

Written Expressions

3rd Year Classes

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Unit One: Exploring the Past

Civilisations

Topic01:

Modern civilization has kept changing at a fast pace. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

A century ago, people were able to live in better conditions than their parents thanks to the progress made in science and technology. But in practice, the outcome of this progress was slow to materialise. For instance, most people still used to travel long distances on foot or by stage coach. And as mechanization was not introduced significantly in daily activities, household chores still had to be done manually, and were therefore time consuming.

On the other hand, community life was still an asset for social cohesion, since people had more opportunities to meet and interact. So they were able to chat with neighbours at shops or in clubs and have a cup of coffee with friends or relatives and tell stories and jokes. Likewise, family visits were frequent and kept the folklore alive, with the grandparents who used to tell traditional tales or sing lullabies or folk songs to their grandchildren. Unfortunately, with the development of audiovisual means such as the cinema, radio, television and then personal appliances like the computer, CD-ROMs and DVDs, the chances of socialization are dwindling and the lack of interaction between people may increase stress, loneliness and anxiety.

Could we then complain that we are missing out on some ingredients in life which used to make our great grandparents happier? This is probably so, since closer contacts among neighbours, friends and families had to be beneficial for communal harmony. However, scientific progress in all fields, particularly in medicine, modes of transportation and communication, and agribusiness can only show that our lives are today quite fulfilling and , if anything, more comfortable than a century ago.

Topic02:

Algeria was the cradle of many ancient civilizations. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Algeria is a huge country in Northern Africa. It covers 920,000 square miles (2,380,000 sq. km), making it more than three times the size of Texas, and the 11th largest nation on Earth. It shares borders with Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Tunisia, and Western Sahara, and has coastline on the Mediterranean.

People have been living in the region that is now Algeria, and the surrounding Maghreb, for more than 200,000 years. The first civilizations sprang up between 4000 and 8000 years ago, eventually forming a cohesive population, usually referred to collectively as the Berber culture.

From about 900 BCE Algeria has been invaded repeatedly by various peoples, mostly from across the Mediterranean. First the Phoenicians came, trading along the coast and eventually establishing Carthage in nearby Tunisia and various outposts in Algeria. Then came the Romans, who conquered the Berbers more-or-less completely by 24 AD. By the 4th century Algeria had been converted to Christianity.

Beginning in the 8th century Algeria, and the greater Maghreb, became a strategic target for the expanding Islamic world. By the end of the first decade of the 8th century the Umayyads had conquered all of North Africa, including Algeria. Over the next few centuries Algeria converted to Islam and was Arabized dramatically.

In the 16th century Algeria came under the control of the Ottoman Empire, and became a center for Mediterranean piracy and privateering. It was in Algeria that the infamous pirate Red Beard (né Barbarossa) eventually was based, as a provincial governor. During this period both Arabs and native Berbers saw their roles diminished, as Turkish became the national language and Turks became entrenched in most positions of power. Piracy continued to spread and become institutionalized in Algeria, as well as its neighbors, in a confederacy known as the Barbary States. In addition to capturing the wealth of European traders, these pirates also began capturing Christians as slaves, a turn of events that eventually led the young United States to enter into two of its earliest wars against the Barbary Coast.

In the early 19th century Algeria was conquered by the French, who began to settle and develop the region. Although infrastructure developed under French control, to the majority of the Muslim inhabitants of Algeria, France was seen as a harsh colonial power. Resistance and open revolt continued throughout all of the French occupation, but it began to grow substantially and develop during the 1930s. Although relatively peaceful attempts were made for a Constitution and more equality in the mid-1940s, these were met with no support by the French government.

By 1954 the situation had gotten bad enough that the citizenry revolted on a massive scale. The National Liberation Front was the main body of revolt, launching a full-scale civil war that would last for eight years. In that time nearly two million Algerians would die, and another two to three million were relocated. Independence was finally achieved in 1962, after one of the longest, bloodiest wars for independence in modern history.

<http://www.wisageek.com/what-should-i-know-about-algeria.htm>

Topic03:

Write a composition on the scientific achievements of the ancient Greek civilization.

Typical Essay:

The Greeks were very interested in science as a way of organizing the world and making order out of chaos, and having power over some very powerful things like oceans and weather. From about 600 BC, a lot of Greek men spent time observing the planets and the sun and trying to figure out how astronomy worked. They must have gotten their first lessons from the Babylonians, who were very good at astronomy and also very interested in it. By the 400's BC, Pythagoras was interested in finding the patterns and rules in mathematics and music, and invented the idea of a mathematical proof. Although Greek women usually were not allowed to study science, Pythagoras did have some women among his students. Socrates, a little bit later, developed logical methods for deciding whether something was true or not.

In the 300's BC, Aristotle and other philosophers at the Lyceum and the Academy in Athens worked on observing plants and animals, and organizing the different kinds of plants and animals into types. Again, this is a way of creating order out of chaos.

After Aristotle, using his ideas and also ideas from Egypt and the Persians and Indians, Hippocrates and other Greek doctors wrote important medical texts that were used for hundreds of years.

Topic04:

Write a composition on the ancient Egyptian civilization.

Typical Essay:

Egypt is one of the most fertile areas of Africa, and one of the most fertile of the countries around the Mediterranean Sea. Because it is so fertile, people came to live in Egypt earlier than in most places, probably around 40,000 years ago. At first there were not very many people, but gradually Egypt became more crowded, so there was more need for a unified government. Around 3000 BC (5000 years ago), Egypt was first unified under one ruler, who was called the Pharaoh.

The pharaoh's government guaranteed both external and internal security to the people of Egypt. As a consequence, the Egyptians grew very proud of their country and became so fond of the pharaoh that they worshipped him as a god-king. This national pride and identification with the pharaoh kept the unity of ancient Egypt and made its civilization prosper for many centuries.

From that time until around 525 BC, when Egypt was conquered by the Persians, Egypt's history is divided into six different time periods. These are called the Old Kingdom, the First Intermediate Period, the Middle Kingdom, the Second Intermediate Period, the New Kingdom, and the Third Intermediate Period.

But the economy of ancient Egypt was ruined by all the resources that the pharaohs put into the building of pyramids and the gradual decline and fall of ancient Egyptian civilization.

Topic05:

Write a composition on the scientific achievements of the ancient Egyptian civilization.

Typical Essay:

Egyptian scientists were generally most interested in observing nature and practical engineering, and they were very good at both of these things. The pyramids and temples, for example, show good knowledge of geometry and engineering. Egyptian engineers used the Pythagorean Theorem, thousands of years before Pythagoras was born.

Because the Nile flood was so important to Egyptian farming, scientists also worked out good ways to measure how high the flood was going each year, and kept accurate records and good calendars. You can see here how the Egyptian wrote down numbers. The device they used to measure the height of the Nile flood is called a Nilometer.

They also worked out good ways to move water from the Nile to outlying farms in the desert, using hand-powered irrigation pumps (shadufs) and canals.

It may also have been Egyptian scientists who first figured out how to make yeast-rising bread.

Topic06:

Write a composition on the achievements of the ancient Egyptian civilization in architecture.

Typical Essay:

People tend to think that Egyptian building styles stayed the same for the whole period of Egyptian history, from the beginning of the Old Kingdom to the end of the New Kingdom two thousand years later, but that's not true. The Egyptians built different kinds of buildings at different times, just like any other group of people.

In the early part of the Old Kingdom, the Egyptians built mainly mastabas, a kind of tomb with a flat roof like a house. Then throughout most of the Old Kingdom, the Egyptians built the pyramid tombs which are now so famous. Of course they also built smaller buildings like houses and butcher shops.

In the Middle Kingdom, the mastaba tomb came back again, although in a more elaborate form for the Pharaohs. They didn't build any more pyramids. Then in the New Kingdom there was a lot of building that was not tombs: temples for the gods especially, but also palaces for the Pharaohs.

Topic07:

Write a composition on the ancient Sumerian civilization and its achievements.

Typical Essay:

The people who settled down and began to develop a civilization, in the land between the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers , are known as the Sumerians. About a thousand years later, the Babylonians took over in the south, and the Assyrians took over in the north, but the Sumerian culture lived on.

The Sumerian civilization probably began around 5000 BCE. In the beginning, they were an agricultural community. They grew crops and stored food for times of need.

The ancient Sumerians were very smart. They invented, amongst other things, the wheel, the sailboat, and the first written language, frying pans, razors, cosmetic sets, shepherd's pipes, harps, kilns to cook bricks and pottery, bronze hand tools like hammers and axes, the plow, the plow seeder, and the first superhero, Gilgamesh.

They invented a system of mathematics based on the number 60. Today, we divide an hour into 60 minutes, and a minute into 60 seconds. That comes from the ancient Mesopotamians.

Some Mesopotamian words are still in use today. Words like crocus, which is a flower, and saffron, which is a spice, are words borrowed from the ancient Mesopotamians.

The ancient Mesopotamians created a government that was a combination of monarchy and democracy. Kings ruled the people. Elected officials who served in the Assembly also ruled the people. Even kings had to ask the Assembly for permission to do certain things.

Law held a special place in their civilization. In Babylonian times, laws were actually written down. But there were always laws. The laws clearly said how you had to behave and what your punishment would be if you did not behave correctly. And the laws that were later written down, for the most part, were laws created by the ancient Sumerians.

Ancient Sumer was a bustling place of three or four hundred people. The ancient Sumerians built many cities along the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers. Archaeologists believe that their largest city, the city of Ur, had a population of around 24,000 residents!

Topic08:

Write a composition on the ancient Phoenician civilization.

Typical Essay:

Another great race of people descended from the Babylonian or Semitic stock were the Phoenicians. They inherited the intellectual and adventurous side of Babylonian life, and through them the use of the alphabet, or written language, was spread abroad over all the world.

The Phoenicians were earth's first-known sailors and explorers. In tiny barks, such as we of today would think scarcely safe for navigating a river, they coasted the entire Mediterranean Sea and even ventured far along the shores of the tempestuous Atlantic. They went not as traders in the ordinary sense, but as bold adventurers, eager to see new things, resolute to confront and conquer whatever sudden, unknown danger leaped upon them.

Their home lay along the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, adjoining Palestine, the home of the Hebrews. There they built mighty cities--Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, celebrated in song and story, the richest, most strongly guarded towns of their day. From these, the daring little ships sped forth ready to traffic or to plunder--for the Phoenicians were ever pirates where piracy seemed most profitable--ready to turn miners and dig in the tin mines of England, or become herders and raise flocks in the fertile valleys of Spain. They were, as the Greeks called them, a "red people," ruddy of face and probably of hair. The whole world knew and liked and feared these red Phoenicians, these first ready-witted searchers of the globe.

Topic09:

Write a composition on the achievements of the ancient Indus valley civilization in architecture and art.

Typical Essay:

The earliest big buildings in India were built by the Harappan people in the Indus River valley, about 2500 BC. The Harappan buildings included high brick walls around their cities to keep out enemies. Most of the buildings were ordinary houses, with rooms arranged around a small courtyard. Probably some families owned a whole house (and lived in it with their slaves), while others rented only one room in a house, and the whole family lived together in the one room. The rulers built bigger buildings, like this public bathing house and a town warehouse for storing wheat and barley, also out of mud-brick and baked brick. Like the houses, these bigger buildings were square or rectangular, with small courtyards in the middle. They used arches, but, like the Sumerians and the Egyptians, they only used them underground, as drains or foundations for buildings.

The major themes of Indian art seem to begin emerging as early as the Harappan period, about 2500 BC. Although we're still not sure, some Harappan images look like later images of Vishnu and Shiva, and the tradition may start this early. With the arrival of the Indo-Europeans (or Aryans) around 1500 BC, came new artistic ideas.

Around 500 BC, the conversion to Buddhism of a large part of the population of India brought with it some new artistic themes. But at first nobody made images of the Buddha - only stupas (STOO-pahs), symbolic representations that didn't look like a person.

Then the conquests of Alexander the Great, in the 320's BC, also had an important impact on Indian art. Alexander left colonies of Greek veteran soldiers in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and these soldiers attracted Greek sculptors (maybe some of the soldiers were sculptors). Their Greek-style carvings attracted attention in India - the first life-size stone statues in India date to the 200's BC, just after Alexander. During the Guptan period, about 500 AD, the great cave temples of Ajanta and Ellora were carved. Scenes from the life of the Buddha became popular, and statues of the Buddha.

Finally, the arrival of the Islamic faith and Islamic conquerors about 1000 AD brought iconoclasm to India, and a love of varied and complex patterning derived from Arabic and Persian models. This affected even Hindu artists who had not converted to Islam. Small Persian-style miniature paintings also became popular.

Topic10:

Write a composition on the scientific achievements of the ancient Indus valley civilization?

Typical Essay:

From the time of the Harappans to the time of the Islamic conquests, Indian scientists and mathematicians were leaders in many different fields. They especially stood out in mathematics and engineering.

The Harappans in 2500 BC had a sewage system at their city of Mohenjo-Daro, and carefully laid out, straight streets. So even though we can't read their writing, we know that the Harappans understood a lot of geometry.

A severe climate change halted development at Harappa around 2000 BC. The Aryan invasion of 1500 BC also seems to have stopped scientific advances for a while, but it did bring military advances to India in the form of horse-drawn war chariots. Around 800 BC, when the Aryans in northern India learned to smelt iron from the Assyrians in West Asia, this gave them another military advantage.

Around 500 BC, thanks to Persian influence, the city of Taxila (in modern Pakistan) became a great scientific center. Atreya, a great botanist (plant specialist) and doctor, was working at Taxila about this time. Around the 300's BC, Indian farmers seem to have been using water wheels to lift water for irrigation - the earliest water wheels in the world.

By 250 or 200 BC, under Mauryan rule, Indian scientists were the first in the world to be smelting iron with carbon to make steel.

In the 600's AD, Indian mathematicians may have been responsible for inventing the numeral zero, and the decimal (or place) system (or it is possible that they got this idea from Chinese mathematicians). This made it a lot easier to add and multiply than it had been before. Indian mathematical ideas soon spread to West Asia and from there to Africa and Europe.

Indian advances in iron-working led to some new ideas in the 1000's and 1100's AD. First, Indian architects were the first to use iron beams to replace wooden beams for building big temples. Second, Indian blacksmiths discovered a kind of iron that made a very strong and flexible kind of steel, called wootz steel.

Topic11:

Write a composition on the scientific achievements of the Roman civilization?

Typical Essay:

Roman scientific achievements are mostly in the areas of medicine and engineering. The Romans invented a lot of new ways to mine for metals like silver and gold and lead. They developed water mills as well for grinding grain. And they were the first people to really use concrete for major building projects. The use of concrete helped them to develop the dome and the barrel vault and the cross vault. They used their vaults to build aqueducts to carry fresh water to towns, and they used their engineering skills to build sewage systems to keep their towns clean and healthy.

Roman subjects in Phoenicia also invented blown glass, and mold-made pottery and oil lamps were also first made in the Roman period.

