experiences on neurodevelopment. It has become a common refrain among psychologists that the majority of personality formation is in the first 2 years of life. This stems from the relationship children have with their parents, whether they are shown unconditional love and, conversely, if there is any neglect or abuse present in the household. As the child continues to mature and become aware of their surroundings, societal influences intrude and include gender stereotypes, early friendships, and imitation of one's parents. By the time a child reaches kindergarten, most of their social and personal identity is, allegedly, fixed.

Despite the valid arguments detailed above, I believe the teenage years are when individuals truly begin to navigate the demands of others against their own personal desires. The key life events that take place in the teenage years include an increase in academic pressure, more nuanced social relationships, increased responsibility at home, and, crucially, the biological changes of puberty. These are the foundation of finding one's place in the world and managing wants against what is

expected of an individual by friends, family, school, and society at large. Some teenagers find a balance early and excel while others struggle for long periods that may last into adulthood. On the whole, these experiences outweigh those accumulated as a young child.

In conclusion, though the childhood years are developmentally important, nothing is a better predictor of the future than the issues that must be resolved as teenagers. It is therefore important that teenagers are given latitude to grow and express themselves.

Cities vs Rural Areas

Some people think that cities are the best places to live. Others prefer to live in rural areas.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

There are fundamentally different reasons that dictate whether one lives in the countryside or an urban area. In my opinion, the health benefits of living in the countryside do not outweigh the range of opportunities available in cities.

The chief advantages of the countryside relate to health. City-dwelling lends itself to a more sedentary lifestyle and the threat of air pollution is ever-growing. In contrast, individuals living in the country are much more likely to walk or ride bikes as part of their daily routine. Over time this equates to healthier living habits and can reduce the risk of obesity and concomitant conditions such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Moreover, recent studies have found that worsening air quality in cities and the absorption of microparticles into the lungs is driving up rates of cancer and asthma. The countryside presents an alternative environment where cleaner air can result in both short and long-term health benefits. Nonetheless, cities offer a wide array of options rural areas lack. This begins with the employment on offer. The vast majority of well-paid jobs are located in cities ranging from doctors to lawyers to managers in companies. Living in the countryside limits one to careers primarily centred around agriculture. Cities also contain a richer variety of educational and cultural opportunities. The best schools are usually found in cities and museums and concerts are rare in the countryside. Take New York City for example, where some of the most famous museums in the world are located next to beautiful concert venues and renowned five star restaurants. This broadens an individual's horizons and makes cities ideal for both single people and families.

In conclusion, despite the healthier overall lifestyle enjoyed in the countryside, city life allows too many modern conveniences to be ignored.

Each individual must decide what they value highest but most should opt for city life.

Packaging

Some people say that supermarkets and manufacturers have a responsibility to reduce the amount of packaging on products they sell. Others believe that it is the consumer's responsibility to avoid buying products which have a lot of packaging.

Discuss both views and give your opinions.

It is often argued that curtailing the over-packaging of products is the onus of supermarkets and manufacturers rather than consumers. From my point of view, I am largely in agreement with the latter viewpoint.

On the one hand, supermarkets and manufacturers are responsible for using less packaging because they are the ones who have instituted unnecessary packaging on a large scale. There is no discernible reason, in light of its dire environmental impact, that toothpaste manufacturers have historically chosen to pack tubes in extra boxes or supermarkets have opted to wrap bananas and apples in Styrofoam trays, covered with plastic. These redundant practices contribute greatly to both the initial production of plastic and its subsequent disposal in landfills. Since supermarkets and manufacturers are the ones with the power to reform their own policies, it is only logical that they should be responsible.

On the other hand, only consumers can force the hands of large corporations by boycotting their products. This is best evidenced in cities where it used to be common to package fruits and vegetables in plastic, such as Chiang Mai in Thailand. Consumer awareness movements among locals have had a discernible impact on companies. It is now much more common to find bananas bare or simply wrapped in natural leaves and vegetables tied together with a single piece of string to lessen their environmental footprint. This same practice employed in cities around the world will have the largest possible impact on the environment.

In conclusion, the only pragmatic way to persuade shareholder-controlled corporations to reform packaging policies is by putting consumer pressure on their bottom lines. If customers make more of an effort to steer clear of heavily packaged products in favour of more environmentally conscious ones, this will lead to a shift in thinking when it comes to the environmental toll of plastics.

Sports Sponsorships

Many companies sponsor sports as a way of advertising themselves. Some people think this is good for the world of sport, while others think it is a negative.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many believe that the influence of multinational companies on sports through sponsorship deals has a harmful effect. In my opinion, while advertising creates potential conflicts of interest, this is a positive situation overall as it funds the sports industry.

The growing primacy of sponsorships in sports can be problematic when it precipitates an ethical dilemma. In recent years, many Middle Eastern corporate entities linked closely to governments with poor human rights records such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar have purchased and are now endorsed by major footballing leagues and teams. This raises the question of whether such leagues should accept morally bankrupt ownership. A similar example was seen in the NBA recently, which has signed various lucrative sponsorships with Chinese companies and was put in a difficult position when a league executive expressed support for the independence movement in Hong Kong. The league was forced to backtrack amid pressure of boycotts from China.

Nonetheless, advertising is a key part of the viewing experience fans have come to expect. The advertisements themselves are slightly annoying at best, but they allow leagues to make games widely available to watch and guarantees the salaries of the best players. Most games, whether it be football, basketball, tennis or another sport, can be viewed for free on major television networks or online. Advertising allows the distributors and owners to earn enough for this to be a viable option. Moreover, leagues do not operate in a vacuum. If one league banned all advertising, then players would simply switch to play somewhere else where salaries are higher. Advertising is therefore an unavoidable, crucial prerequisite to having the top players.

In conclusion, the fan benefits outweigh the pernicious impact of sponsorship deals in sport. It is regardless important for leagues to balance competing ethical, economic, and entertainment priorities.

Children & Crime

Some people believe that children that commit crimes should be punished. Others think the parents should be punished instead.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

Some today are calling for parents to be held responsible for crimes committed by their children. In my opinion, there are exceptions but many cases merit greater punishment for parents.

Those arguing against this reform point out that parents are not always culpable. There are numerous instances of loving parents who raise their child well but social problems still manifest from a young age. This is often the case if the child suffers from a mental illness such as schizophrenia or a dissociative disorder. These conditions may stem from simple genetics, in which case parents should not be punished, or from trauma the primary caregivers are unaware of. For example, if they have been abused at school or by a relative then it follows logically the offending, rather than innocent, party should be brought to justice.

Despite the important exceptions above that courts must sort through, parental abuse and neglect should be punishable. Studies have shown that most young children who commit crimes have been abused in some way by their parents. Serial killers are an extreme but useful case in point. Nearly every serial killer begins antisocial behaviour from a young age, including the criminal torture of animals. There are also no known examples of serial killers coming from happy homes; they are all the product of varying degrees of abuse from their parents. This is clear evidence that parents play the pivotal role in molding the psyche of young children. As children grow up and have more influences this may change but for young children, parents are chiefly responsible and courts should recognise this fact.

In conclusion, there are some cases where parents may not be at fault for criminal acts by children but in most situations they are the driving force. Trying parents for their child's crime and seeking treatment for the children would therefore be a modern, progressive, and positive reform.

Foreign Films & Culture

Some believe that it is beneficial to show foreign films while others feel this can have a negative impact on local culture.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

Some believe cinemas should show a wide breadth of films from around the world, while others worry about the globalising effect on local culture. In my opinion, though reliance on domestic film can contribute greatly to the cultural development of a nation, it is too severe a restriction.