In medicine, Galen wrote during the Roman Empire, and he was the first to describe many symptoms and treatments. His medical textbook was the standard for over a thousand years. The Romans didn't do that much work in mathematics, but they did develop their own way of writing numbers.

Topic12:

Write a composition on the achievements of the Roman civilization in architecture?

Typical Essay:

One of the things the Romans are most famous for is their architecture. The Romans brought a lot of new ideas to architecture, of which the three most important are the arch, the baked brick, and the use of cement and concrete.

Around 700 BC the Etruscans brought West Asian ideas about architecture to Italy, and they taught these ideas to the Romans. We don't have much Etruscan architecture left, but a lot of their underground tombs do survive, and some traces of their temples.

In the Republican period, the Romans built temples and basilicas, but also they made a lot of improvements to their city: aqueducts and roads and sewers. The Forum began to take shape. Outside of Rome, people began to build stone amphitheaters for gladiatorial games.

The first Roman emperor, Augustus, made more changes: he built a lot of brick and marble buildings, including a big Altar of Peace and a big tomb for his family, and a big stone theater for plays. Augustus' stepson Tiberius rebuilt the Temple of Castor and Pollux in the Roman forum. Augustus' great-great-grandson Nero also did a lot of building in Rome, including his Golden House.

Then in 69 AD Vespasian tore down some of the Golden House to build the Colosseum. Vespasian's son Titus built a great triumphal arch, and his other son Domitian built a great palace for himself on the Palatine hill.

Even though Domitian was assassinated in 96 AD, later architects continued to use the techniques that had been developed for his palace, just as later emperors continued to live in Domitian's palace. Trajan's architect used brick and concrete arches to build a new forum with a big column in it and an elaborate market building that is the source of modern shopping malls. Trajan also built the first major public bath building in Rome. It may have been the same architect who later designed Hadrian's Pantheon, a temple to all the gods, which used brick and concrete to build a huge dome. Nobody would build a bigger dome for more than a thousand years.

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/romans/architecture/romarch.htm>

Topic13:

Write a composition on the ancient Roman system of government.

Typical Essay:

From 500 BC to nearly 1500 AD, for two thousand years, Roman government had more or less the same system. Of course there were some changes over that time too.

When the Roman Republic was first set up, in 500 BC, the people in charge were two men called consuls. The consuls controlled the army, and they decided whether to start a war and how much taxes to collect and what the laws were. There were also prefects in Rome, whose job was to run the city – some heard court cases, some ran the vegetable markets or the meat markets or the port. Finally, there was also an Assembly of all the men (not women) who were grownup and free and had Roman citizenship.

Once the Romans began conquering other places, far away from the city of Rome, they also had a system of provincial governors – men who took charge of a province of the Empire, and who heard court cases there. They were also in charge of the army while it was conquering places.

By about 50 BC, the time of Julius Caesar, these generals had begun to take over the government and not pay any attention to the consuls or the Senate anymore, and just do as they pleased. They could do that, because they had the army with them.

Augustus, in 31 BC, was one of these generals. But he realized that people didn't like this pushing people around, and so he set up a different system keeping the Senate and the consuls. This system kept on going for the next 1500 years, more or less.

Topic14:

Write a composition on the scientific achievements of the ancient Chinese civilization.

Typical Essay:

In early and medieval China, as in the Roman Empire, science seems to have been oriented mainly towards engineering and practical inventions, and not so much towards theoretical ideas about how the natural world worked. It was in Han Dynasty China that paper was first invented, and about the same time that the magnetic compass, for telling north from south, was also invented there. Scientists in China also invented gunpowder.

Chinese scholars also conducted scientific observations of plants and animals, and also of astronomy (the stars and planets). The many detailed and careful drawings of flowers and other plants, and star charts, from China show this interest.

The influence of Confucius made China a place where logical thought was also highly valued. Mathematics was taught in the schools, through the use of a math textbook called the Nine Chapters, which may have been written as early as the Han Dynasty in the 200's AD (but nobody knows for sure).

By around 850 AD, under the Tang Dynasty, Chinese printers were experimenting with block printing, and around the year 1000 they invented moveable type.

Topic15:

Write a composition on the ancient Islamic civilization.

Typical Essay:

People first came to the Arabian Peninsula probably about 150,000 BC, in the Old Stone Age. They were hunters and gatherers. By 2000 BC (or possibly earlier) Semitic-speaking people had moved into the Arabian Peninsula, also coming from the north. They were nomads when they arrived, who travelled around with their sheep and goats pasturing them in different pastures at different times of year. And they stayed nomads: many of them are nomads today.

In the southern part of the peninsula, on the other hand, the people were farmers. Nobody is sure where they came from, but the Queen of Sheba mentioned in the Bible may be one of these people.

By the time of Alexander the Great, we start to know a little more about the Arabs, because the Greeks were trading with them. The Romans also traded with the Arabs, who got spices and other things from India and sold them to the Romans for gold.

In the long war between the Sassanids and the Romans, different tribes of Arabs fought on each side. In this Late Antique period, the kingdom of Saba (Sheba) fell apart.

The Prophet Mohammed was born in the northern Arabian trading city of Mecca between 570 and 580 AD. When he was forty years old, he heard the angel Gabriel speaking to him and telling Mohammed that he was a prophet in the line of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, who would continue the faith those prophets had started. Mohammed's faith was called Islam (iz-LAMM). After a slow start, Mohammed made a lot of converts to his religion, and after he won some military battles, most of the other Arabic tribes also converted to Islam. After they had done that, Mohammed's successors attacked first the Romans and then the Sassanids to convert them. By 640 (after the death of Mohammed) the Arabs controlled most of West Asia, and soon after that, under the rule of the Umayyad caliphs, they conquered Egypt. By 711, the Umayyads controlled all of Western Asia except Turkey (which was still part of the Roman Empire), and all of the southern Mediterranean: Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and most of Spain.

Topic16:

Write a composition on the scientific achievements of the ancient Islamic civilization.

Typical Essay:

Because West Asia was such an economic crossroads in the medieval Islamic period - because of the Silk Road that connected China and India in the east to Europe and Africa in the West - there were always lots of new scientific ideas coming through West Asia too. Educated West Asian scholars were able to make use of these foreign ideas to develop new scientific theories and approaches.

One example from the East is the use of "Arabic" numbers, which really came from India, about 630 AD. The Arabic word for numbers, in fact, is *hindsah*, which means "from India". Arab scientists, especially the Persian Mohammed Al-Khwarizmi, were able to make use of the new numbers (and possibly the work of Greek mathematicians like Diophantus of Alexandria) to develop algebra around 830 AD (The English word "algorithm" comes from Al-Khwarizmi). (Ordinary people, however, kept on using the Greek system of numbers; only mathematicians used Arabic numbers).

In the 800's AD, the great schools at Cordoba in Spain, under Umayyad rule, inspired many scholars to investigate new scientific ideas. Among them was a man of Berber origin, Ibn Firnas, who designed the first glider, which he successfully used in 875, when he was 65 years old, to fly down from a cliff near Cordoba (though he hurt his back when he landed). This was the first controlled human flight.

A more successful invention also from Islamic Spain was the glass mirror, invented around 1000 AD. Even earlier, in the 900's, Ibn Sahl and others made curved glass mirrors that concentrated sunlight to focus heat.

About 1000 AD, West Asian blacksmiths also learned how to make steel from India, and then they developed the idea further to produce the very high quality Damascus steel that was used in fighting the Crusades.

Another example from the East is the use of paper, which the Arabs learned from the Chinese about 750 AD. The magnetic compass also came to West Asia from China, about 1100 AD.

From the West, Arabic scholars were able to read the books of the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle, and the Roman encyclopedist Pliny the Elder, and they translated these books into Arabic. They were especially interested in Aristotle and Pliny's studies of plants and animals, and produced many new studies like that of their own, often with beautifully detailed and accurate illustrations. This led to the classification and description of many new species of plants and animals, and also to advances in medicine. All through the Middle Ages, everyone knew that the best doctors, men like Ibn Sina or Maimonides, lived in the Islamic kingdoms.

Topic17:

Write a composition on the achievements of the Islamic civilization in architecture.

Typical Essay:

The first buildings that were built in the Islamic Empire were designed by Greek architects who had already been living in the area when the Arabs conquered it. Because of that, these buildings look a lot like earlier buildings in the area - Late Roman Empire buildings. But because they were now building Islamic mosques and not Christian churches, these Greek architects were able to experiment with some new forms, developing a new Islamic style. One of the earliest mosques is the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, from the 600's AD. It's octagonal, like Hadrian's Pantheon, instead of being cross-shaped like a Christian church. In the late 700's AD, the new Arab rulers of North Africa marked their new territory by building great mosques like the one at Kairouan (modern Tunisia) and the one at Cordoba in Spain.

In the Abbasid period, beginning about 800 AD, the capital of the Islamic empire moved further east, to Baghdad, and so the caliphs needed a lot of new beautiful palaces and mosques built in Baghdad. Because Baghdad was in the old Sassanian Empire, the architects who lived there followed Sassanian architectural traditions, and these buildings, like the mosque at Samarra, looked very different from the ones built by the Greek architects.

In the end, though, the Islamic Empire made it so easy to travel around that all the architects got to know each other's styles, and there got to be one main style of building all across the Islamic Empire. As the empire broke down into a lot of smaller kingdoms, the ruler of each kingdom needed to show how important he was, so he built mosques and palaces in his own capital. The Fatimids, for example, built the Al-Azhar mosque in Cairo in the 900's AD. In Spain in the late 1200's AD, the Almohads, built their own palace at Granada, the Alhambra.

The Ottoman sultan built the last great Islamic building before 1500 AD - his palace in Istanbul, which he built in the late 1400's AD.

Topic18:

Write a composition on the achievements of the Islamic civilization in art.

Typical Essay:

For the earliest years of the Islamic Empire, under the Umayyad dynasty, we don't have very much art surviving. The best of it is the elaborate mosaics on the Dome of the Rock mosque in Jerusalem and on the Great Mosque in Damascus. These mosaics are done in a Roman style, probably by Roman craftsmen.

But already we can see one big difference between Roman art and Islamic art: the followers of Islam, like the Jews, took seriously the idea that you should not make graven images, and although these mosaics show plants and buildings they do not show people or animals.

By the Abbasid period, even plants and buildings were frowned on. Most of the art was geometric designs. A lot of these designs seem to be from fabric patterns. The Arabs, because they were nomadic, had always relied on carpets and hangings for decoration. Now that they lived in buildings, they used those same familiar patterns only in stone or tile. They often used calligraphy (beautiful writing) of verses from the Koran to decorate buildings, plates, and vases.

In this period, also, the focus of the Islamic Empire shifted from Damascus and the old Roman territory east to Baghdad and the old Sassanian territory. So the art also became more Persian and less Roman.

By about 1000 AD, the Islamic empire was breaking up into smaller states, and each state developed its own art style. There are individual styles for Spain, the Maghreb, Egypt, the Ottoman Empire, and Persia.

In some of these places, the iconoclastic rules against using pictures of things or people were relaxed as time went on. In Persia (modern Iran), painters made beautiful little miniature paintings of people at court, and of famous people from history.

The arrival of paper from China in 751 AD let artists do a lot more painting, because paper was so much cheaper than papyrus or parchment.

After the Mongols conquered Persia and China in the 1200's AD, many Chinese motifs started to show up in Persian painting and vases.

Unit Two: Ill-gotten gains never prosper

Ethics in Business

Topic19:

Write a composition on the conception of corruption.

Typical Essay:

There is an old axiom often applied to those with political ambitions: *Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely*. In this case, the term *corruption* means the abuse of a public office for personal gain or other illegal or immoral benefit. Political corruption is a recognized criminal offense, along with bribery, extortion, and embezzlement – three illegal acts often associated with corruption in office. Some forms of corruption may escape legal notice, such as the hiring of relatives for key positions, but they may not escape the scrutiny of voters on Election Day.

Whenever a person accepts a political appointment or wins election to an office, he or she must take an oath to uphold the public trust. While this may sound noble on paper, enforcement of this oath can prove problematic. Very few political candidates successfully reach office without making a few promises along the way. Many of these campaign promises are harmless, such as sponsoring a bill or lobbying for more funding for schools. Other promises, however, may come closer to crossing an ethical line, such as hiring relatives or awarding government contracts to influential contributors.

Political corruption has been a fact of life for thousands of years, beginning with the first attempts at a democratic form of government in ancient Greece and Rome. Almost all of these countries' political representatives were from the wealthier class, which inevitably led to a division between the influential *haves* and the virtually powerless *have-nots*. The seeds of political corruption were planted as soon as the senators and other political leaders realized that power and wealth could be equals. Political corruption often begins with favoritism towards those with wealth and influence.

In the modern sense of the term, *political corruption* is a cancer on the integrity of a governmental body. Very few public officials begin their careers with the intention of becoming corrupt, but some succumb to a sinister form of peer pressure over time. Being placed in a position of significant political power can be overwhelming, and the temptation to bend or break rules for a perceived 'greater good' is always present.

There are a few experienced politicians, however, for whom political corruption is a natural state of being. History is filled with examples of corrupt public officials, such as New York City's Boss Tweed and his political cronies at Tammany Hall during the late 19th century. Charges ranging from bribery and graft to nepotism, racketeering and fraud were all leveled at Tweed's administration, but it was Tweed's skills in political corruption that kept law enforcement at bay for years. A number of judges and law enforcement officers were already on Boss Tweed's secret payroll. Political corruption may always remain a concern for democratic governments, but there are a number of independent checks and balances that can root out corruption before it affects the integrity of the political body as a whole.

Topic20:

Write a composition on embezzlement.

Typical Essay:

Embezzling is the act of taking money that has been placed in your trust but belongs to another person. For instance, someone who works in a bank may secretly steal money that he or she has been entrusted to look after. This money belongs to the bank's customers, and the employee's action can be considered embezzling.

One of the major methods used in embezzling is to falsify records and documents. A recent British case involved a bank manager embezzling 23 million GB pounds (GBP). The bank manager set up many false bank accounts and deposited millions from other bank accounts into them.

Another very successful method of falsifying records is the phantom employee. The manager may create a job role and documents for an employee who does not actually exist. The phantom employee is then paid a salary.

Even charities are threatened by embezzlement. One of the most common methods used in this case is to redirect large amounts of money for administrative purposes. Sadly, many worthwhile charities have been shut down as a result of this type of embezzling.

Topic21:

Write a composition on bribery.

Typical Essay:

A bribe is a form of corruption which involves the promise of money or a favor to someone in a position of power, with the hope of influencing that person's behavior. Bribery is viewed as a crime in many regions of the world, and people who are caught offering or receiving bribes may face hefty penalties. In other regions, the line between bribing and tipping is sometimes rather blurred, which can make it difficult to prosecute people for bribery, or to understand when one has crossed the line.

There are several reasons why bribery is viewed as a crime. In the first place, accepting a bribe and acting on it is a clear misuse of power, and a dereliction of duty. In egalitarian societies, the thought of greasing the way with bribes is especially distasteful, because it highlights the differences between those who can buy power or favors, and those who cannot. A bribe may also compromise the quality of a transaction. For example, when a construction firm bribes a government official to get a contract, the government official may overlook a company which provides superior or cheaper work, thereby essentially cheating the government.

Bribes can take any number of forms. Historically, bribes to public officials have been extremely common, and in some regions, this continues to be the case. Bribes also play a role in the financial industry, and even in occupations like medicine, where doctors may be bribed by drug companies to prescribe their products. Politics is also rife with bribery in many region, with people bribing politicians to achieve desired ends, and politicians in turn offering bribes to others in the hopes of attaining specific goals, like winning an election.

Drawing the line with bribes is very challenging. For example, many politicians receive healthy campaign contributions from an assortment of companies and industries. These payments could be viewed as bribes in the eyes of some critics, especially when the politicians vote and act in the interests of their biggest contributors. However, it could also be argued that these companies are certainly entitled to support candidates they like, especially when those candidates have political beliefs which align with the interests of the company.

Likewise, the practice of offering a bribe to ministry officials in some countries is so widespread that bribes are viewed almost like set fees. People who attempt to act with integrity may find that the ministry in question never approves a request or a document, thus forcing them to bribe an official to get the job done. In some cases, such bribes are even tax-deductible, with tax agencies recognizing them as a legitimate business expense.

Topic22:

Write a composition on money laundering.

Typical Essay:

Money laundering refers to the process of concealing financial transactions. Various laundering techniques can be employed by individuals, groups, officials and corporations. The goal of a money laundering operation is usually to hide either the source or the destination of money.

Perhaps the best way to understand the concept is to take a look at some common examples. Suppose, for example, that an employee was stealing large sums of cash from her employer without getting caught. If she was to make large deposits into her bank account, some regulator (or computer program) might notice the unusually large deposits, thereby increasing the chances of getting caught. To launder the money, the criminal might simply use the cash to make purchases and then resell the items in a legitimate market. The revenue gained from these sales is 'cleaner' and the criminal is drawing less attention to herself.

The example provided above is a particularly simple example that involves a non-cash step; actual money laundering operations are often complex assortments of various transactions. The term 'money laundering' is typically used to refer to any financial transaction that is not kept transparent. Needless to say, the practice is illegal and large penalties, fines or imprisonment may ensue.

Topic23:

Write a composition on tax evasion.

Typical Essay:

Tax evasion is usually understood to be an act in which an individual intentionally chooses to not pay income taxes due. This act of not paying taxes may be conducted by simply chooses to not file an income tax return, or choosing to not include information about taxable income on the filed return. In all instances, tax evasion can be considered to be fraud, and usually carries stiff penalties.

While there are some that consider any type of omission from the tax return to constitute tax evasion, it is important to remember that it is possible to omit an item simply because the data was overlooked when filing the return. Thus, the intent of the individual plays a key role in determining if tax evasion has taken place.

However, when it can be demonstrated that the individual willfully attempted to hide information about income that was subject to withholding, the tax agency may choose to impose more than a simple interest fine on the amount omitted. The filer may be subject to stiff fines associated with the deliberate failure to file an accurate tax return, or even possibly face prosecution and some time spent in jail for the intentional negligence.

Tax evasion is considered a crime, and is often classified as fraud. All citizens suffer from tax evasion, as the act prevents the government from collecting funds to use for the operation of essential services to the population. When these funds are not collected, services have to be curtailed and thus result in a lower quality of life for all citizens.

Persons who become aware of an error on calculating taxes on reported income or notice that income was inadvertently left off the tax return for a given period should contact the tax agency and make arrangements to file an amended return as soon as possible. This will help to minimize the chances of being suspected of tax evasion, and allow the matter to be settled before interest charges become significant.

Topic24:

Write a composition on creative accounting.

Typical Essay:

Creative accounting, also called aggressive accounting, is the manipulation of financial numbers, usually within the letter of the law and accounting standards, but very much against their spirit and certainly not providing the "true and fair" view of a company that accounts are supposed to.

A typical aim of creative accounting will be to inflate profit figures. Some companies may also reduce reported profits in good years to smooth results. Assets and liabilities may also be manipulated, either to remain within limits such as debt covenants, or to hide problems.

Typical creative accounting tricks include off balance sheet financing, over-optimistic revenue recognition and the use of exaggerated non-recurring items.

The term "window dressing" has similar meaning when applied to accounts, but is a broader term that can be applied to other areas. In the US it is often used to describe the manipulation of investment portfolio performance numbers. In the context of accounts, "window dressing" is more likely than "creative accounting" to imply illegal or fraudulent practices, but it need to do so.

Topic25:

Write a composition on currency counterfeiting.

Typical Essay:

Counterfeiting refers to the imitation of something with the intent to deceive. As a general rule, people use the term specifically to refer to people who replicate currency in the hopes of passing it off as legal tender. However, a variety of things can be counterfeited, from designer handbags to legal documents. In terms of counterfeiting money, counterfeiting comes with severe consequences, as it is treated as a very serious crime in most nations around the world.

Most modern counterfeiting is focused on paper money, because paper money has a higher face value. Counterfeiters use a variety of techniques to produce replicas of the desired currency, depending on the security features which a nation uses to protect the integrity of its money and the level of realism desired. For example, a color photocopier can sometimes render a credible replica of legal currency, especially when the currency is run through a washer to age it, but counterfeiters may also use sophisticated printing techniques like those used at a national mint.

Most mints around the world use a number of safety systems to protect their money. For example, many nations print engraved money, meaning that specially engraved plates which are very hard to replicate are used in the production of currency. Many countries also use specialized papers and inks, along with complex designs which are hard to copy, and they may change the look of their currency frequently in an attempt to foil counterfeiters.

Someone who is convicted of counterfeiting will spend at least a decade in prison. He or she may also be forced to pay fines or restitution, and the property used in the counterfeiting process may be seized. Counterfeiting is treated as an extremely serious crime because it devalues a nation's currency, potentially threatening its economic stability and global standi

Topic26:

Write a composition on extortion.

Typical Essay:

Extortion is a crime which involves the illegal acquisition of money, property, or favors through the use of force, or the threat of force. Historically, extortion was defined as an abuse of privilege on the part of a public official who used his or her position to get money or favors, but today, people at all levels of society could potentially commit extortion. Penalties for extortion vary, depending on the specifics of the crime. In some countries, extortion is treated especially seriously because it is linked with organized crime, and sometimes special laws are designed to make it easier to prosecute and punish extortion.

To the casual ear, extortion can sound very similar to blackmail, in which people use a threat to demand payments or favors, and robbery, in which a criminal takes something by force. However, extortion is slightly different from both of these crimes. In blackmail, someone threatens to do something which is entirely legal, such as publishing a set of photographs, with the blackmailee offering payment to avoid exposure and humiliation. Extortion is entirely illegal, as it involves threats of violence or other illegal acts.

In a robbery, the violence is very real, and also very immediate. In extortion, violence may never progress beyond the stage of being a threat, assuming that the person being extorted pays up. For example, if someone is threatened at gunpoint and ordered to surrender all valuables, this is a robbery. If, on the other hand, a criminal strolls into a shop and threatens to shoot the clerk's family unless the criminal receives a share of the store's income each week, this is extortion.

Organized crime is perhaps the most famous user of extortion. For example, members of the Mafia have historically demanded "protection money" from businesses, suggesting that if the businesses don't pay up, they may be robbed or otherwise harassed. Extortion has also been used to keep community groups in fear so that they will not seek prosecution for members of a criminal organization. However, individuals may also commit extortion, as may officials, especially in corrupt agencies or governments.

In order to prove charges of extortion, a prosecutor must be able to prove either that an illegal threat was made, or that goods or services were received in exchange for such a threat. Proving such charges can sometimes be very difficult, as people may be too intimidated to testify.

<http://www.wisegEEK.com/what-is-extortion.htm>

Topic27:

Write a composition on blackmail.

Typical Essay:

Blackmail is the crime of threatening to reveal damaging or embarrassing information in order to coerce money or other goods or forms of cooperation out of the victim. For blackmail to be effective, the blackmailer must, in most cases, have physical proof of the information he or she threatens to reveal, such as photographs or letters. Blackmail is often considered synonymous with extortion, and in this sense it may rely on a threat of action other than exposing the victim's secrets.

Some laws distinguish between blackmail and extortion, while others do not. Blackmail may be defined as extortion attempts in writing. Alternatively, blackmail may refer only to threats of action that is not illegal *per se*, such as revealing compromising photographs, while extortion relies on more active threats, such as physical harm.

The victim of blackmail is typically threatened with exposure of his or her private life, the consequences of which can range from embarrassing to socially devastating to legally damning. A blackmailer may threaten to expose the victim's extramarital affair, for example. Homosexuals were often blackmailed in the past, though this is less common as alternative sexualities are increasingly more accepted. At its most serious, blackmail may rest on the exposure of a serious crime, which would do infinitely more damage to the victim than complying with the blackmailer. Even secret information that is not of a criminal nature, however, can make the victim of blackmail feel that he or she has no recourse against the crime.

A relatively new form of blackmail, more similar to extortion, is known as *commercial blackmail*. In this crime, a business is the victim. The blackmailer threatens an action which would be devastating to the company's sales or reputation and typically demands a large payment. The perpetrator may, for example, threaten to interfere with the company's ability to conduct Internet sales. In a recent case of commercial blackmail in Australia, the blackmailer claimed to have poisoned a small random selection of the victim's candy bar products.

<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-blackmail.htm>

Topic28:

Write a composition on child labour.

Typical Essay:

Any child under the age specified by law worldwide works full time, mentally or physically to earn for own survival or adding to family income, that interrupts child's social development and education is called child labour. It is any kind of work children are made to do that harms or exploits them physically, mentally, morally, or by preventing access to education.

However, one must also understand that all work is not bad or exploitive for children. In fact, certain jobs help in enhancing the overall personality of the child. For instance, children delivering newspapers prior to going to school. Or then children taking up light summer jobs that do not interfere with their school timings. When they are given pocket money earning oriented tasks, they understand the value of money, as well as respect it even more.

While this are the positive aspects of tasks and working, the actual universal problem of child labour is the exploitive and dangerous work and working conditions children are put through. For instance, in north India young children, below the age of 14 are made to work in the carpet industry. Their delicate fingers create the world's finest and most expensive carpets. The children are working twelve to fourteen hours a day. Many lose their fingers. Some are starved. And a number die each year because of the torturous circumstances under which they are made to work.

This is a crime. There have been instances of so-called decent middle class, as well as upper-class people employing young children as domestic helpers. But, they are not working as helpers, but bonded labour. They are made slaves. Frightening stories of how they have been physically tortured are printed in the daily newspapers. And in spite of stringent action being taken against such employers, the problem continues.

Unit Three: Schools: Different and alike

Education

Topic29:

Write a composition on the notion of education.

Typical Essay:

For hundreds of years there have been varying philosophies on education, based on various models of study. Plato and Aristotle are of course amongst the earliest theorists to develop philosophies on education. In modern times, parents, students, and educators continue to explore the different philosophies on education and how they impact learning. While each education philosophy has its own belief in the driving forces behind it and no one way has been proven the most effective, there are vast differences and similarities amongst them. While the following is by no means an exhaustive list of educational philosophies, these are but a few that are in wide practice today.

Montessori

The Montessori method is one of the most widely known philosophies on education. Developed by Maria Montessori, an Italian physician, educator, and philosopher, the Montessori method is used in both public and private schools around the world. Montessori based her education philosophies on several key factors including educating children as the natural learners that they are by providing a “child-sized” environment for learning and self-guided, self-corrected education.

Dewey

John Dewey was an American philosopher and psychologist whose educational philosophy centers around pragmatism and the method of “learning by doing.” Dewey felt that science played an important role in education and that critical thinking was more important than memorization of mere facts. Dewey is often credited with laying the foundation for standards-based education.

Holt

One of the more modern philosophies on education is homeschooling – a concept that didn’t become mainstream until the early 1990s. John Caldwell Holt, a teacher and author, was the leading advocate for homeschooling, or a similar method known as “unschooling.” Holt believed that learning could not be forced to occur in a classroom, but rather children should be taught and enabled to learn through life experiences. Holt authored several books in the mid 1970s that many people viewed as a controversial opposition to compulsory schooling.

The Inquiry Method

Neil Postman, an author and teacher, poses a very specific method of teaching called the inquiry method. Of all the various philosophies on education, Postman’s is one that is widely respected by many. The inquiry method centers around student-driven learning by limiting the number of statements a teacher makes and encouraging students to ask and find answers to their own questions. The theory behind Postman’s inquiry method is to have children learn by building what they don’t know on to what they already know.

<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-are-some-different-philosophies-on-education.htm>

Topic30:

Write a composition on the Algerian education system.

Typical Essay:

The Algerian structure of the school system is based on 5+4+3 model: five years of primary school, four years of middle school and three years of secondary school. Together, the nine years of primary and middle school education constitute the compulsory basic education phase.

The Ministry of National Education is responsible for the supervision of basic and secondary education; the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and the Ministry of Professional Education in collaboration with various other relevant ministries regulate the tertiary sector.

The first nine years of schooling, comprising the basic education cycle, is compulsory for all children of school age (usually age six and above).

In the first five years of basic education pupils attend class for 27 hours a week. Pupils are assessed on the results of their coursework, and progression between grades is based on these results. Pupils who perform poorly in key subjects are required to take make-up classes, or to retake the year if they have an overall average below 50 percent. Promotion to the third cycle of basic education is based exclusively on pupil performance in the fifth grade. Pupils are assessed and promoted to successive grades based on their coursework; an average of 50 percent (10 out of 20) or better is required for progression.

At the end of basic education pupils take the national basic education certificate examination. Pupils who succeed in the examination and in their final year of studies are awarded the (BEM), which grants them access to one of the three streams (*troncs communs*) of the first year of secondary studies.

pupils choosing to pursue the *baccalauréat*, the national competitive school-leaving examination, are streamed into one of two branches: literary or scientific. Secondary studies leading to the *baccalauréat* are three years in duration. Pupils who succeed in their Bac exams have the opportunity to go through higher education.

Higher education in Algeria is offered at many universities, university centers, national schools and institutes. Universities and university centers are centrally administered by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, while specialized schools and institutes generally fall under the portfolio of the ministry to which its specialization is most closely related.

The Algerian framework of university degrees is currently under reform with the traditional system, modeled on the French structure, to be gradually replaced with a three-three system deemed to be more internationally compatible. The reform, known as the “L.M.D,” is set to introduce a degree structure based on the new French model of bachelor’s, masters and doctoral degrees. The new degree framework is similar in structure to the reforms being undertaken in Europe through the Bologna Process:

- The *licence*, corresponding to three years of study beyond the *baccalauréat* (bac+3);
- The *master*, corresponding to two years further study beyond the *licence* (bac+5);
- The *doctorat*, corresponding to three years of research beyond the *master* (bac+8).