Those wary of the pernicious effects of films from other countries point to the importance of nationally produced films. When a country imports few films from abroad, they are forced into making more and better movies to attract audiences. For instance, in the 1980s immediately after the cultural revolution in China, few foreign films were shown. Studios instead funded ambitious Chinese film-makers like Zhang Yimou, who would later go on to lead the early 1990s ascent of Chinese new wave cinema. This same pattern has been repeated in South Korea, Japan, France, and numerous other countries at different periods in the 20th century. The sum effect on culture for each respective nation has been massive and, in many cases, represents their most recent defining cultural achievements.

Nonetheless, watching foreign films allows individuals to enjoy the best entertainment on offer. It would be cruel to ban foreign films and enforce a sub-par viewing experience in countries with under-developed film industries. Film is, after all, mainly an enjoyable form of relaxation. The most popular movies tend to come from Hollywood and include blockbuster superhero franchises, Oscar-worthy dramas, and comedies. Many local theatre chains would struggle to stay in business without foreign films and the new online streaming options mean that audiences would likely just subscribe to Netflix or download movies illegally. The actual cultural benefits of such restrictions might therefore be questionable while theatre-goers would surely be deprived of quality recreation.

In conclusion, the examples of isolated national film industries do not outweigh the diversionary value of film. There are other methods of preserving and encouraging culture besides censoring outside influences.

Artificial Intelligence

Some scientists believe that in the future computers will be more intelligent than human beings. While some see this as a positive development others worry about the negative consequences.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

Many today are worried about the potential drawbacks of artificial intelligence. In my opinion, these concerns are legitimate but on the whole A.I. will allow for new heights to human endeavour.

The chief associated worries concern its misuse by humans initially and machines later. The former is already coming to pass as automation has

phased out many traditional jobs. As artificial intelligence becomes more sophisticated, the positions in jeopardy will transition from low-skilled factory staff to data analysts and other white-collar workers. The fear is that companies will be motivated solely by their bottom line, lay off many employees and trigger mass social unrest. Some also believe A.I. portends darker scenarios akin to the apocalyptic dystopias of films like *The Matrix* and *Terminator*. This is a possibility though it is impossible to estimate its likelihood.

The speculations above should be taken seriously but they pale in comparison to the technologies A.I. can complement. Companies ranging from Google to Amazon to Tesla are investing heavily in this industry because of its enormous potential. For example, self-driving cars are fast becoming a reality and will reduce the number of vehicular accidents massively. Policymakers in government will be able to take advantage of sophisticated algorithms to project economic policy and positively enhance the lives of billions. In the consumer sphere, smartphones will become increasingly helpful, freeing up individuals to focus their time on work, family, and leisure. This is only a partial list and the most intriguing and impactful applications have yet to be unearthed.

In conclusion, artificial intelligence poses risks to the labour market and the future of humanity, but the opportunities for new projects should take priority. It is important to find a balance and methods of mitigating the dangers.

Protecting Wild Animals or Humans

Some people think that resources should be spent on protecting wild animals, while others think those would be better used for the human population.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

There are many who doubt the logic of spending money and time on wild animals when there are so many humans in need. In my opinion, the valid reasons to prioritise humanity do not outweigh the fact that animals more desperately require refuge.

Those who advocate for less aid for animals believe that human life is inherently more valuable. Humans are capable of higher reasoning skills, have more emotionally complex lives, and most importantly, we share a primary obligation to members of our own species. A good example of this would be when humans and animals come into conflict. Recently, a boy

fell into a gorilla cage at a zoo and the wild animal was killed to protect the child. There was a large public outcry but only extremists would argue the human should die in such situations. Increased funding for wildlife in effect means reduced resources allocated to charities for the underprivileged and the implicit elevation of animals over humans.

However, the risk to wild animals is pressing and justifies responsible action. Despite the vulnerability of particular humans, nothing imperils humanity as a whole. This is not the case for endangered animals like bald eagles, cheetahs, lions, and polar bears. They face threats ranging from the impact of climate change to deforestation to poaching. Those are all a direct result of human activity. Without our help, there is a very real chance that some species on the brink will go extinct in the coming decades. Once they have gone extinct, there will be no way to bring them back and this is the existential threat that ought to compel continued funding for programs aimed at wildlife conservation.

In conclusion, though human life is more valuable, the danger looming for at-risk animals is greater and validates compassionate effort. The longer we neglect animals, the greater the chances of extinction.

Pocket Money for Children

Giving children and adolescents pocket money is common throughout the world.

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this practice and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

In most countries, it is common for children to be given an allowance. This can lead to problems in extreme cases but the advantages are stronger and relate to maturation.

There are two main drawbacks to this practice if parents are irresponsible. Firstly, a parent might give their child too much spending money. There are many well-known cases of children who become pampered socialites, incapable of contributing positively to society because they have little incentive to work or grow as human beings. The second related scenario involves parents who do not monitor their children's spending habits. For example, young children might buy candy and parents need to try to counter this by encouraging healthier eating. As they get older, parents must continue to monitor closely misuses ranging from relatively benign videogames to decidedly harmful narcotics.

Nonetheless, the advantages in the majority of cases make allowances a positive. An important part of engaging with society is transactions. The first time a child pays at a shop, they enter into the wider economy and begin to understand their role in it. As they grow up, they will have to make decisions about their pocket money. They might opt to save it thereby cultivating discipline and self-control. The purchase itself will also take on increased relevance. Instead of wasting money on something superfluous or actively injurious to them, such as unhealthy foods or a new gaming console, they might begin to realise independently the importance of healthy habits and choose to buy more books, art supplies, or invest in an extracurricular.

In conclusion, allowances without clear checks can in rare instances lead children down a dark path but, in general, spending money fosters greater independence and better decision making. It is therefore paramount for parents to set clear boundaries for their children.

Rewarding Success

Some think schools should reward students who have the best academic results, while others think it's more important to reward students who achieve other types of success (such as sports, music, and good behaviour).

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

It is common to reward students for their academic success but many today believe schools should also recognise other areas of excellence such as athletics and behaviour. In my opinion, rewarding academic results is more important as it is a powerful motivator and should not be replicated for other pursuits.

Rewarding academic success is part of an historic system of control. The purpose is self-evident: to psychologically compel continued positive results. For example, in many East Asian countries such as Vietnam where good marks are highly valued, it is not uncommon for parents to offer financial incentives to students, schools to regularly hand out certificates of excellence, and teachers to highlight individuals for praise. All these distinctions are powerful extrinsic motivators that draw students away from the, often monotonous, subject being studied itself to monetary gains, public recognition and the esteem of one's teachers, respectively. This effectively exploits basic desires for respect and reinforces a pattern of academic excellence.

However, despite the benefits listed above, other types of activities contain their own rewards already. A student who behaves well in class will typically earn the appreciation of teachers or simply do it out of their natural temperament and therefore not require compensation. Students with athletic prowess enjoy the reverence of their peers and the sports themselves. These built-in rewards apply to a variety of fields of success outside traditional school subjects. In fact, rewarding behaviours that students already enjoy doing in themselves might actually hinder motivation. Students could potentially become more focused on the reward than the experience itself and an intrinsic drive will become extrinsic, ironically now requiring tangible reinforcement to continue. In conclusion, rewarding academics is a proven method of reinforcement that could have the opposite effect of decreasing intrinsic motivation when applied to other areas. Teachers and parents should be wary of the subtle difference between encouraging children and establishing a near-Pavlovian relationship.

Focus on Single Subjects

Some educational systems make students study specialised subjects from the age of fifteen while others require students to study a wide range.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

Many educational reformers today incline towards a narrower curriculum for students 15 and older. In my opinion, while this is part of a decidedly modern movement for early specialisation, a wide range of knowledge serves as a basis for more well-adjusted adults.

Limiting subjects from the age of 15 onwards can allow for greater focus. It is not uncommon for many children to choose one musical instrument or participate in a single sport from the beginning of grade school. The rationale is that more time spent in one domain inevitably leads to mastery and this is supported by research into the importance of practice for elite performers. There are many famous examples of individuals who focused from their teenage years onwards and found success such as The Beatles' band members with music and Steve Jobs with computer technology. Fewer subjects after age 15 is therefore one way to safeguard a child's future.