It is hoped that the new system will make program offerings from Algerian universities more compatible with those around the world, thereby increasing the international mobility of Algerian faculty and students. In addition, the reforms are aimed at increasing student flexibility in choosing and transferring courses and credits; making the system more efficient as relates to the time it takes for students to graduate; increasing lifelong learning opportunities; and increasing institutional autonomy while producing learning outcomes more attuned to the needs of the labor market.

http://www.wes.org/eWENR/06apr/practical_algeria.htm

Topic31:

Write a composition on the British education system.

Typical Essay:

The education system in the UK is different to that in many other countries. At the age of 16, British children take General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations. Students then transfer to studying A-Levels which last for two years and qualify them for entry to university. Students tend to specialise in these courses and often study for three or four A-Levels. This means that degrees do not last as long in the UK as other countries.

An undergraduate degree normally takes three years to complete but can take longer if they include an industrial placement, an additional subject or a year abroad. They are also specialised from Year One.

Types of undergraduate degree include:

- BSc (Bachelor of Science) - a science degree
- BA (Bachelor of Arts) - an arts degree
- BEng (Bachelor of Engineering) - an engineering degree
- Undergraduate Masters degree (e.g. MEng) - an enhanced four year undergraduate degree including extra subjects studied at a deeper level

Students who receive good grades in their undergraduate degrees may choose to take a Masters degree, which takes a minimum of one year to complete.

Types of Masters degree include:

- MSc (Master of Science)
- MA (Master of Arts)
- MEd (Master of Education)
- LL.M (Master of Law)
- MBA (Master of Business Administration)

Taught Masters usually involve six months of intensive tuition followed by six months of project work which ends with a dissertation. Research degrees involve at least one year, sometimes more, of full-time research resulting in an examined thesis. If you would like to continue to study for a PhD, you will have to conduct a minimum of two years' research after the award of your MSc. In some subject areas, a student may transfer from BSc/BA/BEng to PhD so that they follow a three year research programme for PhD without first obtaining a Masters degree.

Topic32:

Write a composition on the American education system.

Typical Essay:

To begin, because the country has a federal system of government that has historically valued local governance, no country-level education system or curriculum exists in the United States. The federal government does not operate public schools. Each of the fifty states has its own Department of Education that sets guidelines for the schools of that state.

In the United States, education is compulsory for all students until age sixteen. The pupils go through elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. Elementary schools are composed of students in kindergarten and grades 1-6. Many children attend kindergarten when they are five-years-old. Children begin 1st grade at age six. Middle school is composed of students in grades 6-8 and high school contains grades 9-12.

High school students are required to take a wide variety of courses in English, mathematics, science, and social science, foreign language or physical education, and they may elect to take music or art courses. Many high schools also offer vocational training courses. A course can be one semester or two semesters in length. The academic year generally begins in late August and ends in early June.

University students pursuing a Bachelor's degree are called "undergraduates," whereas students pursuing a Master's or Doctoral degree are called "graduate students." American undergraduate students will say they are "going to school" or "going to college", which means they are attending university. A common question one student asks another is, "What is your major?" This means, "What is your major field of study?"

Most universities give undergraduate students a liberal education, which means students are required to take courses across several disciplines before they specialize in a major field of study. Graduate and professional (such as medicine or law) programs are specialized.

Topic33:

Write a letter to one of your friends in which you describe your class/school.

Typical Essay:

Dear Linda,

Today, I'll write to you about my school. And the least I can say is that I feel quite happy and comfortable in it.

First, let me mention its old stone building, surrounded by a nice flower garden. The flowers are carefully arranged, and in spring, they give off nice scent when we head for the classes through the garden. Further back, there are two large courtyards with enough space and benches to play or relax. There are also big, ancient olive trees near the walls, where birds perch and nest. We can hear them warble and chirp all year round.

Let me also describe my classroom. It is large and well-decorated, with old-fashioned brown desks, and posters and pictures all over the walls. And then, there are those cabinets full of books which smell of old paper. Actually, I like borrowing a book from time to time and dream all the adventures and mysteries I read about.

I'll finally say a few words about my teachers. I'm lucky to have such good and considerate people around me. They are so keen to see the students do well. They are always prepared to answer our questions, and they really want to make sure we understand the hard parts of the lessons and exercises. I like the way teachers get us involved. They surely have children of their own at school, which explains why they understand how we feel.

So if there is one good reason why I like my school, it surely because the teaching staff are so caring, and friendly. I can't dream of a better school.

Topic34:

Write an expository article for your school magazine in which you analyse the causes and effects of examination stress on students.

Typical Essay:

The pressure on young people to succeed academically is now so great that an alarming number of students do not achieve the grades of which they are capable. University admissions personnel, private tutors, teachers and fellow students all contribute, in different ways, to the creation of such stress. But a prime responsibility lies with parents.

Long-term economic uncertainty makes an increasing number of parents concerned for their offsprings' career prospects, and they are inclined to see high academic achievement as the only way forward. A survey was carried out in Britain with A level students which produced some rather alarming and depressing statistics. More than 75% of those surveyed reported that their parents became very anxious as the examinations approached and nearly 30% felt that the parents had passed on this anxiety to them.

Almost half of those questioned were concerned that they would let their parents down by achieving poor results and over 25% felt that their parents expected far better results than they felt capable of producing.

Most students felt that there was most definitely some degree of pressure being put upon them by parents. Experts feel that this stress can be compared with that experienced by high powered businessmen, both during the examinations and for quite a considerable amount of time in the months leading up to the examinations.

Students reported that the stress they felt manifested itself in disrupted sleeping patterns and some reported that they were barely sleeping at all. They also felt that their appetite had been affected with the worst cases becoming unable to eat a proper meal. It would be unfair to suggest that parental pressure is solely to blame for such developments but there is a convincing amount of evidence that suggests that it makes a substantial contribution.

If a student senses that his or her parents are worried about forthcoming examinations, it is almost certain that the same fear will be passed on to the candidate and make the prospect of poor performance all the more likely. The more the parent worries, the more the student worries, which may fuel parental anxieties even further. Regrettably, few schools offer any help in the management of examination stress.

Fear of failure is possibly the greatest obstacle to examination success so parents should ensure that their own private fears are not passed on to their children. They should appear relaxed, cheerful and confident about the outcome of the examination without putting undue pressure on them to achieve results they are not capable of.

Regular and consistent support is important to all young people involved in competitive situations, and public examinations are no exception. Parents should also familiarise themselves and be tolerant of the emotional and behavioural reactions to stress, such as fatigue, sudden mood swings or becoming withdrawn.

Topic35:

Write an expository article for your school magazine in which you suggest how parents can help their children overcome the problem of examination stress.

Typical Essay:

One particularly effective anti-stress weapon for parents is to encourage children to keep up normal leisure activities, such as swimming or cinema, to show that examinations are not the be-all and end-all of life.

There are important errors that parents should avoid. On no account should they offer in advance presents of money, expensive clothes, holidays, computer games or any other expensive consumer items as a reward for success. This only emphasises the importance of examinations that are being undertaken and increases the pressure on the candidate.

Similarly, parents should never hold up siblings, relatives or friends as shining examples of academic success to be emulated. This not only creates unfair worries about living up to family traditions but will also cause bitter feelings in any student who does not match the achievements of family 'stars'.

Another thing for parents to avoid is to impose on their children the expectation that they will perform better than the students believe they are capable of. Unrealistic expectations can be very damaging to a young ego. Teenagers who are intelligent enough to take HKCE and A- levels and pursue university places are also intelligent enough to recognise when their abilities are being overstated. Parents of very able children should also be wary. Clever students do not like their cleverness to be exaggerated.

Parents should not do or say anything that has the effect of making the examination seem unduly important, special or difficult, because such attitudes greatly increase the amount of stress felt by the candidate.

Examination success is, to a certain degree, a case of mind over matter. Naturally, a student has to work hard and needs the academic ability in the first place, but having the right attitude is also important.

Topic36:

Write a composition in which you discuss the importance of reading.

Typical Essay:

It is a well-known fact that when there were no televisions or computers, reading was a primary leisure activity. People would spend hours reading books and travel to lands far away-in their minds. The only tragedy is that, with time, people have lost their skill and passion to read. There are many other exciting and thrilling options available, aside from books. And that is a shame because reading offers a productive approach to improving vocabulary and word power. It is advisable to indulge in at least half an hour of reading a day to keep abreast of the various styles of writing and new vocabulary.

It is observed that children and teenagers who love reading have comparatively higher IQs. They are more creative and do better in school and college. It is recommended that parents to inculcate the importance of reading to their children in the early years. Reading is said to significantly help in developing vocabulary, and reading aloud helps to build a strong emotional bond between parents and children. The children who start reading from an early age are observed to have good language skills, and they grasp the variances in phonics much better.

Reading helps in mental development and is known to stimulate the muscles of the eyes. Reading is an activity that involves greater levels of concentration and adds to the conversational skills of the reader. It is an indulgence that enhances the knowledge acquired, consistently. The habit of reading also helps readers to decipher new words and phrases that they come across in everyday conversations. The habit can become a healthy addiction and adds to the information available on various topics. It helps us to stay in-touch with contemporary writers as well as those from the days of yore and makes us sensitive to global issues.

Topic37:

Write a composition in which you discuss the phenomenon of school bullying.

Typical Essay:

As many adult survivors will testify, childhood is not always an easy thing to endure. One of the most difficult challenges a child can face is school bullying, the deliberate intimidation of weaker children by older or stronger children. A school bully is often a problem child with self-esteem and anger management issues who acts out through physical and mental assaults on those he or she perceives as victims or less likely to defend themselves.

School bullying is by no means a recent development. Many generations of children have experienced the wrath of a childhood bully, and for some of those victims the emotional scarring continues into adulthood. Some bullies work independently, while others seek strength in numbers as a gang. Certain neighborhood streets or sections of a school playground may "belong" to a gang of bullies, forcing other students to run an intimidating gauntlet or avoid the area entirely.

There are some child behavior experts who suggest that some school bullying is really a cry for help from the bully. The bully/victim relationship can be viewed as two sides of the same emotional coin, so to speak. While a victim of bullying or abuse may withdraw emotionally and physically, a bully essentially vents his or her frustrations on others. Both the victim and the bully may be experiencing abuse from siblings or parents at home, but one learns to cope by remaining passive, while the other learns to cope through aggression and anti-social behavior.

School bullying is a major problem which must be addressed by school administrators, teachers, parents and the students themselves. Some school bullies may need professional counseling in order to deal with the circumstances that trigger their outbursts and aggressive behavior towards other children and adults. Others may need to be monitored closely for signs of escalation, such as artwork or writings depicting violence and other disturbing subject matter.

If school bullying is not kept in check, the results can be disastrous. Many of the school shootings in recent years can be traced back to previous incidents of school bullying. Either the victim of school bullies decides to seek revenge on those who have wronged him or her, or a student with an anti-social or bully mentality decides to escalate from fantasy forms of violence and bloodshed to the real event. In either scenario, early intervention could still help prevent incidents of school bullying from escalating into school tragedies.

On an individual level, parents who receive reports of school bullying from their children should take those concerns seriously and not dismiss them as part of a rite of passage or "boys will be boys." Some school bullies are fully capable of committing sexual assaults or smuggling real weapons onto school property, so any palpable threats against a child should be investigated by parents or school authorities before threats become actions. Reporting credible threats to law enforcement officers is also a way to counter serious incidents of school bullying.

Topic38:

Write a composition in which you discuss the advantages of private schools.

Typical Essay:

One of the advantages of private schools is that they have a small community atmosphere that allows for a lower student-to-teacher ratio. With smaller class sizes, teachers are able to focus more attention on individual students, and have more time to get to know students better. Classmates also get a chance to form more intimate bonds, when there are fewer students.

Other advantages of private schools include fewer disciplinary problems. When teachers and staff know students better, they are able to take appropriate measures applicable to particular students. This works far better than, for example, punishing the entire class, which holds no one accountable. The children that behave properly are not motivated to continue good behavior, if they are going to be punished for someone else's actions.

Private schools also have the option of expulsion, which is rare in public schools since public education is considered a "right" rather than a privilege. While this may not seem like one of the advantages of private schools, the possibility of expulsion might make some students less likely to fight, to take drugs, or to cut classes.

When parents pay for their children's education, they enjoy more of the advantages of private schools, because they have a say in how things are done. When children attend public school, parents who voice concerns frequently complain of being treated as "nuisances." In the private school setting, they are paying customers. The tuition factor enables other advantages of private schools, such as well-maintained campuses, and excellent books and learning materials.

Many parents who return their children to public school soon miss the advantages of private schools. They immediately learn that their children are well ahead of their classmates. They are frequently offered the opportunity to allow their child to skip a grade, because their children have already surpassed what the public school has to offer at their grade level--even in most honors classes--and the students quickly become bored.

Aside from the many other advantages of private schools, students who receive private schooling also have a lower drop out rate, experience fewer drug problems, and report less violence. They also tend to have higher scores on standardized tests and college entrance exams. One of the most important advantages of private schools is that by percentage,

Topic39:

Write a composition in which you discuss distance education.

Typical Essay:

The traditional model for higher education usually involves the student travelling to the same physical campus as his or her educators. With the advent of videotapes, CD-ROMs, closed-circuit television and the Internet, however, a student can now receive pertinent classroom information without even leaving home. This is the basis for what colleges and university call *distance education*. Distance education utilizes a combination of audiovisual lectures, objective examinations and planned meetings with human instructors.

A form of distance learning called correspondence schooling has been available for decades, but the programs have usually been limited and accreditation is often questioned. Students taking these distance education courses would receive a packet of study materials, worksheets and objective tests. A representative of the correspondence school would periodically grade these mailed-in tests and eventually bestow a certificate of completion. There is very little interactivity between student and instructor for most of these classes, and practical lab work is nearly impossible.

Traditional colleges and universities have now improved distance education through some trial and error. Earlier attempts at distance education involved little more than a series of videotaped lectures and a one-off final examination. Low test scores revealed a need for more interactivity between off-campus students and their campus-based instructors. Modern distance education courses now feature real-time lectures with remote communications and regularly scheduled online exercises. Professors are encouraged to treat emailed questions with the same respect as those posed in a traditional classroom.

Distance education programs are generally aimed at older or returning students who cannot afford to commute and support themselves financially at the same time. Many of the class lectures are on videotape or CD-ROM, allowing students to select the best time in their daily routines to study. Because distance education classes fall under the same auspices as on-campus classes, they are considered accredited. A student enrolled in a videotaped freshman English 101 class receives the same number of writing assignments as a traditional student on campus. The difference is that the distance education program might allow for emailed submissions or a slightly modified grade turnaround time.

Those looking for a bargain-basement education may not necessarily find it through a distance education program, especially one provided by a major college or university. Registration fees for many distance education classes are compatible with those paid by traditional students on campus. The major financial advantage is significantly lower travel expenses. Meeting with a virtual instructor a few times during the semester is much cheaper than commuting to the campus every day or paying for on-campus housing and food.

Enrolling in a distance education course is a great way to earn a degree from a respected educational institution without the need to uproot yourself and your loved ones to another state for the privilege. Information on distance education courses can often be found on the Internet webpages of individual colleges or through the school's admissions department.