However, the famous examples above are belied by the bulk of research that shows, for the majority of individuals, a wide range of skills and

interests is a better predictor of future success. Studies have overwhelmingly shown that varied skills allow for increased creativity and a more even temperament. The average high school student must study obviously useful subjects such as math and various disciplines of science but also take music, art, home economics, and choose their own electives. They may never become professional musicians but opening up that side of their brain can help them be more creative in another field and feel their education is well-rounded. Without dabbling in these allegedly useless subjects they might feel harnessed to a single career and purpose, unable to exercise autonomy over their own life.

In conclusion, studying a range of subjects after the age of 15 leads to better results in general. A complete syllabus furnishes happier individual citizens and contributes to a richer overall society.

School Age

Some people argue children should stay in school until the age of 18 while others think that 14 years is long enough.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

Many feel that compulsory schooling should extend to the age of 18, while others feel 14 is sufficient. In my opinion, there are good reasons to prioritise starting work but it is more important for one's future to at least graduate high school.

Those who support parental rights argue that if college is not a realistic option, dropping out of school at 14 gives one a better chance of learning a valuable trade. In an ideal world, every student would go to university and become a great success but in the real world the majority of individuals do not enroll in higher education. The years spent cramming in high school are wasted on subjects like algebra and history, having no tangible impact on their future livelihood. Give these students the opportunity to enter the workforce earlier and they will someday be able to master a craft and become a skilled electrician, plumber, or chef. Those jobs might, in the final analysis, pay better than positions open to many university graduates.

Regardless, the value of finishing high school is in the world of infinite possibilities it affords. Not every graduate goes on to university but even a high school diploma makes it both easier to land a quality job and eventually get a promotion. Depending on the country and the government funding available, many high school graduates will be able to

attend university regardless of their socioeconomic status and may be the first generation in their family to do so. Even if they opt to enter the workforce after the age of 18, they will have the possibility of later returning to higher education with a clearer understanding of what vocation they want to study. This opportunity alone is enough to justify mandatory attendance until age 18.

In conclusion, it is a privilege that should be enforced to attend school until age 18. There will be cases where school is a waste of time but there will be more instances where a basic level of education makes the difference between a mean and an elevated existence.

Zoos and Rare Animals

Many people think that zoos are cruel. Others think they are helpful in protecting rare animals.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

Some concerned groups feel that zoos are cruelly exploitative while others argue they serve the vital function of protecting endangered animals. In my opinion, though zoos are inherently unnatural, their efforts are laudable overall.

Those activists who decry the existence of zoos often point out how animals live in the wild. A lion in the African Serengeti, one of the few remaining preserves for lions in their natural habitat, roams over miles of grassland, hunts for meals and competes with rival prides. This is how lions have lived for thousands of years and is the natural byproduct of a generational process of evolution. The same lion placed in a zoo paces a small cage, is tossed already dead meat to eat, and rarely has other lions to interact or mate with. The evidence for zoos as a cruel institution lies in the contrasting of a natural and unnatural lifestyle and turning proud beasts into scavengers.

Regardless, zoos are essential for the preservation and cultivation of endangered species. There are countless animals ranging from various big cats (lions, tigers, leopards, and other sub-species), to pandas, rhinoceros, gorillas, pangolins and many more that depend on zoos for protection and safe breeding grounds. These animals have been driven to the brink of extinction either by loss of habitat due to rampant development and climate change or hunted for their fur or alleged medicinal properties. Responsible zoos are tasked with breeding them in order to stabilise falling populations and then re-introducing them into

the wild. Without these zoos, many species would likely already have gone extinct.

In conclusion, zoos are fundamentally artificial but also a net positive because of their conservation efforts. To ensure this remains the case, these refuges must be well-regulated and governments should enact complementary solutions such as anti-poaching laws.

Private & Work Life

Some people like to spend their leisure time after work with co-workers while others prefer to keep their private life separate from their work life.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

After finishing work, many people strive to carve out an independent private life and therefore eschew meeting colleagues socially. In my opinion, strong bonds with co-workers are justifiably common but it is more important to have a stable network of friends outside work.

The main advantage of fraternising with other employees after work is convenience. Employees get off work at the same time and it is easy to make plans. Most workers chat with each other about their plans for the evening and then invite each other to get a drink, go to dinner, play sport or catch a movie. Since colleagues work together all day, they have a good idea of each other's personality and will naturally congregate with the characters and groups they are predisposed towards. This organic process of meeting up with their close friends at work can quickly become an entrenched habit to look forward to at the end of the workday.

Nonetheless, a varied social life is crucial in order to maintain better mental health. Conversations with co-workers inevitably turn to office related gossip and gripes about work. These self-serving and repetitive dialogues do little more than weakly reinforce one's self-esteem. When talking with an old school friend or former co-worker one is more likely to forget about work and delve into other subjects. The result is relief of work-related stress and freedom from reinforcement of your inner drives to compare, belittle, gossip, and complain. Over time, the mental toll of being immersed in work the entire day can lead to feelings of depression and frustration, while the opposite is true of those who compartmentalise work and social life.

In conclusion, spending one's leisure time with a wider sphere of friends is key to good mental health. As people today become increasingly

isolated, it is especially important to have a secure group of friends beyond the workplace.

Group and One-on-one Lessons

Some people believe that one-on-one lessons are better for learning while others think that group lessons are superior.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam

Many concerned parties feel that education is best done in private sessions while others feel that group lessons are better. In my opinion, the pacing of individual lessons is an advantage but a classroom setting is superior as it allows for a wider range of skills to develop.

On the one hand, one-on-one lessons enable learners to work at an individualised pace. In the classroom, students either fall behind or get bored because they understand the lessons too easily. A tutor can observe their student's progress and tailor lessons accordingly. This could result in a situation where a student who is gifted at math progresses well beyond their grade level. If they struggle in another subject, such as English, a Grade 5 aged student could effectively be studying Grade 4 English and Grade 8 math at the same time. This kind of pacing is only possible with one-on-one lessons.

On the other hand, group lessons open up opportunities for collaboration in and outside the classroom. Groups foster a classroom dynamic of debate. Students and teachers can exchange views and learn more from a plurality of perspectives. This is further exemplified in the project work that is commonplace in high schools and university classrooms in the United States. The rationale for assigning these projects is that students must improve their teamwork skills by getting along with classmates, taking on responsibility for given tasks, learning to compromise, and managing different temperaments. Many schools today assign roles within teams, such as team leader, presenter, primary researcher, and so on. These collaborative projects can then be brought into a group lesson and debated.

In conclusion, group lessons are a better way to learn. It is important that educators do not blindly follow the latest academic fads and instead carefully analyse the consequences before making drastic reforms to established educational practices.

Artistic Talent (Real Past IELTS Exam/Test)

Some think that quality art can be made by anyone while others think that it requires special talent and ability.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Real IELTS Exam/Test

Some believe that art ought to be left to talented professionals while others believe anyone can make worthwhile pieces. In my opinion, talent is a complex concept but its lack of clarity does not make it any less crucial.

Talent, particularly in a subjective field such as art, is indefinable. It is impossible to determine the interplay between talent and genetic predisposition, upbringing, personal qualities like perseverance, motivation, luck, and practice. Research into sports has shown the importance of genetics but that is largely because of the athletic requirements. Good hand eye coordination, superior spatial sense, and linguistic prowess may give one a talent advantage in the arts but many technically skilled artists produce lifeless, unoriginal art. There are simply too many unknowns as to what informs talent and how this translates to subjective works to make a definitive appraisal of its value.

However, let us make no mistake: talent is important for all human endeavours and art is no exception. The term itself may be hazy but there is no doubt in practice that certain individuals can create stirring masterpieces and others cannot, regardless of how much hard work they put in. A good example of this would be in music. Some bands and artists toil away for years without making much of an impression while others, like the Beatles and Mozart, were successful from a very young age. John Lennon and Paul McCartney's lyrical gifts and understanding of melody were present for them in their early 20s and few other individuals, professional or amateur, in their entire lifetime have had the talent to reach their heights.

In conclusion, though it is difficult to define, good art requires talent. There is therapeutic value for amateurs but great art with universal appeal is the prerogative of the gifted.

Education Spending (Real Past IELTS Exam/Test)

Some believe that money for education should mainly be spent on better computers while others believe it would be better spent on teachers.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam/Test

Many today are of the view that education funding ought to be chiefly directed towards upgrading computer technology in schools while others would prioritise teachers. In my opinion, better computers will have the most identifiable impact, but teacher quality is more important.

Those who want increased investment in computers can highlight the unquestioned relevance of computers today and in the future. The single most important skill students will learn and that will serve them in professional and personal contexts over the course of their life, will be computer literacy. Jobs in traditional domains are rapidly vanishing or deteriorating while information technology positions are the most likely to be stable in an uncertain future job market. Someone who learns how to code in school will have a lifetime job at a good salary. This clear evidence insulates from criticism decision-makers opting for increased funding for computers over teachers.

Regardless, the overall impact of teachers is far greater, if not as immediately discernible. A good example of this is in Finland, which has invested heavily in education generally and in teachers particularly. Teachers often remain with the same students for years and are able to form stable bonds, guiding them through both their social and intellectual development. Students will remember these teachers their entire lives but the greatest impact comes from the values and habits instilled by teachers that may never reach the level of conscious gratitude. Students will simply be indebted to them without being able to trace the roots of some of their best qualities.

In conclusion, the quantifiable support for investing in computers only veils the true value teachers hold for education. Educational leaders with the vision to make unpopular, risky decisions will reap later rewards.

Part-Time Jobs (Real Past IELTS Exam/Test)

In many countries, teenagers are encouraged to find part-time jobs. Some think this is a good development while others disagree.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam/Test

Some believe that teenagers ought to take part in hourly paid work while others feel this is not a good idea. In my opinion, though this can be an added burden for teenagers, it offers a host of benefits related to life experience.

Opponents of part-time work for teenagers seize on the mental repercussions of stress. Teenagers already deal with so many life problems ranging from the chemical changes inherent in puberty to social stress to academic pressure. There are countries such as South Korea and Japan where the academic workload rarely allows for recreation time, let alone paid work. Adding in a job and its encumbent concerns can only worsen a teenager's mental health and, in the most extreme cases, lead to depression and nervous breakdowns. Even students not affected as deeply are sure to be less happy due to stress.

Regardless, working is a maturing experience. Work continues and hastens the lifelong process of negotiating one's own priorities against the expectations of others. Most high schoolers start with a low-paying part-time position and that may educate them about the importance of having a good education. They are also likely to begin developing the qualities that will serve them well in a variety of future workplaces including teamwork skills, organisation, and perseverance. The experience will also give them a window into an industry and help them make more informed choices for their future career.

In conclusion, though work can take a toll on mental well-being it is a positive, overall maturing experience. Teenagers should try a variety of jobs in order to have a clear overview of possible working environments.

Learning from History (Real Past IELTS Exam/Test)

Some believe that history has little to teach us about today while others think that the study of the past helps us to understand the present.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Recent Past IELTS Exam/Test

Many feel that the study of the past does little to inform the present while others believe it can help aid understanding. In my opinion, history certainly holds insights but they are so deeply woven into a specific context so as to be as misleading as enlightening.

Those who argue in favour of learning from history can point to the importance of understanding a culture. A frequently cited example of this is the war between Vietnam and the United States in the mid 1960s to early 1970s. Both before and during the war, the United States President and his advisors understood little about the history of Vietnam with its successive invasions from foreign nations including China and Japan. A deeper understanding of the unity and resilience of Vietnam might have

led them to make different decisions regarding splitting the country in half and the escalation of ground troops. Mistakes born of ignorance take place all the time in international relations and even domestic politics. Regardless, history only holds lessons for the keenest observers. Every historical moment passes through a complex set of circumstances, many of which are hidden from history books, and cannot be reduced to simple lessons. For example, the Vietnam war is often summed up with the platitude that it is impossible to invade and occupy a foreign nation. This ignores the myriad reasons that led to defeat and supposes that other conflicts are identical. After the invasion of Iraq proved to be a quagmire, many relished the historical lessons of Vietnam without considering the very diverse set of circumstances that led to failure in each country. There are certainly insights to be gained from studying past conflicts, but they will rarely result in fixed, black and white rules applicable to every new situation.

In conclusion, history is not a simple road map for the future. Those who are too avid to accept seemingly apparent lessons are doomed to lead themselves astray and make new mistakes.

Music & Society (Real Past IELTS Exam/Test)

Many people believe that music is just a form of entertainment, whilst others believe that music has a much larger impact on society today. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam/Test

There are those who claim that music is solely for entertainment purposes while others feel it has larger societal implications. In my opinion, ostensibly most people listen to music for fun, however it still opens up pathways for fringe elements of society to become mainstream. Those that argue for the narrower view of music can easily highlight the ways in which music is consumed today. People listen to music at parties, nightclubs, and weddings to dance and enjoy themselves. They listen using streaming services like YouTube, Apple Music and Spotify to relax throughout the average day. The end result of all that listening is not that individuals think deeply about the lyrics or in any way question their actions, attitudes, or prejudices. More so than narrative forms of entertainment like movies and books, music is almost purely for entertainment and rarely rises above the level of subconscious enjoyment.

While there is some truth to the argument above, music turns a positive spotlight on previously underrepresented demographic groups. People do not simply listen to music; they are also apt to follow and admire their favourite artists. One of the best examples of this is the championing of LGBT lifestyles. Elton John was an early example of an artist whose sexuality was fluid at a time when many viewed this behaviour as deviant. He did not come out as gay until much later but his influence on aspiring artists and the average listener was immense. Today, there are many artists who are openly gay and this not only reduces bigotry in general by undermining its logic but also inspires others to come out. A person listening to and following artists in any genre today accepts these once alternative lifestyles as the norm.

In conclusion, music has an important role to play in society by giving voice to previously silent groups. In the same way that music broke down racial barriers in the 20th century, the 21st century will be the century of inclusion.

Staying Fit (Real Past IELTS Exam/Test)

Some believe that the best way to stay fit is to join a gym or health club while others think doing everyday activities such as walking and climbing stairs is enough.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam/Test

Many think that going to the gym is unnecessary and you can get in adequate shape simply through your day-to-day routine. In my opinion, there are benefits to a generally active lifestyle but joining a gym is still the best guarantee of a basic level of fitness.

The health benefits of everyday activities are apparent for those who are very active walkers. Doctors advise the average person to walk 10,000 steps a day to be healthy. These steps can now be easily recorded with a FitBit or Apple Watch, which means that there is less need than ever to set aside gym time. This clear goal can encourage individuals to become more aware of their daily habits and slowly change or supplement them. For example, instead of taking the elevator to one's apartment or work, you can add a few hundred steps by taking the stairs. While at work you can walk around more often and all your progress will be digitally recorded. This dedication may become habit, eliminating the need for regular, dedicated workouts.

Despite the advantages of walking detailed above, the gym nets more impactful results. The number one leading cause of death globally is heart disease and the only way to combat it is through dietary changes and exercise. Researchers have long extolled the benefits of aerobic exercise for heart health. The most effective aerobic workouts happen at the gym on treadmills and ellipticals. Many doctors recommend that patients at risk of heart disease sign up for gym memberships and commit to a regular workout schedule as walking alone does not provide the intense workout required to strengthen the heart and prevent early death.

In conclusion, going to the gym is crucial to being in good shape. Healthy habits ranging from good nutrition to taking part in sports to making time for the gym are important checks against the inclination today towards a passive, sedentary lifestyle.