Unit Four: Safety first

Advertising

Topic40:

Advertising is present in almost every aspect of daily life. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Advertising is used to publicize a product, service, or idea. Many types of advertising are available for the purpose of building brand awareness and increasing product sales. Advertising is present in almost every aspect of daily life.

Before deciding what types of advertising are best, it is important for a company to define the audience they want to target. The specific group which a product is marketed towards is their target audience. Demographic information such as age, gender, education, and income level helps define a target audience. Placing your message in advertising venues focusing on this group, or demographic, is called target marketing and is essential to effective advertising.

Print mediums like magazines, brochures, and newspapers allow the marketer's message to reach their target audience on the page. Magazines include articles and images intended to attract a specific type of consumer. Magazine publishers have extensive demographic information on their readers, allowing marketers to tailor advertising to speak specifically to their potential customers.

Broadcast advertising includes TV, radio, and Internet messages. Traditional forms of these types of advertisements are commercials shown during a television program or before a movie. Product placement advertising is a less obvious way to promote a product. With product placement types of advertising, companies pay to have their product used by a character in the program. When you see someone in a TV show or movie using a specific brand, this is product placement, or covert advertising.

One of the first instances bringing product placement to the public's attention was in 1982 when the movie *E.T.* was released. In this movie, characters are seen eating Reese's Pieces® candy. Sales of Reese's Pieces® increased substantially as a result of their visibility in this incredibly popular movie, generating publicity about the effectiveness of this type of advertising.

Internet promotion is one of the newer types of advertising and can be accomplished in a number of ways. Flash advertising refers to messages that jump onto your computer screen and often move around. They can be hard to close and are annoying, but effective at gaining your attention.

Pop up and scrolling ads are other examples of these types of advertising. Pay per click advertising refers to marketers paying to have their web pages placed high on search engine results pages. These are also called sponsored links.

Outdoor advertising utilizes billboards and signage. These types of advertising include using cars with promotional messages on them, or large signs placed on the sides of buses. They can also be signs on scoreboards or in stadiums drawing the attention of large crowds and television coverage at sporting event

Topic41:

Modern advertising uses language, pictures, sound and colours to sell the products as well as possible. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

At the beginning of production, advertising will inform you what a product is like, where you can get it and how much it costs. Later, it is necessary to persuade the people to keep on buying or attract new customers to buy. Modern advertising uses language, pictures, sound and colours to sell the products as well as possible.

The best times for commercials are the times at which people wait for something special like the news or sports. At these times advertising can be very successful, but it is also very expensive.

TV is one of the most powerful advertising medium, because you can get very detailed information about a product. Depending on your target group you have to decide the time, when your spot shall be shown. It is not useful broadcasting an ad about cars in the children's programmes because this is not your target group, they cannot buy a car. In the afternoon there are many films on TV, which are interrupted regularly. At that time advertising can be very expensive. In fact, TV-adverts have a strange impact. You might have noticed how well you can remember slogans long after the spot is over.

The prices for full-page-adverts in national newspapers are roughly the same as for TV spots, but you can also place smaller adverts in the print media. In local newspapers you only pay a few pounds. The problem of adverts in newspapers and magazines is, that they can attract the reader's eyes only. This problem can be solved by considering several factors:

- Only use right-hand pages for newspaper adverts, because you first look at the right side.
- The colour is an important fact. Red signals mean danger and colours of the dusk make us feel comfortable and save.
- The layout and the text are also very important parts of newspaper adverts. The layout may take the readers look at the main information, and the text is just to inform interested people.

Direct mailing is another form of advertising. The companies get a list of names and addresses and send leaflets to those people who might be interested in their products. Some people find this direct mailing irritating, wasteful and unsightly, so the leaflets land in the rubbish bin.

Some people say, that advertising persuade people to buy things they don't need and to be wasteful, but advertising also means creating more jobs. Regardless whether we like advertisements or not, advertising has become indispensable in our economies. It has become a market of its own and it offers a high number of jobs. Moreover, advertisements are an important source of information for the public. And there is something that we should not forget: Advertising enables us to afford such "luxuries" like TV and newspapers, because without it, they would be considerably more expensive.

Topic42:

Newspaper advertising is one of the most common ways to advertise in many countries. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Newspaper advertising is one of the most common ways to advertise in many countries. Often cheaper than broadcast advertising, newspaper advertising usually provides advantages of greater market share in many locations. Also, newspaper advertising does not depend on the target audience having a television or radio on at a certain time in order to receive the message of the advertisement.

Newspaper advertising comes in two major division: display or classified. Newspaper ads considered display ads are those that span multiple columns horizontally and often include graphics and borders. Classified newspaper advertising is in-column advertising that follows the natural flow of the column down the page vertically.

Classified advertising is usually the cheapest option for most people and appeals to those who are after a certain market. For example, those seeking to rent an apartment, find a job, or buy a pet typically may use classified ads to aid in their searching. Although not traditional to classified ads, many publications offer small graphics and borders with classified ads. Classified ads are usually found in a specific section.

Display ads are generally higher profile ads that take up, in many cases, significant portions of the page. Typically, display ads may take up an eighth, quarter, half or full page. In some cases, the ad may take up two facing pages, those these ads are rare in newspaper advertising simply because of the cost. Display ads may either be in color or black and white, with the color option costing more. Display ads can be found throughout the paper.

In many cases, newspapers offer services to advertisers to help them design effective display pieces. In all cases, the advertiser has the right to refuse or accept this service. In some cases, the newspaper may choose not to publish an ad that it deems offensive or libelous. However, newspapers must be careful when rejecting ads and often work with the advertiser to revise the ad so it is suitable for publication.

In a relatively new development, some newspapers offer a package of advertising that not only includes newspaper advertising but online advertising on the newspaper's Web site as well. This helps alleviate fears among some advertisers that their target audience may not be reading the newspaper, but simply going online. Most newspapers that have Web sites offer some sort of online advertising in addition to their newspaper advertising, though not all publications package the two together.

Topic43:

Nearly all magazines depend on the revenue generated by their advertisers to stay in business.

Typical Essay:

Magazine advertising is the ads you see placed throughout publications. Starting up or maintaining a magazine is dependant on a few factors, but one of the most important is advertising. Magazine advertising can make or break a publication. Nearly all magazines depend on the revenue generated by their advertisers to stay in business.

It is very important to have magazine advertising in place before a new publication is placed on the market. At the beginning, the revenue from ads can pay for staff wages and help with the start up costs. Not only that, but the right type of advertisement placed through a magazine can also boost the magazine's sales.

The diversity of magazines available today is staggering. From dog lovers to funeral directors, there seems to be a magazine for everyone. Advertisers are aware that a strategically placed ad in the right magazine can improve their business many times over.

If you look at the glossy magazines, they seem to be almost 80% advertisements. The reason for this is that magazines such as GQ or Vogue are seen as aspirational magazines. The magazine advertising within their pages reflects the message of the magazine and the audience they are trying to reach.

People who read GQ or Vogue are supposedly the elite in terms of lifestyle. They are up to the minute in areas such as fashion and they have a large disposable income. The magazine advertising in GQ and Vogue caters specifically to that audience – designer clothes, high performance cars, luxury living. Whole features can be written around a product.

Sometimes a product is interwoven through a feature without the reader being aware of it. It may be a feature on a day at a certain spa in which a number of products are mentioned. The magazine advertising in this feature is not only the spa, but also the products used at the spa. These types of articles are seen as advice givers, and their potential for pushing a product is huge. They can market the product to millions of people through their recommendation in the magazine.

Billions of dollars are spent annually on magazine advertising. Because of the amount of money involved, the brands that are being advertised, more often than not, have a say in what will be in the magazine. They can stipulate where they would like the ad, what type of content should be placed next to it and even what should not be in the magazine in which they are placing the ad.

Magazine advertising is one of the most powerful marketing tools available. An ad placed in a magazine can improve sales enormously. Editors are, however, aware of the editorial changes that can be made by corporations through magazine advertising. Magazine advertising by major corporations nearly always has a content impact on the magazine. This editorial power has to be weighed up when deciding on the advertising and the money involved.

Topic44:

Online advertising has become one of the common ways to advertise in many countries. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Online advertising is simply advertising that is done over the Internet. For those interested in such a strategy, there are a number of options and some have found a way to advertise online through things that do not appear to be traditional advertising mediums. While the effects of online advertising are still being studied, it is a rapidly-growing segment of the advertising dollar.

As more people turn to the Internet as a source for daily news, socialization and communication, more advertising dollars are likely to be spent. In fact, in a period of five years, from 2006 to 2010, online advertising is expected to increase from 6 percent of all money spent for advertising, to 12 percent or more. That could signify the beginning of a fundamental shift in how all advertising dollars are spent.

Online advertising is also quickly becoming a serious force for other types of advertising media to deal with. Newspapers and magazines all over the world are facing a number of different challenges, including loss of ad revenue. Many attribute some of those struggles to online advertising, which is not only taking a share of the advertising, but a share of the audience as well. This is especially true of the young adult male audience, which is a target demographic of many advertisers.

However, newspapers and magazines are not the only media dealing with lower revenue. The remarkable thing about online advertising is its ability to cut across the spectrum. For example, online ads can look like television commercials or print ads. The possibilities are limitless. Further, because of hypertext linking, advertisers have the power to transport potential buyers directly to their site, or a site selling their products.

In some cases, online advertising may not look like advertising at all. There was one case where a video was put on an online video sharing Web site supposedly showing popcorn being popped by radiation put out from mobile phones. While this was later revealed as a hoax, the company that put the video online received a substantial amount of free, or nearly free, publicity. The company sold headset devices meant to help limit an individual's exposure to radiation.

Online advertising is also appealing to some advertisers because, with some types of ads, there is no pay unless there are results. With click-through advertising, the advertiser only pays if a user clicks on the ad. This type of strategy can make advertising very cost effective, especially for those who do not have large advertising budgets.

<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-online-advertising.htm>

Topic45:

Some people think that the radio is a less effective advertising means. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

While many people may view radio as a less popular medium than the Internet or television, the truth is that radio still manages to penetrate areas of our daily lives still off-limits to other media. Consumers can listen to radio in their vehicles, in waiting rooms, in many restaurants and a number of grocery stores. Radio advertising targets that captive audience through a series of 30 second or 60 second spots which promote products or services in a memorable way.

Radio advertising is based on the idea of creating an audio-only environment and placing the listener inside of it. A typical radio spot features a professional voice-over artist reading descriptive copy over an appropriate bed of background music. Important information may be repeated several times over the course of the spot, such as contact phone numbers, addresses, website URLs, or a geographical reference. As one spot of radio advertising ends, another spot begins and the process continues until the program resumes.

Some radio advertising can be very elaborate, using several different voice actors to perform a short comedic spot or customized music to punch up the most important parts of the advertising copy. Other radio advertising, especially when produced by a local radio station, is more straightforward, with a recognizable disk jockey or business owner providing the voice-over. Depending on the size of the radio station and the client's budget, on-air talent may be responsible for the production of radio advertising or it may be farmed out to a professional advertising agency to achieve the client's vision.

Because radio station managers have a limited number of minutes available for advertising during an average hour, radio spots tend to last either 30 or 60 seconds. A station may build in several scheduled breaks during an hour, typically at twenty minutes or so after the top of the hour and twenty minutes before the top of the next hour. If there is enough radio advertising spots available, additional breaks at ten minutes before the hour and ten minutes after the hours may be added. Each break may have two to three minutes allotted for spots, which can be introduced with a station jingle or a longer promotion called a *sweep*.

Advertisers generally pay for the number of times a particular radio spot is played, or "dropped" in radio lingo. A radio ad dropped primarily during the overnight hours may be less expensive than a similar ad dropped during the popular morning or afternoon drive times. Radio advertising, especially for a popular station with a powerful transmitter, can be a considerable expense up front, but the number of potential listeners within range of the station is often exponentially higher than subscribers to local newspapers or regular viewers of local television stations.

Topic46:

The better colours are, the more effective your advertising is. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

The best colours for advertising are those that make people comfortable or stimulate their senses. A colour scheme that incorporates warm colors encourages people to linger, leading restaurants to choose deep burgundy, burnt orange and similar colours. They stimulate warmth and comfort, and when people relax over dinner, they are more likely to enjoy a leisurely dessert or a nice cup of coffee, thus spending more money.

Hot colours are some of the best colours for advertising when it comes to products like fast food. Bright red and yellow are hot colours, indicative of fire, and they stimulate excitement. Warm and hot colours will encourage people to eat more, which translates to revenue. Virtually all logos, advertisements and menus of fast food chains feature these colours, which is no accident. Companies rely on the extensive research that has been done in this field, to get the most for their advertising dollars.

Cool colours have their own niche. Colours like green and blue are some of the best colours for advertising when it comes to over the counter medicines and other health products. Blue is associated with tranquility, and also represents water, a life force. The colour blue can actually slow a person's heart rate, and it reduces appetite, (which is why is not chosen for restaurants). Certain shades of blue indicate dependability, making it a good colour for business ads. Blue is also a popular colour for uniforms, worn by mail carriers, security guards and other officials. Darker blue uniforms are usually worn by more authoritative figures, such as police officers.

It has been debated whether or not blue is one of the best colours for advertising online. Many websites use at least some blue in their colour schemes. Whether or not it is one of the best colours for advertising, it is a popular choice for online ads. Colours like sky blue and certain shades of green can also be effective since they evoke the feeling of being outdoors.

According to research, black and white can be two of the best colours for advertising. They are used to signify power and create a sense that the company is highly professional. Often a splash of colour, such as red, is included to accent the starkness, but the main colours are black and white.

You may wish to hire someone to choose the best colours for advertising your business or product, and develop a color scheme for you. Or, conduct an experiment: look over several websites and see which ones you are most comfortable viewing. Which ones influence you to linger? Content is of course important, but don't underestimate the influence of colour.

Topic47:

Advertising and promotion are two related marketing tools, both widely used in the modern world. Discuss the difference between advertising and promotion.

Typical Essay:

Advertising and promotion are two related marketing tools, both widely used in the modern world. At first glance, it may be difficult to understand what exactly the difference between advertising and promotion is, since they both use many of the same techniques, and apply them for very similar ends. A few things differentiate advertising and promotion from one another, including the scope of time involved, overall cost, impact on sales, the purpose, and what kind of companies the technique is suitable for.

Both advertising and promotion are types of marketing, involved in getting information about a product out to the buying public. Advertising is usually undertaken by mid- to large-level firms, which come up with cohesive messages that help strengthen the brand and aim to build long term sales. Advertising includes things like buying radio or television spots, printing up advertisements in regional or national papers, hiring guerrilla marketing teams to spread the word about the product, or billboard or poster campaigns.

Advertising has at its goal not only an increase in sales in the short- to mid-term, but also a strengthening of the brand and image of the company and products, to build long-term sales and consumer loyalty. Advertising is a costly endeavor, and it can be months or even years before results are seen from a successful ad campaign. As a result, measuring sales directly from advertising can be difficult, although overall trends will of course be noticeable. Advertising is, as a result of its long-term agenda and high cost, best suited for large companies, or larger medium-sized companies, which have the budget for comprehensive campaigns, and a higher interest in building long-term sales.