Job Satisfaction/Security (Real Past IELTS Exam/Test)

Some people argue that job satisfaction is more important than job security, while others believe that they cannot always expect job satisfaction and a permanent job is more important.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Exam/Test

Some make the pragmatic argument that in an uncertain job market, security ought to be valued over satisfaction. In my opinion, those with families cannot be reproached for this view but it is generally more important to enjoy your job and spread goodwill.

Workers with dependents rightly value a consistent paycheck and benefits over all other factors. If someone is just starting out in a labour of love such as becoming an artist, they may struggle initially to bring home enough money to make ends meet every month. They might not be able to send their children to good schools, live in a good neighborhood, and keep everyone in the house reasonably well clothed and fed. Even if they can manage that, it will place incredible mental stress on not only them but also their spouse and children. Research has shown these deeply ingrained anxieties from childhood can persist throughout adulthood.

It is nonetheless more important to pursue a job that is fulfilling. The vast majority of the world dislikes their job and a large percentage of these people have difficulty reconciling their frustrations with their day-to-day temperament. An unhappy employee is more likely to be short with co-workers, complain to friends, and resent their family for the burden they

must shoulder for their welfare. More of this persons daily interactions will be negative and this adds up over years to create the greatest global repository of ill will. Free up the same person to enjoy their job and there is a strong chance they will suddenly brighten the days of those around them.

Overall, fomenting good humour is more important and only in very rare family situations should an individual persist in a job for its stability. Many recognise this once it is too late and they already have an expensive lifestyle to maintain or their best working years are behind them.

Retirement (Real Past IELTS Tests/Exams)

Some think that governments should support retired people financially while others believe they should take care of themselves.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Tests/Exams

Many today have come to the conclusion that retired seniors should be supported by the government and not left to their own meagre resources. While I agree there are certain cases where governments are liable, citizens ought to be incentivised to handle their own finances.

The main reason many support a government backed retirement plan is the dire condition of many seniors. There are a number of possible causes deserving due attention. Some seniors are without family, others may be war veterans and have trouble finding work due to physical or psychological impairments, and still others may be victims of economic downturns. Without support they must fall on the mercy of society and will wind up at soup kitchens and seeking out chronic charity or even begging. Simply put, governments are their last refuge and in the best position to lend a helping hand.

Despite the rare instances mentioned above, nations ought to encourage ownership of one's own future. If all citizens knew the government would provide a decent retirement fund for them, they would have little incentive to work hard, save money and make wise investments. Governments deal with large sample sizes and, granted this would not happen with many responsible adults, it still poses a sizeable national risk. An analogous example of this is the way parents raise their children. They provide for them early on, much like how governments offer free schooling, but then children are expected to grow up and take responsibility for their own lives. Parents that coddle their children for

too long end up spoiling them in the same way that a national retirement fund would deprive individuals of the opportunity to become self-reliant. In conclusion, the advantages of a more self-assured, mature citizenry outweigh the odd unavoidable case of desperation. There should be a degree of balance to allow for these exceptions while still nurturing more life-affirming values.

Leadership Essay 2 (Real Past IELTS Tests/Exams)

Some believe that people are naturally born as leaders while others feel that leadership skills can develop.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Many are of the view that leadership is innate, rather than cultivated through time and experience. In my opinion, leadership is largely developed rather than gifted.

Those who believe that there are naturally born leaders point out the character of a person as a fixed quantity. There are certain individuals who display a natural charisma and inimitable capacity for command. A recent example of this would be Barack Obama. He is a naturally eloquent, stately, physically imposing presence and perfectly walks a fine line between warmth and firmness. Researchers have long identified common natural characteristics of leadership such as height, a deep voice, a strong chin and natural grace of movement. These cannot be developed to a significant degree and therefore support the claim that leadership is intrinsic.

However, great leadership is more deliberate than spontaneous. There are countless examples of individuals possessing all the physical characteristics of leaders who fall well short of inspiring people. An instructive example of this is Steve Jobs. Early in his career he inspired people with his exceptional talent but that had its limits as he pushed and demeaned employees ultimately leading to his ouster from Apple. This humbling experience led him to soften the sharper edges of his personality in the ensuing decade by considering other viewpoints and giving up more control to competent employees. These learned traits served him well when he became CEO of Apple again and reached what many regard as the pinnacle of leadership.

In conclusion, though the endpoint may obscure the origins, all leaders must cultivate their hubris to become great leaders. The long-standing assumptions about leadership must be challenged in order to put in place better institutional practices to mold future pioneers of industry and politics.

Online Materials (Real Past IELTS Tests/Exams)

Many people feel that students should learn from online materials while others feel that it is better to use printed materials.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Tests

There have been recent calls for schools to phase out printed materials and take better advantage of online resources. Although printed materials enable important cognitive returns, schools should adopt online materials almost exclusively to protect the environment.

Printed materials encourage children to develop good thinking habits. Children and teenagers will of course spend an outsized amount of time on the internet, through smartphones and computers, as they grow up. This not only impacts their attention span and brain chemistry but also makes them susceptible to worryingly unreliable online information. Printed materials, on the other hand, are written by well-regarded authors, thoroughly researched, and students cannot get distracted by the lures of the internet while reading a physical book.

Nonetheless, online materials present an opportunity to protect the world's trees at a time when they are under great threat. Take the typical lifecycle of a school's coursebooks for example. Hundreds of students in a single grade are given a dozen books for various subjects every year. The books tend to be reused for several years but they later must be replaced with newer editions, necessitating more trees be cut down. Using online materials does not entail the same level of environmental costs. Textbooks can be easily updated and no trees have to be chopped down to create the devices in the first place. Over time, this will have a dramatic impact on tree populations around the globe and help mitigate the looming damage of climate change.

In conclusion, administrators should make every effort to replace the outdated medium of paper with their electronic equivalent. This is merely one step, but a still crucial one, in saving the earth from imminent catastrophe.

Children Starting School (Real Past Tests)

Some people think that children should begin their formal education at a very early age. Some think they should begin at least 7 years old.

Discuss both views give opinions.

Real Past IELTS Tests

There has been growing momentum in recent years towards movements for children to start schooling after the age of 7. In my opinion, although going to school from a young age will help with social development, children should be allowed to grow outside school until the age of 7.

Proponents of early schooling often point out the clinical research on the impact of school on social skills. At home, children are exposed to a variety of different circumstances. They may or may not have siblings, their parents might take them out for playdates often or neglect them at home, hampering their social skills. Once children start school, they are all in more or less an equal environment where they must communicate with older and younger children, compromise when playing, learn to listen to their teachers, and start forming stable bonds based on empathy and shared interests with others.

Despite the social advantages, children can develop more uniquely if they are allowed to delay their entrance to formal schooling. A good example of this is in Finland, where students do not begin school until after the age of 7. Finland is renowned for its top-performing students but this can be traced to a number of factors besides simply school age. However, the impact on individual development is apparent. According to research into child psychology, children form the basis of their personality between the ages of 4 and 7. Therefore it is paramount to delay the age when they begin school in order to give them room to breath and ultimately produce a greater variety of voices in society at large as has been the case in Finland.

In my opinion, the social benefits of school do not outweigh the individual positives of delayed schooling to both the individual and society. Schools should continue to research this area so that they can better advise policymakers.

Healthy Lifestyle (General Training)

Many think that in today's world it is very difficult for people to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Others, however,

feel that it is easy for people to be healthy and fit if they want to be. Discuss both views and give your opinion.

You should write at least 250 words.

Living a healthy lifestyle has become an increasingly important topic as what researchers know about nutrition has evolved. In my opinion, despite some obvious hurdles it is easier than ever for people to be healthy and fit today.

The main hurdles related to fitness today revolve around technology. A few decades ago people led much more active lives that involved more exercising and comparatively less time in front of screens. The advent of computer technology generally and the smartphone in particular has precipitated more passive lifestyles globally. Smartphones are the chief culprit. People become easily addicted to the small dopamine rushes that phones provide and their availability means they are tailor-made to be everyone's worst habit. This prevents many people from developing healthy exercise patterns and, in cases where people binge watch shows on Netflix or YouTube, can also cause over-eating.

Despite the above mentioned challenges, it is easy to be healthy today because of the amount of information on nutrition available. Doctors a hundred years ago recommended smoking cigarettes and the many sources of heart disease were only documented decades ago. Today everywhere you look there are articles and people on television laying out hard evidence related to nutrition as well as the importance of eating vegetables and limiting meats and fatty foods. There is healthy debate and the consensus on specific foods might fluctuate but the general trend is greater awareness of which foods are healthy and which ones will shorten your life and undermine your fitness goals.

In conclusion, although there are good excuses today to be unfit, people can learn enough about nutrition to lead a healthy life with a degree of ease. Schools should make greater efforts in the future to teach students about nutrition and set them up with the knowledge they need to combat passivity.

Responsibility, Society, and Taxes (Real Past IELTS Tests)

Some people think that paying taxes is their only responsibility towards society while others feel that everyone should do more.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Tests

Many are of the opinion that taxpayers are fulfilling their obligations to society at large while others feel that responsibility extends beyond a

financial contribution to the government. In my opinion, paying taxes greatly helps fund social programs but individuals have little choice but to do more if they also want to think highly of themselves.

The main reason that many see taxes as enough are the far reaching impact of tax dollars. Take some well-run European socialist countries such as France for example. In France, there are social welfare programs underpinning their progressive society such maternity leave for new mothers, world renowned unemployment benefits, top notch schools, not to mention more basic services like police, fire, and infrastructure maintenance. These are the direct result of taxes and though their net effect varies by implementation in various countries, they are clearly the foundation of stable societies globally.

Despite the discernible impact of taxes, individuals are responsible for their daily decisions related to society. Every job will touch on, with varying degrees of strength, society. A doctor who takes his job seriously, rather than simply trying to push new drugs or unnecessary tests to drive up premiums, helps families in their most dire situations. Even a cashier has a role to play. They can do their job responsibly with a positive attitude and send out other people into society with a good impression or contribute to the rising tide of cynicism in today's culture. These actions are unavoidable and anyone who feels the need to think of themselves as a good person has no choice but to take up a larger role in making society a better place to live.

In conclusion, though taxes are part of what a person owes to society, they will necessarily also have a positive or negative day to day impact. People should rightly see their contributions as essentially self-interested excuses to feel good about themselves.

Recycling (Real IELTS Test)

Most agree that we should be training children to recycle waste to preserve the Earth's natural resources. However, some believe that it is parents who should teach their children to recycle waste while others feel schools are more responsible.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real IELTS Past Tests

The general sentiment in most quarters is that recycling is an integral part of combatting climate change and most debate now circles around whether parents or teachers should be most responsible. In my opinion, schools reach the largest number of children overall.

Many believe that instilling values is a parental right. Parents have the basic right to influence their children according to their own beliefs. For example, a Muslim living in a Christian country will likely still follow many Islamic traditions. Even if the child learns implicitly or explicitly about Judeo-Christian tenets in school, the parents have a right to raise their child in the manner they think is most culturally fitting. This also applies to recycling, though it is hardly a matter of subjective belief to most informed citizens today.

Despite the rare potential parents who may be against recycling, schools should be where recycling is taught because government mandates will reach all children. There is simply no way to legislate every single family to make their children recycle but this can be easily enacted in schools. A good example of this would be in Japan where school children take an active role in cleaning and separating their own rubbish for recycling. Not only does this make a huge difference in itself but it is also a nationally comprehensive approach to fostering life-long environmentally conscious habits across an entire generation.

In conclusion, schools are more likely to have a larger impact on recycling habits and therefore this is their responsibility. Governments ought to make recycling one of their top educational priorities in the future as part of a cohesive plan to better the environment.

Hunger (Real IELTS Test)

Some people believe that education is the key to tackling hunger worldwide while others feel that the answer is in food aid.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Real Past IELTS Tests

Many feel that education is the best way to tackle hunger while others feel that immediate food aid is a better solution. As far as I'm concerned, education is clearly the better long-term remedy.

Many charities are active in food aid efforts because of its clear impact in emergency situations. A good example of this would be famines in a sub-Saharan African nations. These are caused by unpredictable weather conditions and coupled with governmental instability can result in mass malnutrition and even death. It is impossible to deal with the sources of these famines over time but food aid addresses its symptoms and keeps actual people alive now. The tangible results of this kind of aid are the strongest arguments in its favour.

Although the above mentioned methods are appropriate in emergencies, they do little to disrupt the underlying causes of hunger. If people are better educated then they can get better jobs and hunger disappears as a problem. There may be other relevant economic realities, such as the unemployment rate, that need addressing but education will still go a long way to eradicating hunger. Education can also help in regions that are prone to hunger as farmers will be able to develop better agricultural methods. Simply put, if citizens have good jobs, there is little real threat of hunger even under exceptional circumstances.

In conclusion, although food aid has its use, I feel education is a clearly better option. Governments ought to divert more resources into education to see world hunger ended over the course of the next century.

Medical Testing (Real Test)

Many believe that using animals for scientific testing purposes is fundamentally immoral, while others see it as a necessary evil. In my opinion, even though it is decidedly unethical, the overall impact on human progress justifies its continuance.

Detractors of animal testing often point out that animals have rights. We would never condone this type of testing on a human, even with one with a low IQ and it follows that we should treat animals with some measure of respect. The strongest argument supporting this is the level of cruelty involved in animal testing. Many drugs that are tested on animals have painful side-effects and the test subjects may die slow, painful deaths. This is undeniably unjustifiable regarding testing in non-essential medical fields such as cosmetics.

Despite the moral quagmire detailed above, I believe animal testing does enough to advance medical testing to warrant its use. Some cursory research will reveal the importance of animal testing in fields such as diabetic medicine, cancer research, experimental surgery, and stem cells. Testing insulin for diabetics on dogs may be the most well-known example of this kind of impactful research. Many other advances in medicine often attributed to animal testing have saved countless human lives to an extent that would be impossible if researchers were working under the moral constraints of human test subjects.

In conclusion, animal testing is the best way to make breakthroughs in medicine and should be strongly encouraged. Governments should work with medical institutions to implement more medical testing on animals across the board.

CHILDREN & CHOICE (BY DAVE)

Some people believe that allowing children to make their own choices on everyday matters (such as food, clothes and entertainment) is likely to result in a society of individuals who only think about their own wishes. Other people believe that it is important for children to make decisions about matters that affect them.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Cambridge IELTS 12

One common area of debate among parents is the extent to which children should be trusted to make their own decisions and the potential impact this will have on their sense of responsibility. Although decision-making skills will help in some ways, I believe parents should dictate choices for children in order to make them more aware of others.

On the one hand, children who have been allowed to make their own choices will eventually develop a keen sense of responsibility. This can be best seen in the contrasting example of helicopter parents and more liberal parents. Helicopter parents smother their children with attention and make the majority of their decisions for them. Over time, these kids will likely become dependent on their parents. If your parents always pick out your clothes then you never have to check weather forecasts, make choices about what colours match or concern yourself with trends in fashion. Later in life, these kids will not have developed any of these skills because of their parents. Contrast this with children who pick out their own clothes; they will have to consider these factors carefully and it will make them more responsible when it comes to shopping and taking care of their wardrobe.

On the other hand, I still believe that parents should make the majority of choices so that children will be more responsible towards others. For example, some parents have made the logical and ethical choice to be vegetarians and they force their children to do the same. This can have a positive effect not only on their individual health but also on the environment. Moreover, it is a learning opportunity for parents to teach their offspring about ethics. Parents can make the argument that industrial farming is inhumane and animals should be treated with more respect. This may have a carry-over effect resulting in their children growing up to be more thoughtful towards others.