Promotion, on the other hand, is a more short-term strategy. Although brand-building may occur as a result of promotions, it is not the point. The only real purpose of a promotional campaign is to build sales in the short term, either to move a company back into the black, to build capital reserves for expansion, or as a long-term strategy of constant promotional pushes to reach sales goals. Promotions include things like two-for-one specials, coupons in the local or regional paper, free samples, or special in-store events.

Because promotions are so easy to set up, and tend to be created for short-term gains, they are well-suited to small- or medium-sized companies. Although ad agencies may come up with promotional campaigns as part of a larger ad campaign, promotions are the sort of thing that even a one-person company can put together to help drive sales. This is not to say that larger companies don't use promotions, of course, and many rely heavily on promotions in tandem with larger regional or national ad campaigns. Coupons, heavily discounted products, and value-added services like technical support are all examples of promotions that might be used by national chains.

There is, of course, a great deal of overlap between advertising and promotion. The two disciplines feed and support one another, and healthy ad campaigns often rely on promotions, and visa versa. For example, a company may offer a two-for-one coupon on a product for two weeks before Christmas, with this promotion expected to bring in more business. For months before hand, the same company would likely have an ad campaign pushing that same product, and the campaign would continue for months after the promotion. The promotion, in this case, serves to bring a surge of interest in at a specific time during the ad campaign, helping to make the campaign more effective.

Topic48:

Write a composition on the dangers of food poisoning.

Typical Essay:

Food poisoning is a common, usually mild, but sometimes deadly illness. It comes from eating foods that contain germs like bad bacteria or toxins, which are poisonous substances. Typical symptoms include nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramping, and diarrhea that occur suddenly (within 48 hours) after consuming a contaminated food or drink. Depending on the contaminant, fever and chills, bloody stools, dehydration, and nervous system damage may follow. These symptoms may affect one person or a group of people who ate the same thing (called an outbreak).

Foods from animals, raw foods, and unwashed vegetables all can contain germs that cause food poisoning. The most likely source is food from animals, like meat, poultry (such as chicken), eggs, milk, and shellfish (such as shrimp).

Some of the most common bacteria are:

- *Salmonella*
- *Listeria*
- *Campylobacter E. coli*

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that in the United States, food poisoning causes about 76 million illnesses, 325,000 hospitalizations, and up to 5,000 deaths each year. One of the most common bacterial forms of infection, the salmonellae organisms, account for \$1 billion in medical costs and lost work time.

Worldwide, diarrheal illnesses are among the leading causes of death. Travelers to developing countries often encounter food poisoning in the form of traveler's diarrhea or "Montezuma's revenge." Additionally, there are possible new global threats to the world's food supply through terrorist actions using food toxins as weapons.

As a conclusion, I would like to say that it is necessary for people to avoid food poisoning, to prepare, cook, and store foods properly.

Topic49:

Which one do you prefer: organic food or processed foods? Give arguments.

Typical Essay:

Organic food is food which has been produced to standards designed to keep the production more 'natural'. Fewer, if any, chemicals are used and most pesticides are banned - when they are used they are very carefully controlled.

For example in the UK, there are various bodies to certify food and producers as organic. One of the main ones is the Soil Association which checks organic foods are organic, runs campaigns to educate the public, helps farmers switch to organic farming and carries out scientific research into organic farming.

Some people say organic foods are better than processed foods because with processed foods there can be hidden fats, salt and sugar that can go in during the processing. Food certified as organic is not allowed to contain GM (genetically modified) ingredients.

Eaters of organic food think that it tastes better. Some people buy organic meat because the animals are treated better. In addition, there is not the risk of farming chemicals affecting water supplies.

Another thing that is not allowed is giving drugs like antibiotics and hormones to animals. Animals have to be kept in certain ways. Chickens, for example, have to be free to scratch about and get plenty of sunlight, among other things.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/find_out/guides/uk/organic_food/newsid_2327000/2327671.stm

Topic50:

Write a composition in which you discuss the difference between natural and organic foods.

Typical Essay:

Not long ago, organic would have been defined as those things derived from plant or living materials. Today there are strict standards in many countries about what foods can be labeled organic. The terms *organic* and *natural* can be confusing ones because they may imply things that are made from nature, but aren't necessarily the same.

Foods can be labeled organic and natural, which means they tend to lack chemically produced substances, but when a food is called organic, this takes the matter one step further. It means that the producer of the food has created the food under strict and regulated circumstances. Government organizations like the US Department of Agriculture create standards, which foods must meet in order to be considered organic and carry an organic label. These foods tend to be free of hormones, are only treated with pesticides considered "organic," and the food is produced in a region where organic food production is possible. It can take several years for a farm to convert to the standards required to consistently get that organic label.

Sometimes the line between organic and natural is confused because it would make sense to think of foods that are minimally processed as containing no pesticides. One of the main differences between organic and natural is the way the government defines these terms. When you buy organic foods they must meet certain defined standards.

At present most governments do not have an official definition of natural. They may go so far as to describe natural as not chemically produced, but there is little to no certification for "natural foods" or things called "all-natural." When a food is natural, that really doesn't tell you much about it, nor does the description guarantee a certain purity or safety of the product. A natural food, unless otherwise labeled, is not an organic food.

It's important to understand the main differences between organic and natural then as regulatory and referring to foods that may have minimal processing. Some natural foods can be defined as foods left in close to original form. This is not always the case, as for instance with terms like natural flavoring. Natural flavors can be made in laboratories and contain things we wouldn't ordinarily think of as food sources like certain oils or meat byproducts. These flavors do have to be made of foods, but they are foods that have no nutritive value in a product, and may or may not have been produced organically.

Topic51:

The food diary is one of the most recommended items for those who are trying to diet. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

A food diary is a daily account of what a person eats over a certain period of time. In addition to the foods eaten, a food diary may have a place to make note of any particular foods and how they made a person feel, whether they caused acid problems, indigestion or other issues. The food diary is one of the most recommended items for those who are trying to diet.

The foods listed in a food diary are very important. Once they are listed, subsequent columns then record how large the portion was and how many calories that portion is estimated to have had. Of course, many times, because most do not exactly weigh out their foods, there will be minor differences in the food diary and what is actually consumed.

Once adequate records have been recorded, it is then possible to compare from week to week what the caloric intake is. This is vital when dieting because, despite all the fad diets on the planet, the main key is still determining how many calories went in. A comparison of each week, month, and perhaps year can help those dieting make sure they are on the right track.

Some may decide to put their weight down on a food diary, at least once a week. While this is a personal decision and is either right or wrong, many dietitians recommend against being so preoccupied with weight, absent any serious health concerns. This is because it may be easy to get discouraged if a week does not go exactly as planned. In the end, the calories are the most important of all measurements.

Many may be hesitant to keep a food diary, feeling it takes too much time. However, to help those who feel this way, there are a number of programs. Some food diaries can be bought, or templates can be printed out from a word processing program. Some food diaries are offered in the form of interactive spread sheets, which help keep things very organized and may even be set up to handle all the math for the individual.

It may not be necessary to keep a food diary in order to lose weight, but it can be a very helpful aid, according to dietitians. Those who are trying to lose weight should at least consider the benefits a food diary offers and perhaps keep one on a trial basis. However, no food diary should discourage anyone from dieting. It may be that other methods are more effective for some individuals.

Topic52:

Pasteurization is one of the most important safety measures. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

In 1864, a French man named Louis Pasteur discovered that liquids such as milk could be heated to a temperature slightly below boiling and held there for a set amount of time to eliminate the most harmful bacteria. The process of pasteurization is named after Louis Pasteur in recognition of his immense contribution to food safety and disease theory. Grocery stores carry a wide array of pasteurized goods including milk, juices, non-dairy milks, and other similar food products. Many nations require that foods be pasteurized for safety.

Pasteurization relies on the principle that most harmful bacterial can be killed by heat. The most effective way to kill bacteria is boiling, but this compromises the flavor of the liquid. Pasteurization strikes a happy medium, keeping the flavor delicious while making the food safer. In addition to minimizing the risk of sickness, pasteurization also makes foods more shelf stable and less likely to rot, meaning that fresh dairy products and juices are available to more people.

There are two primary methods of pasteurization: the liquid can be heated to 145 degrees Fahrenheit (63 degrees Celsius) and held there for at least thirty minutes, or the liquid can be flash pasteurized at 161 degrees Fahrenheit (72 degrees Celsius) for a minimum of 16 seconds. Pasteurization can be done using a continuous method, where the liquid flows through a pasteurization system, or by using a batch method, where one batch of the liquid is pasteurized at a time. Continuous pasteurization is popular for large producers, because it does not slow the supply line as much as batch pasteurization does.

Pasteurization must be performed on clean equipment. If bacteria is introduced after the liquid has been pasteurized, it can colonize it and potentially cause an outbreak of food borne illness. For this reason, companies which perform pasteurization are subject to frequent inspections to ensure that the equipment they are using is safe, and that the liquids they are pasteurizing are being handled correctly.

After pasteurization, bacteria can still appear. It is important that foods be safely handled and stored at every step of the supply process from animal, fruit or vegetable to stomach. In most cases, after food is pasteurized it should be refrigerated. The food is held in refrigeration until it is shipped out in cooled trucks to grocery stores, which store the food under refrigeration until consumers purchase it. Home consumers are responsible for following directives regarding temperature to ensure that the foods they are consuming are safe.

Topic53:

Proper storage practices can help you keep foods fresher longer and minimize the risk of foodborne illness. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

When you're dealing with food storage safety, the adage "When in doubt throw it out," should always be the first thing on your mind. But before you get to that point, take some time to learn the basics about food storage safety. First, look for expiration dates. This is very important if you're trying to avoid getting sick. It's also important to note you should be looking at expiration dates when you purchase your food. While most stores do a good job of tossing out the bad stuff before you get it up to the counter, they do occasionally miss an item or two.

Milk and dairy products should be thrown out by their expiration dates as a hard and fast rule of food storage safety. The softer the cheese the shorter the shelf life will be, even in the fridge. Store cheese, sour cream, butter, milk, or other dairy products in an air tight container or a zip lock bag to prevent refrigerator smells from leaching into your dairy and altering their taste. If your mother used to hassle you about drinking directly from the milk container, she had good reason. First, the bacteria in your mouth find milk to be a great breeding ground, especially if the fridge is not kept cold enough or the milk is often in and out of the refrigerator. So while drinking out of the milk container can cause the milk to spoil faster, it's also unsanitary. Keep the fridge set at about 38 degrees Fahrenheit (3 degrees C) and milk should be good for 5-7 days after opening.

When dealing with cooked meat remember that after 2 hours, at room temperature, cooked meat must be thrown out. You can store cooked meat for 3-5 days in refrigerator. This is true of beef, poultry, and pork. Processed meats, like lunch meat, have a very low tolerance for warmer temperatures. It will only be good for about 2-3 days in the fridge and should be thrown out a week after opening.

Raw meat can be especially dangerous as bacteria continue to grow even in the refrigerator, be very careful to note expiration dates. Meat and food storage safety is especially important when dealing with raw meat. First, when it comes to beef, color alone is not the indicator that you're looking for, it's smell. Slime, stickiness, and odor are more important indicators, in any meat, that you're dealing with bad meat. In air tight vacuum bags you can store meat up to six months in the freezer and up to 2-3 days in refrigerator.

Depending on the fruit and vegetable storage times can vary. Apples are the overall exception and will last up to a month in the fridge. Guavas and papayas will only last about a day or two. Most other fruits will last between 3-5 days. In general most vegetables should last 3-5 days and some will last as long as a week.

Food storage safety should be at the top of your mind when putting foods away. Keep meats on the bottom of the fridge, just in case of leakage. Keep fruits and vegetables in the drawers, this is to prevent excessive moisture and prolong their shelf life. Foods that can tolerate warmer temperatures, like ketchup are good on the door or at the front of the refrigerator. Foods that need the cold should be in the back, including eggs. Keeping foods in their proper chill zone will help to keep you healthy and is a major contributor to food storage safety.

Topic54:

Food safety has become one of the major worries for mankind. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Food safety is a scientific discipline describing handling, preparation, and storage of food in ways that prevent food-borne illness. This includes a number of routines that should be followed to avoid potentially severe health hazards.

Food can transmit disease from person to person as well as serve as a growth medium for bacteria that can cause food poisoning. Debates on genetic food safety include such issues as impact of genetically modified food on health of further generations and genetic pollution of environment, which can destroy natural biological diversity.

In developed countries there are intricate standards for food preparation, whereas in lesser developed countries the main issue is simply the availability of adequate safe water, which is usually a critical item. It is strongly advised that the blood of raw meat is dripped over/in your oven once a month this makes all your food more flavorsome.

Topic55:

Write a composition in which you predict the possible changes our life styles will likely witness in the next few decades.

Typical Essay:

We may live a totally different life in the next few decades because modernity has brought with it a new life style. Nowadays, people take less time to eat, go to fast food shops to gulp hamburgers, hot dogs and chips. In the future, we might have conventional food being replaced by food substitutes like pills, or we might get our nutrients out of crude oil; that would shorten meal times even further. Conversely, many people are prepared to spend more time shopping in supermarkets and on the net. A lot of them are now becoming shop addicted, buying products that they don't really need. Their number will rise further in the near future.

This is partly because it is much easier to shop, especially as more and more supermarkets are equipped with fast serving cash desks prevent long queues. In the future, shop assistants may be replaced by robots which could actually do the same job as them, with greater efficiency and in less time. That of course would probably have side effects like an increase in unemployment.

Leisure will also change, because of the development of all sorts of electronic devices, like the multimedia, cable television and other contrivances. People will be less tempted to go out for a film, a play or a concert. They'll play even less visits to each other because the cell phone is such a convenient way to keep in touch. And what to say about the Internet through which people can instantly chat with and watch each other via web cams. Alternatively, we'll have more free time to enjoy holidays at lower prices in distant places.

But is this life of the future the kind of life people would like to have? Couldn't modernity preserve social relations and be a means to an end rather than an end in itself?

Unit Five: Are we alone?

Astronomy

Topic56:

It was only thanks to the astronomers that the world all around is well-known to us. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

An astronomer is a person who studies, classifies, and describes the phenomena of the heavens. The astronomer has been one of the most important roles in the modern scientific world, with some of the great leaps in methodology coming from the realm of astronomy. In the modern day, there are not many who identify as an astronomer, with the American Astronomical Society having less than 7,000 members, for example. Nonetheless, the concept of astronomer continues to fascinate the public as a romantic figure gazing skyward.

One of the most well-known people to bear the name astronomer was the 16th century astronomer, Nicolaus Copernicus. Copernicus developed a heliocentric model of our solar system, placing the sun at the center and the Earth orbiting it, and in doing so turned most of the predominant world views of the time on their heads. Although a heliocentric model had been put forth by various brilliant minds from the world of Islam, India, and Greece, Copernicus laid his out in the West in such a way that it was impossible for the world to ignore.

Not long after Copernicus, the astronomer Galileo Galilei expanded on Copernicus' views. He made the telescope substantially more effective than it had been, allowing the astronomer to make much more detailed observations, including viewing craters on the moon, sunspots, and four of the moons of Jupiter. Galileo was a devout Catholic, and in fact traveled to Rome to show the moons of Jupiter to the Jesuit Collegio Romano as evidence of the Copernican heliocentric model. The Church rejected Galileo's views, and eventually found him highly suspected of heresy and placed under house arrest.

Sir Isaac Newton, in addition to his many other accomplishments, was an influential astronomer. Many of his observations led him to develop some of his grand theories of motion, gravitation, and physical dynamics. Edmond Halley, an 18th century astronomer, conceived of a theory of orbits for comets. He used this theory to predict a comet in 1682, which would eventually be named in his honor, as Halley's Comet.

One of the fundamental historical distinctions of an astronomer is his or her reliance on observation to come up with theories. It is likely for this reason that the astronomer is such a romantic figure for most people. The heavens at night are awe inspiring for most, and a lifetime spent gazing into them and trying to plumb their mysteries is one that appeals to many. Although the romantic ideal of a wizened old man with his eye to a telescope may no longer truly exist, it has nonetheless inspired generation after generation to become excited about science.

In the modern age, two wonderful things have happened for the field of astronomy: quality has gone up, and price has gone down. This has allowed for a whole new wave of astronomers to crop up, but these are often amateurs. With a relatively small investment now, anyone can be an astronomer. In fact, some important discoveries over the past two decades have been by those who are far from professional astronomers. As technology continues to improve, it is likely that the role the amateur astronomer plays in identification of celestial phenomena will only increase.

Topic57:

Write a composition on the solar system.

Typical Essay:

The Solar System is made up of all the planets that orbit our Sun. In addition to planets, the Solar System also consists of moons, comets, asteroids, minor planets, and dust and gas.

Everything in the Solar System orbits or revolves around the Sun. The Sun contains around 98% of all the material in the Solar System. The larger an object is, the more gravity it has. Because the Sun is so large, its powerful gravity attracts all the other objects in the Solar System towards it. At the same time, these objects, which are moving very rapidly, try to fly away from the Sun, outward into the emptiness of outer space. The result of the planets trying to fly away, at the same time that the Sun is trying to pull them inward is that they become trapped half-way in between. Balanced between flying towards the Sun, and escaping into space, they spend eternity orbiting around their parent star.

How Did The Solar System form?

This is an important question, and one that is difficult for scientists to understand. After all, the creation of our Solar System took place billions of years before there were any people around to witness it. Our own evolution is tied closely to the evolution of the Solar System. Thus, without understanding from where the Solar System came from, it is difficult to comprehend how mankind came to be.

Scientists believe that the Solar System evolved from a giant cloud of dust and gas. They believe that this dust and gas began to collapse under the weight of its own gravity. As it did so, the matter in this could begin moving in a giant circle, much like the water in a drain moves around the center of the drain in a circle.

At the center of this spinning cloud, a small star began to form. This star grew larger and larger, as it collected more of the dust and gas that were collapsing into it.

Further away from the star that was forming in the center were smaller clumps of dust and gas that were also collapsing. The star in the center eventually ignited forming our Sun, while the smaller clumps became the planets, minor planets, moons, comets, and asteroids.

Topic58:

Many theories were formulated about the creation of the world. Choose one and discuss it.

Typical Essay:

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http://www.kidsastronomy.com/solar_system.htm

Topic59:

Suppose a comet collided with the earth. Write a composition predicting the consequences of such a collision.

Typical Essay:

For the most part, a comet is an object in the solar system that orbits the sun sometimes has a coma (or atmosphere) and a tail. These characteristics are added mostly because of the effects of solar radiation upon the comet's nucleus (the nucleus is made of rock, dust, ice, etc.).

The interesting thing is that comets' orbits are highly variable. First, they are almost always highly affected by close calls with major planets, sometimes even being moved into orbits that destroy them due to their nearness to the Sun. One of the reasons why comets are so easily moved is because the outgassing that creates their comas and tails propels them in mysterious and unpredictable ways. But if a comet collided with the earth, what would happen then?

If the comet were small enough (and we survived), probably something similar to the situation on the 15th of April 1815, when volcanic eruptions of Mount Tambora ejected immense amounts of volcanic dust into the upper atmosphere, would happen." The year of 1816 (the year after) was often referred to as the Year Without a Summer.

This is because so much dust, from only one volcano, blocked out so much sunlight that several people froze to death and crops around the world died. Prices for food skyrocketed and it caused a major problem in economy.

The meteor that hit the Earth and resulted in the extinction of the dinosaurs probably kicked up 100 times to 1000 times as much dust as this volcano explosion.

So the consequences of such a supposed collision really depend on the size of the comet. The bigger it is, the more devastating its outcomes are.

http://www.secretsofsurvival.com/survival/comet_collision_with_earth.html

Topic60:

Write a composition on the importance of astronomy.

Typical Essay:

Astronomy is the study of celestial objects, phenomena, and origins. One of the oldest sciences, astronomy has been practiced since prehistoric times. Modern astronomy depends highly on accepted physical theories, such as Newton's Laws of Motion and general relativity. In the past, astronomy was something anyone could do, and many seers and sages made reputations for themselves by using the stars for useful functions, such as telling what time of the year it is, or navigating the seas. Columbus and his contemporaries used the stars to navigate across the Atlantic ocean.

It wasn't until the Renaissance that the theory of heliocentricity in astronomy, the idea that the Earth orbits the Sun rather than vice versa, began to acquire popular currency. Telescopes were invented in 1611 by Galileo Galilei, and he used his to take detailed observations of our Moon, which he revealed was mountainous, and observe Jupiter's four largest moons, now named the Galilean moons in his honor. Newton improved on Galileo's design, inventing the reflecting telescope, which is still used in optical telescopes to this day.

IN 1781, Sir William Herschel discovered the planet Uranus. In 1838, parallax — the slight difference in stellar position due to Earth's location in its orbit — was used to precisely determine the distance of stars. Neptune was discovered shortly thereafter. Pluto was discovered only as recently as 1930.

Modern astronomy is very complicated and expensive. Instead of only observing light rays, we observe radar, infrared, x-rays, and even cosmic rays. Orbital observatories such as the Hubble Space Telescope have produced the best images, include extremely high-resolution photographs of other galaxies.

In the mid-20th century, it was discovered that the universe was expanding. This, along with other evidence, led to the theory of the Big Bang, that the entire universe began as a point particle of extreme density. Later observations of the cosmic microwave background confirmed this, and the Big Bang continues as the primary theory of cosmological origins to this day.

The future of astronomy lies in the development of new observational technologies. One of interest is interferometry, sometimes called "hypertelescopes," which use a network of telescopes working cooperatively to resolve images. These could develop to the point where we can observe extrasolar planets with telescopes directly, instead of just detecting

Topic61:

Galileo is often called “the Father of Observational Astronomy”. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Galileo Galilei was an Italian physicist, mathematician, astronomer and philosopher who has been called “the Father of Modern Science”. Born on 15 February 1564 in Pisa, Italy, Galileo is known for greatly improving the telescope from only 3X magnification to 32X magnification, discovering the moons of Jupiter, observing hills and valleys on the Moon, discovering and analyzing sunspots, popularizing laws of motion for uniformly accelerated objects, making the compound microscope practical, being one of the first to understand sound frequency, and being one of the most ardent advocates of the theory of heliocentrism. Galileo was among the first people in Europe to practice rigorous scientific standards, setting up formal experiments and describing the results using mathematics.

Galileo is probably best known for his advocacy of heliocentrism, the idea that the Earth orbits the Sun rather than vice versa. This was known as the Copernican theory after its inventor, Nicolaus Copernicus. Galileo based his support of Copernicanism after his observations of the satellites of Jupiter – this was the first discovery of celestial bodies that did not supposedly orbit the Earth. If the satellites of Jupiter orbited Jupiter, then could not the Earth orbit the Sun? Unfortunately, this idea was condemned as heresy, and Galileo was put on trial under the Inquisition in 1633. Narrowly avoiding imprisonment, Galileo was put under house arrest until his death in 1642 at age 77.

Galileo is famed for independently creating his own telescope after merely hearing about the concept while visiting Venice in 1608. The basic concept is simple – the combination of a concave and convex lens – but the telescope had only been invented that very year, by Dutch spectacle makers. In March 1610, Galileo published his initial astronomical observations in a short work entitled *Sidereus Nuncius* (Starry Messenger).

There is a legend that Galileo dropped objects off the Leaning Tower of Pisa as a way of testing the different speeds at which they fell, but this was more likely a thought experiment. In reality, Galileo performed similar experiments with inclined planes that led to the same conclusion. The conclusion, contrary to the Aristotlean wisdom which had held for over a thousand years before, was that objects fall at the same speed regardless of their weight. Heavier objects are just often larger, and therefore slightly more susceptible to air friction. Galileo was not the first modern thinker to realize this, but he played a crucial role in popularizing it.

Because of all his contributions to physics, engineering, and astronomy, Galileo is often called “the Father of Observational Astronomy,” “the Father of Modern Physics,” and other such titles. His basic insights about physics are taught in high schools worldwide.

Topic62:

Long ago, astronomers spotted a galaxy far away and wondered why it was giving birth to so many stars. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

A galaxy is a cluster of stars, nebulae, dark matter, and other astronomical objects. Most galaxies are tens of thousands of light years in diameter, and contain billions of stars. Galaxies come in three primary shapes; spiral galaxies are thin disks, with spiral arms surrounding a central hub; elliptical galaxies are uniform, oval-shaped agglomerations; and irregular galaxies have little or no definite structure.

A spiral galaxy centers around a hub, which is roughly spherical and bulges outward from the disk. The hub is the gravitational center of the galaxy, and usually contains a supermassive black hole. Surrounding the hub are spiral arms, which are bunched-up waves of stars and gas orbiting the center. The spiral arms usually have more gas and dust, and they contain most of the newly formed stars, which make them appear blue in color imagery. A spiral galaxy may have a horizontal bar passing through its hub; our own galaxy, the Milky Way, is believed to contain a bar.

Elliptical galaxies have a large, central hub, but they lack the arms of a spiral galaxy; they usually appear more yellowish in color imagery from old, reddish stars. Irregular galaxies often have no discernible structure, but often they can be recognized as having a distorted spiral or elliptical shape. Elliptical and irregular galaxies often result from collisions, which cause large bursts of star formation and distort the galaxies' structure due to the complex gravitational interactions. Eventually, the two galaxies usually merge to form one large galaxy, which has cast off most of its gas and dust clouds.

There are roughly a hundred billion galaxies in the visible universe; most of them occur in large agglomerations called galaxy superclusters. Between these superclusters are voids with few or no galaxies, often for a hundred million light years or more. By studying the rotation of spiral galaxies, astronomers found that most of the matter in the universe is not stars and gas, but invisible “dark matter” which cannot be seen but still exerts gravity. Dark matter is thought to be responsible for these large clusters, as the gravitational attraction of the dark matter pulled galaxies together.

Topic63:

Unlike the other small bodies in the solar system, comets have been known since antiquity. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

A comet is a small astral body, similar in construction to a planet. A comet may have an unusual orbit, which may at times bring the comet close to the sun and make it visible to the naked eye, or through relatively low strength telescopes. When such a comet can be viewed it is usually noted as having a tail, made of gasses, which early astronomers often mistook for a shooting star.

Most observable comets in our solar system derive from the Oort Cloud, a hypothesized cloud made up of leavings from the sun. These materials form comets, which orbit the sun because are then affected by the gravitational pull of the sun and other planets. While passing by individual planets, the comet may be affected by the gravitational forces of the planets, thus causing an elliptical or oval-type orbit.

Usually, people on earth see a comet when the comet passes in between earth and the sun. It is thought that the comet and its tail, sometimes called the coma and tail, reflect the light of the sun, enhancing visibility. Since comets may orbit the sun in such strange patterns, people may only see the passage of one comet in a lifetime.

In fact, comets are usually classed by the length of time it takes them to orbit the sun. A short period comet takes about 200 years or less to make a full trip around the sun. A long period comet may take far more than 200 years to complete a trip.

For example Halley's Comet can be viewed on earth about every 75 years. This marks it as a short period comet. Its last sight on earth was in 1986, and it is expected to be seen again in 2061.

A planet may capture a comet and the result can cause significant damage to the comet. Such a gravitational capture may result in the comet breaking into many small pieces, and these smaller pieces can then break off from the comet and hit the capturing planet. Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9, was observed as broken in 1993, and astronomers were able to witness it hitting the atmosphere of Jupiter in 1994.

Most often people looking at the night sky may think that they see "falling stars" which are actually meteors or comets. There are thousands of tiny comets that do not attract much interest. The once in a lifetime comet like Halley's are often thought of as exciting, since most people will only see them with the naked eye once.

Topic64:

Most people looking at the night sky may think that they see “falling stars” which are actually meteors or comets. Discuss the difference between a meteor and a comet.

Typical Essay:

There are quite a few objects in the universe capable of causing a really, really bad day on planet Earth, including a wayward comet or large asteroid. Most meteors, however, barely rate a 'ho-hum' on an astronomer's scale of scary extraterrestrial events. There are a number of differences between a comet and a meteor, from their general composition to the roles they play in the universe.

A comet is a celestial object believed to be composed primarily of space dust and frozen gases. The birthplace of a comet is thought to be somewhere in the outer parts of the universe, not related to the formation of our solar system at all. A comet follows an orbit that may bring it close to a star, such as our own Sun. As the comet approaches the star, a portion of its ice core may melt and release a trail of dust-sized particles. This cycle can continue for millions of years.

A meteor, on the other hand, does not follow an orbit around the sun. It isn't even called a meteor while it remains floating in outer space – it's called a meteoroid. Only when it enters the Earth's atmosphere is it considered a true meteor.

When the Earth passes through a comet trail or debris field, individual meteoroids hit or skip across the first layers of the atmosphere. Observers on Earth may be fortunate enough to see the last few seconds of a meteor's existence as it streaks across the sky and burns up. Unlike a comet, a meteor will not return a number of years later.

A comet rarely passes within a few million miles of the Earth, while a meteor by its very definition must strike the first layers of the Earth's atmosphere. A comet's arrival can be predicted with some degree of accuracy, but a meteor can enter the Earth's atmosphere at any time of the day or night. A comet can rarely be seen by the naked eye, but during a meteor shower, it is not unusual to see dozens or even hundreds of meteors within a few hours.

A comet also receives an official name for identification, such as Swift-Tuttle, Hale-Bopp or Halley's Comet. A few large asteroids may receive identifying names as well, but meteors do not. Virtually all meteors cease to exist once they've entered the Earth's atmosphere. A rare few make it to the ground, however. Once a meteor has made contact with the Earth's surface, it becomes known as a meteorite. While a comet may be composed of space dust, organic materials and ice, most meteors contain elemental metals, such as iron, along with inorganic minerals such as quartz.