In conclusion, parents should make most decisions for children to guide them to be more empathetic. They should work with teachers in their efforts to raise conscientious future citizens.

FAMILY AND THE HOME)

Many parents encourage young people to leave home when they become older, while others think they should stay at home with the family. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

It has become increasingly prevalent for young adults to leave home before getting married. In my opinion, this is a positive trend taken as a whole because it fosters independence but it can have rare debilitating financial drawbacks.

The main drawback to moving out early is losing a parental safety net that safeguards financial stability. In large cities such as New York, real estate prices are so high that without a high-paying job you will struggle to contend with rent, food, transportation costs, and allowances for leisure activities. It is even possible that these hardships could prove overwhelming and pride may prevent you from going back to your parents. These individuals might end up taking a job with a low salary or that is not their passion.

The aforementioned drawbacks are the exceptions; the majority of people who move out are successful because they become self-reliant. A standout example of this is the typical American university student. Most students leave their parental home at 18 and never look back. These students take their first baby steps towards looking after themselves by doing their own laundry, managing their finances to an extent, and taking on campus employment. Once they graduate from university they will likely take over their entire financial outlay. This means they must find a good job and spend more responsibly. These qualities, of frugality and responsibility, will serve them well in their lives and increase their odds of future success.

In conclusion, the majority benefit from the added responsibility that leaving home brings. To encourage more people to move out parents should provide a degree of financial support when necessary but focus more on fostering their children's independence.

HEALTH PROBLEMS INDIVIDUALS/GOVERNMENTS (REAL IELTS EXAM)

Many people believe that every individual is responsible for his/her own healthy lifestyle. Others believe that governments should take care of it. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

There has been much recent policy advocacy related to what the proper role of governments in healthcare should be. Although I believe governments have begun to treat this issue with the seriousness it merits, the responsibility for taking care of one's health should ultimately rest with individuals as they are more likely to stick with habits that they themselves have cultivated.

Those who favour strong governmental intervention often point out the role of the state in forming healthy eating habits through early intervention at public schools. In the United States, the vast majority of students attend state schools and in recent years the government has been implementing new policies aimed at curbing addiction to unhealthy foods. This means that they have reduced the total intake of saturated fats in school lunches and drastically cut down on sugar not only in prepared lunches but also in the ubiquitous vending machines placed around most schools. In the short term this has led to improved health for students but its true effect will be over the next several decades when these children grow up and are more likely to eschew fast food for the healthier alternatives now opening up to meet the growing demands of an increasingly health-conscious nation.

While there are clear benefits to governmental action, individuals are better at regulating their own behaviour in the long-term. People have always found ways to get around rules in order to satisfy their most basic desires, including those related to food. No matter what steps governments take, people will always crave unhealthy, delicious foods as our brains are hardwired to feel pleasure from saturated fats, carbohydrates, and sugar. For example, even a country like France, which has imposed strict rules over the food that children are served, is still facing an obesity crises. Therefore the only way for people to consistently combat poor health is to develop the discipline on their own. Individuals who make the choice to eat healthier are more likely to stick with this habit having worked out the reasons for themselves, rather than simply following a rule imposed by their schools at the behest of the government.

In conclusion, governments have a large role to play in public health but only individuals can take control of their own lives and make decisions that will truly benefit them in the future. In this case, the best solution is simply no solution. Standing back and allowing people to become more self-reliant will not only have more long-lasting effects but will also empower individuals in various other areas of their life to be more responsible.

Railway Lines (by Dave)

In a number of countries, some people think it is necessary to spend large sums of money on constructing new railway lines for very fast trains between cities. Others believe the money should be spent on improving existing public transport.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Cambridge IELTS 12

Governments must always balance demands for newer modes of transport, including newer railway lines to connect cities, with maintaining current transportation infrastructure. In my opinion, the maintenance of current transport has a greater overall impact although the importance of fast trains will make life more convenient for commuters in the short-term.

The rationale for investing in newer, faster railway lines is that they will make it easier for people to travel between cities. Recent examples of this can be seen in Japan, which is famous for its 'bullet trains' that allow residents to traverse the country in a matter of hours. This provides an economic boon by allowing businessmen to travel easily from city to city. Moreover, tourists can also use these trains for convenient transnational travel, thereby making the country more tourist-friendly and helping to expand the industry.

Although I concede the above advantages, the majority of people are served by already existing forms of public transportation. Tourists and businessmen travelling between cities are the exception compared with those travelling inside cities. These travellers rely on buses, subways and city streets to get around. Simple improvements or additions to a subway line impacts millions of people. A new bus route can help workers get to and from work more easily. Even the lowering of fares is a reform that would benefit less affluent travellers.

In conclusion, cities that are more concerned with actual improvements, rather than publicity grabbing headlines, should focus on the most-used

forms of public transport. In the future high speed rails may even become redundant as people commute less and transition to jobs based primarily online.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS PLANTS AND ANIMALS (IELTS CAMBRIDGE 14)

Some people say that the main environmental problem of our time is the loss of particular species of plants and animals. Others say that there are more important environmental problems.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Many are of the opinion that the risks for endangered plants and wildlife are the most severe consequences of our worsening environment while others would argue that other problems are more pressing. While I consider the impact of recurring natural disasters to be important, in my opinion the loss of wildlife is the most serious threat to the environment. The rise in recent catastrophic natural disasters has been strongly linked to climate change. Many scientists have made the case that incremental rises in temperature, specifically involving the oceans, has increased the frequency and potency of hurricanes, tsunamis, and blizzards. There are countless instances of these from the last two decades but the tsunami affecting mainly Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand in 2004 is a particularly striking example. This was the largest natural disaster this century and resulted in thousands of deaths, injuries and billions of dollars in damages, the effects of which set these developing nations back economically for years. People lost their lives, homes, and livelihood in many cases.

The main reason that many people including myself are so focused on plant and animal life is because of the rising number of endangered animals in recent decades. One of the most well-known examples of this is the often cited case of polar bears. Polar bears live mainly in the Arctic and recent melting of the polar ice caps has resulted in reduced ice for polar bears to hunt on. Polar bears have become an endangered species and it is often forecast that by 2100 they will be entirely extinct in the wild. Their extinction will likely have a domino effect on the fragile ecosystems of the arctic and other endangered animals like seals and narwhales. This is just one example of the impact of global warming on animals and plants of our planet. Extinction is irreversible and there is no more lasting impression we can leave than to deplete the world entirely of a species.

In my opinion, the loss of ecological diversity trumps any other environmental concerns. In order to remedy this problem governments and individuals need to take serious steps to not only invest more in conservation efforts for endangered animals but also work towards long term reforms related to fossil fuels, carbon emissions and the other apparent catalysts for climate change.

ACCEPTANCE / UNSATISFACTORY (IELTS CAMBRIDGE 14) BY DAVE

Some people believe that it is best to accept a bad situation, such as an unsatisfactory job or shortage of money. Others argue that it is better to try and improve such situations.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Many people find themselves in situations where they must either accept what life has given them or find a way to move up in the world. In my opinion, although accepting your situation in life may be pragmatic in some cases, it is still better to at least strive to improve your situation as it can usually be bettered to some degree.

On the one hand, the vast majority of people are unable to drastically change their situation and acceptance of this fact will make them feel more satisfied with their lives. The best example of this would be those people living in dire economic conditions. Recent research puts the Democratic Republic of Congo as one of the poorest nations on Earth, both due to a lack of developed infrastructure and internal strife in recent years. For a person living in a small village, ravaged by war or famine, it would be cruel to suggest that they should find a way to improve their lives when it might simply be impossible. Instead, such people may feel they are better off accepting that they cannot make any changes to their situation at the present moment and just focus on their own survival and that of their family. These situations are rare but do exist around the world in various countries, particularly if they are at war or experiencing a severe economic downturn.

On the other hand, few would dispute the fact that in even the most difficult situations people can make their lives better through continued effort. Instances of people who worked hard and became successful abound in both developed and developing nations. Some relevant examples of this are the postwar situations of countries like Germany, Japan, and South Korea. All those countries were devastated by war to greater and lesser degrees yet they are all currently economic powerhouses. In Japan, World War 2 left their population depleted of workers, a deep national debt due to reparations and infrastructure reduced to rubble. By not accepting their situation they were able to become leaders in technology through notable companies like Sony, Nokia and Toyota. The efficacy of the individuals who had to work hard to improve their lives is reflected in the overall progress of the country and should serve as an example to all war-torn nations.

To conclude, there are very few situations where it would be advisable to simply accept an unhappy situation because hard work over a long period will pay off to some degree in the vast majority of cases. By having a more positive attitude it is also more likely that your efforts to make a better life will be rewarded, while a more defeatist attitude is likely to reduce your chances to make changes in life.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (IELTS CAMBRIDGE 12) BY DAVE

Some people believe that it is good to share as much information as possible in scientific research, business, and the academic world. Others believe that some information is too important or too valuable to be shared freely.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

The question of how much information relevant to various areas of scientific and academic research should be shared is becoming more and more important as the pace of technological innovation quickens and the internet allows for instant collaboration. In my opinion, information is a valuable, potentially dangerous asset and should only be shared freely in particular circumstances.

Advocates of freely sharing information rightly argue that collaboration leads to faster results. This applies to scientists, who can help each by offering their individual research results, businesses, which can work together as long as they are not competitors on advertising or product development, as well as academics, who need fresh perspectives to push their work to higher plateaus. Take for example the potential for sharing information in the business world. Google has built their successful advertising business by working together with various companies and sharing information. Google collects a variety of statistics related to users including their location and interests. This information is shared with advertisers who can then better target ads for users. It allows the consumer to see more relevant products and services and the companies advertising to target their audience more efficiently.

While there are decided advantages like the one mentioned above, information is still a valuable asset that individuals and companies should safeguard. In a perfect world, we might expect people to openly share everything they know but the social and economic constructions of our actual world make this a naive proposition. One interesting example of this is from a recent news article about Elon Musk where he explained why his rocket company SpaceX does not apply for patents on any new technology. He reasoned that his main competitors are governments, not private companies. If his company discloses its innovations then domestic and foreign governments can take advantage of the shared technology and potentially disrupt his business. This is just one example of how sharing can prove damaging in a capitalist society.

In conclusion, though sharing might be a valid standpoint in a perfect world, it is not feasible under current global conditions. Instead of looking to increase sharing, governments should do more to support innovative companies and researchers. This will have a larger overall impact.

TRANSPORTATION (BY DAVE)

Some people think that governments should invest mainly in making public transportation faster while other think there are more important priorities (cost, the environment). Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

While many are of the opinion that the most important factor in public transport is speed, others value areas such as cost and the environment. In my opinion, although there are a number of key considerations, speed is by far the most important.

Two of the most commonly addressed areas of public transport are cost and the environment. In Vietnam, the quality of the public transport buses is very low and they produce a lot of air pollution. However, they are very cheap and this allows the residents who need them the most, typically students and low-wage earners, to afford them. In an ideal world the government would have cheap buses that produce little exhaust, but cost and environmental concerns will always be in conflict. In developing countries, it makes sense to emphasise the expense of tickets while developed countries have the wealth and responsibility to try to better balance these competing policy influences.

Although these are worthwhile considerations, speed of transport should be the main rationale as it has a trickle down effect on the economy and quality of life of a country. For example, Japan has a famously fast and efficient system of railways both inside cities and connecting provinces within the country. If someone has a family, faster transport allows them to spend more time with their family both before and after work. This can enhance the quality of life of working class people. It also means that they will get to work faster, get more work done during the day and have more time to recuperate for the next day. Over years and decades this has hastened Japan's development into one of the world's leading economies. In my opinion, cost and the environment are crucial for ordinary people and the future of our planet but speed has a greater effect on people in both the short and long-term. Governments that focus on faster public transport will reap the rewards for decades and be able to reinvest that money in areas like the environment, education, and healthcare.

NEWSPAPERS AND THE MEDIA (BY DAVE)

Some people think that newspapers are the best way to learn news. However, others believe that they can learn news better through other media. Discuss both views and give your opinion

Newspapers have been considered the most reliable news source for more than a century but in recent decades newer forms of media have supplanted their influence. Some feel that these new sources of news are better but in my opinion, newspapers are by far better because of the amount of time and research that writers put into their articles.

The main reason that many people prefer newer media outlets is that they deliver news more quickly across a variety of convenient platforms. The most notable example of this is online news. The vast majority of people get their news from Facebook and other social media websites which aggregate articles from various online publishers, including the online version of print newspapers in some cases. The problem here is that websites are solely concerned with increasing traffic and getting news up as fast as possible. It is a common occurrence for a website to publish news quickly in order to beat others to the scoop before it has been properly verified or even thoughtfully analysed. The result is hordes of people clicking on links to amuse themselves for a minute without casting a critical eye over the veracity of the news. These articles are then shared online or by word of mouth and false information spreads rapidly.

Despite the conveniences of online media, the news that is printed in newspapers has been better researched and verified in most cases. Newspapers frequently devote entire departments to long-term investigative journalism. A standout example of this would be the Boston Globe's years long investigation into sexual abuse by the Catholic church. They carefully interviewed victims and put together a convincing case which led to long-lasting reforms and convictions of some individuals. They also published stories on the topic for over a year which allowed for detailed and thoughtful analysis of the problem, suggestions for solutions, and articles on wider societal implications. This type of reporting is anathema to the fervent pace of online media.

In conclusion, even though newspapers are a dying industry I think they are more informative and trustworthy than the largely online institutions that are replacing them. This trend is irreversible and will have consequences for the future of democracies around the world as people become less informed.

HISTORY (BY DAVE)

Some people say history is one the most important school subjects. Other people think that, in today's world, subjects like science and technology are more important than history. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own experience or knowledge. Write at least 250 words.

There are many people who have called into question the importance in today's world of subjects like history, which do not have an immediately discernible impact on most future careers. While I think that history should still be mandatory, more practical subjects related to technology and the arts are more needed in our evolving world.

The main reason that students should study some history in school is that it provides crucial insights into nations around the world that serve as springboards for later political beliefs. In America, students learn about the American Revolution, the constitution and the founding fathers periodically from elementary to high school. They learn about why the war started (so that the colonies could tax and govern themselves) as well as the great figures from history like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin. Some of the principles students learn include the ideas of American exceptionalism, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and the responsibility of citizens to vote in a representative democracy. Later in life, most people will lean liberal or conservative but still hold the same basic convictions about individual liberty and responsibility. By knowing the context in which these ideas emerged students can become adults with well-informed political beliefs and it will be more difficult for unscrupulous politicians to make false assertions about the past.

Although history should still be taught, the practical sciences and arts should be prioritised because these are more likely to have an impact on a person's future career. Very few students will end up with careers in history, as historians or professors, but a large percentage will work in the arts and especially the sciences. For example, in Vietnam the most popular university majors are engineering, finance, and graphic design. If schools emphasise maths at school then this will better prepare them to make calculations in complex engineering projects or when working at a bank or accountancy firm. Even learning how to draw and use colors in art class is more useful for students because of the high demand for graphic designers on websites and advertisements. Countries that devote more of their educational budget towards these practical subjects will give students a head start on a potential future career and increase their chances of having a higher standard of living.

It is clear that in this case a moderate approach is best. School administrators should not remove history from the timetable but in my opinion they should devote more time and resources to the teaching of subjects related to technology and the arts. This will become ever more important as the tech industry continues to dominate the future job market.