Topic65:

Cosmologists and astronomers predicted an expanding universe. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Ever since Einstein's theory of general relativity was applied to what is known about the universe as a whole, it has been suspected that the universe was expanding. When Edwin Hubble and Milton Humason discovered in the 1920s that practically all galaxies in the sky were moving away from us at great speeds, this boosted suspicions that the universe was expanding at a rapid rate. Yet it was not until 2000 that decisive evidence was finally found in favor of the universe's expansion, in the form of extensive redshift surveys of very distant objects.

The expanding universe is often cited as the most significant finding in modern cosmology. In Einstein's time, the steady-state theory was the predominant one, which stated that the universe remained balanced at the same size. Einstein, whose equations predicted universal expansion or contraction but not stasis, artificially introduced a stabilizing variable into his equations, called the "cosmological constant." After realizing from Hubble's observations that the universe was likely expanding, he later called this his "greatest blunder."

The phenomenon that first led cosmologists and astronomers to predict an expanding universe was Hubble's analysis of redshift. Using the Mount Wilson Observatory, which was the best telescope in the world at the time, Hubble viewed distant galaxies and saw they looked progressively redder. He looked further away in space, and by extension, further back in time as well, as light takes many billions of years to travel from these galaxies to Earth. Because the redness factor correlated so well with increases in distance, Hubble suspected this was a reliable phenomenon with a physical cause.

The cause was determined to be as follows: as the universe expands, the underlying space increases in volume, but the light traveling through it remains the same. The expanding space stretches out the wavelength of the light, making it longer and thereby redder. An analogy sometimes used is dots on the surface of an expanding balloon. Draw a wave pattern on a balloon, and while you blow it up, notice how the wave stretches out and becomes longer. This is the same principle behind the phenomenon of redshift.

In 1998, it was discovered not only that the universe is expanding, but that it is likely expanding at an accelerating rate. The physical reason for this is chalked up to a mysterious "dark energy," so named because we barely know a thing about it.

Topic66:

Satellites facilitated space research. Discuss what a satellite is.

Typical Essay:

A satellite can be defined as any object, either manmade or naturally occurring, that orbits around something else. For example, the moon orbits around Earth and is thus a satellite. The Earth orbits around the sun and is a satellite of the sun. Other examples of naturally occurring satellites include comets, stars, asteroids, and other planets.

Orbit is determined by the gravitational pull of the object around which the satellite circles. The thing around which a satellite circles is called the primary object. However, primary objects are also affected by their satellites, and feel some of their gravitational pull. In some cases, when two objects have a similar size and weight (mass), and a similar gravitational pull, they may be called binary systems, rather than being called a primary object and a satellite. Some argue that Pluto's moon Charon, and Pluto, represent a binary system instead of a primary object and satellite, since both have similar mass.

Most are more familiar with the term satellite in relationship to the many satellites that circulate the earth. Sputnik was the first artificial satellite, launched in 1957 by the Soviet Union. The launching of Sputnik is almost analogous for the beginning of the Space Race that followed between the US and the USSR. In today's climate, however, many countries have found that a cooperative effort is more successful in space exploration and studies. The International Space Station, a satellite that orbits earth, is currently the largest manmade satellite in Space, and represents the cooperative effort of numerous countries.

Manmade satellites are classified by types, and there are over ten types. Some of the main types of satellite used today include astronomical satellites, communication satellites, earth observation satellites, weather satellites and space stations. Other types of satellites include those used to monitor earth from a military standpoint, and biosatellites, which may carry animals or other lifeforms for the purpose of research on earth lifeforms in space. Navigational satellites are now popular and form a vital part of the global positioning system (GPS) now available in many cars.

Satellites may also be classified by the height at which they orbit earth or another body. A low earth orbit circles the earth at a height of 0-1240 miles (1995.59 km). High earth orbits can be as far away as 22,240 miles (35,791.81 km). Medium earth orbits represent the distance in between high and low earth orbits. Further distinctions exist to describe the type of orbit a manmade or natural satellite has. For example, Pluto has a slightly elliptical orbit. Also a satellite is often classed by what primary object it orbits. A satellite that circles the Earth has a geocentric orbit, for example. The earth, and the planets in our solar system are classed as having a heliocentric orbit since they circle the sun.

A manmade satellite can serve many purposes. We currently use many different types of satellite systems to track things like weather, to make our cellphones work, to find out how to get somewhere and to gather more information about earth, and about the galaxy. About 5000 manmade satellites currently orbit earth, and on clear dark nights, it's often possible to see one in the night sky. Of course, viewing a planet, the stars, or comets is also viewing a satellite. We also must remember, we live on a satellite, and are not stationary in the sky.

Topic67:

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) contributed much to astronomy. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an American government agency which runs the civilian arm of the space program. The aim of NASA is to increase human understanding of the solar system and the universe that contains it, and to improve American aeronautics ability. Under its charter, NASA is supposed to be a peacetime agency that does not perform military functions, although NASA does cooperate with the military, and many NASA employees have a military background. To achieve this goal, NASA has an annual budget which can be counted in the billions to fund programs and pay tens of thousands of employees.

NASA was founded in 1958, in response to the Soviet launch of Sputnik in 1957. The early years of the organization were driven by Cold War competitiveness, and NASA quickly worked on creating rockets which would allow for manned spaceflight. NASA astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were the first humans known to have set foot on the moon in 1969, an action that was considered a major victory for American aeronautics. Riding on this early success, NASA continued development of aeronautic equipment designed to function outside the Earth's atmosphere.

After the moon landing, NASA focused on doing research around the solar system, sending an assortment of manned flights to the moon to collect material for study, and unmanned drones to other planets to collect data. These flights have collected large amounts of data which are constantly being added to and analyzed. Scientific advancement is a large part of NASA's mission. With the assistance of the agency, scientists have been able to conduct experiments in the zero gravity environment of space, and test hypotheses about the universe.

NASA also continues to work on a space shuttle program to make space more accessible. As of 2007, the space shuttle had made 112 flights with astronauts from many nations including the United States, and two of these flights, the Challenger and Columbia, were lost. NASA plans to resume manned flights to the moon by 2020, after safety improvements have been made to the space shuttle.

As part of its mission as a peaceful agency, NASA cooperates with agencies within the United States and international aeronautics agencies. A NASA astronaut can usually be found on board the International Space Station, and astronauts from other nations are invited to participate in NASA events. This fostering of international cooperation will hopefully continue as humans explore space and the possibility of off-Earth human settlements becomes possible.

Topic68:

Cosmologists and astronomers predicted an expanding universe. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Space travel is a form of travel in which passengers enter space, the vast region outside the protective envelope of the Earth's atmosphere. Space starts 62 miles (100 kilometers) above the Earth's crust, at a point called the Karman Line, and it continues for a distance which appears to be infinite, interrupted periodically by celestial bodies such as stars, planets, and so forth. Humans have long had romantic associations with space travel, with people considering space "the final frontier," as they famously say on *Star Trek*.

Humans have been intrigued by the night sky for centuries, tracking the movements of stars, planets, comets, and other features in the sky and pondering the mysteries of the heavens. In the 20th century, the fascination with space took on a whole new level of excitement when humans successfully launched manned spacecraft out of the Earth's atmosphere, putting astronauts in space and on the Moon. With the proof that manned spaceflight was possible, the concept of space travel began to seem less like a pipe dream and more like a reality, and private companies began to enter the field, developing space planes and offering commercial flights.

In the 20th century, space travel was restricted to astronauts who worked for various governments, and it was primarily performed for research purposes. Space travel allowed people to collect samples from the Moon, maintain space telescopes such as the Hubble Telescope, and eventually to perform research on the International Space Station, a structure which orbits the Earth and houses astronauts from several nations at any given time.

While space travel for research is certainly admirable and important, many people are more interested in the potential for space travel as a form of recreation, tourism, or exploration. Civilians began purchasing tickets for tourist flights into space in the early 2000s, sometimes going on brief suborbital flights in which they barely entered space, and sometimes spending several days in space, exploring the International Space Station and enjoying the experience of being in space.

The potential for space travel is infinite, just like the universe, bounded only by human technology. Many people hope that the dreams of science fiction, such as massive ships which can travel between galaxies, will someday be realized. Space travel could be used to explore the rest of the solar system and galaxy, learning more about the nature of the universe and potentially leading to a discovery of life beyond the boundaries of Earth.

Topic69:

We are living in a universe still being discovered. Discuss how big our universe is.

Typical Essay:

The current, observable universe has been determined to have a width of 156 billion light years, with an error of less than 1%, by the latest deep-space telescope WMAP. At first, it might seem impossible that scientists are so sure of this astronomical measurement, but this figure has been narrowed by years of research and determined by several paths of inquiry. Also, the size of the universe is intimately dependent on its shape, age, acceleration, and total mass, so we are very confident in this figure.

In 2003, the Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe sent back enough data for scientists to publish extremely dependable studies that established two previously unknown facts about the universe. They determined our universe is flat, which means standard Euclidean geometry is valid on the largest scale. This can be understood by saying a straight line more or less stays a straight line for as long as it extends. They also established that the universe is accelerating at an ever-increasing rate, which means that all mass is flying away from each other at faster and faster speeds. The WMAP data measured the temperature, called the cosmic microwave background radiation, of our observable universe with an unprecedented accuracy, to within a 5% error. From these facts, we can deduce figures such as the radius of the universe.

Remember that the size of the universe is not a constant value, nor is it the size of an object as we traditionally understand it. The size of the universe is actually the size of space itself, and as space expands, so does the space between planets, stars, and galaxies. At the beginning of the universe, the Big Bang created space and time as we know them. From that moment, space has been expanding, so we find its size by measuring how far light could have traveled since the Big Bang, along with how much space itself stretched.

We can only possibly look or communicate up to the edge, or "horizon," of where light has traveled since the beginning of the universe. The size of the universe means the space in which we can interact with anything. We will never ever know what is "beyond" this boundary, because there is no way to know anything about it, so it's illogical to consider the realm "outside" of our universe, or to wonder what we are expanding "into."

An independent measure of the size of our universe can be given by studying the oldest stars. The oldest stars we have found are probably somewhere between 11 and 14 billion light years old. If we had stars older than the largest distance light could have traveled, then we'd know there was something wrong with our calculations; there would not be enough time for them to evolve. However, these values are consistent with everything else we know about the universe.

Unit Six: Keep cool!

Feelings and Emotions

Topic70:

Having a sense of humour would prevent you from some illness and help you refresh your life. Explain.

Typical Essay:

Laughter – is surely the best medicine! We probably realize the importance of laughter only when we grow out of our childhood days. Do we really need a reason to laugh? I don't really think so! However, with work stress on the rise, laughter therapy sessions are gaining attention worldwide. The benefits of laughter are many! However, one may not really get into the nitty-gritty of issues at a young age. The importance of laughter therapy is realized only when one loses the reason to laugh about the simplest of issues. Well, laughter surely is good for all and those who are unaware of the benefits need to read about the importance of laughter therapy.

Have you observed the beauty of a child especially when it bursts into uncontrollable peals of laughter? Well, that's the beauty of laughter! Laughter therapy provides you a great way to get rid of stress. This is the best stress relief activity, which dissolves all feelings of irritation and anger.

Laughing also helps to motivate a person. This in turn, releases all the positive energy. A good session of loads of laughter would help one to release all the pent-up feelings that are really not healthy otherwise. Laughter helps to reduce feelings of grief and depression and create a sense of well-being. Daily sessions of laughter help to strengthen the immune system. No matter how negative or dejected you feel, laughter is one such therapy that can uplift your emotional state to a very positive level.

A good sense of humor can help in enhancing your personality whether in professional or personal life. Laughter therapy can turn you into a better team member and you can turn out to be an effective person at communication.

The importance of laughter is something that can be felt and known from within. Don't wait anymore, call up your buddies and ensure you have a good laugh over all the silly things you can recall!

Topic71:

Write a short newspaper article in which you describe the Algerian wedding customs.

Typical Essay:

In Algeria, as in all Arab countries, society revolves around religion and religious customs of Islam. Marriage in Algeria is taken very seriously and is considered by most as a sign of maturity. According to the Qur'an, marriage must be based upon love. Algeria's wedding customs amongst those following the Muslim religion are much the same as in other practicing Muslim communities.

Algerian men and women are free to marry whomever they wish as long as the marriage partner is approved by the family. Parents have a more realistic view and can give their children practical guidance in selecting the appropriate marriage mate. Typically a man will express his love for a woman to his mother who will in turn "investigate" the family of the woman as to suitability. If she is approved the family will approach the woman's family to propose the union. A date will be chosen to visit the mosque so as to begin the engagement.

Much preparation takes place from the time of engagement. The family will begin purchasing clothing, household goods, wool and gold. This is referred to as shoura. The couple will spend time together getting to know each other well, sharing opinions and preparing a home. In Islamic culture, husbands and wives are to make mutual decisions and have equal claims in the marriage, it is therefore vital that the couple know each other well and recognize the roles they will take on before marriage.

Algerians believe that the more money they spend on the wedding the more proud the family can be. Weeks before the actual wedding women begin gathering at the bride's house to prepare desserts such as makroud and baklava. The wedding meal will include couscous, meat and vegetables, the bigger the meal, the more generous the family is said to be.

Following the party, the bride is driven to the groom's home. Beautifully adorned in an intricate wedding gown, with make-up, excessive jewelry, and henna designs painted on her hands and feet, she is seated on a decorated chair in his house. All the guests dance and join in great reverie as they prepare to say farewell. The groom will then approach his bride and walk they shall walk out, husband and wife, whilst surrounded by cheering family members and friends.

Algerian wedding customs may vary slightly depending how orthodox the family is and if the people follow other religions. Algerian weddings are truly an explosion of emotion and color, perhaps you will be lucky enough to see a wedding procession during your holiday.

<http://www.algeria.com/wedding-customs/>

Topic72:

Write a short newspaper article in which you describe the different ways men and women express their feelings in various situations.

Typical Essay:

The death of a close friend or a relative, the occurrence of a natural disaster or an accident, and other fatalities are likely to generate feelings and emotions in people.

Actually the difference in reaction is more particularly a question of gender. Men will tend to hide their grief over the death of somebody they know, or they awe when they witness a tragedy; during a natural disaster, they will try not to panic and control their emotions; instead, they will react by taking steps to protect their families and neighbours. Women will show their emotions more openly. They will express their sadness and cry profusely when they learn about a relative's death. Likewise, they will be rather shocked and terrified when they see an accident in which there are casualties. Finally, they are likely to lose their self-control, and fail to take the right decisions to protect themselves in an emergency.

The difference in response regarding the expression of love and affection will most likely follow the same pattern. Men always try to avoid excessive sentimentality. They generally avoid showing in verbal manner too much emotion and feelings to their families and showing concern, offering help or giving presents. Women are again prone to showing their feelings more openly. They would often use terms of endearment, and they often hug and kiss family members, especially children.

The differing levels of sensitivity between men and women concerning the facts of life are probably the reason why their marks of sympathy and affection are dissimilar. But the male and female attitudes are complementary, and both necessary for good human interaction.

Topic73:

Most people experience anxious feelings before an important event such as a big exam, business presentation or first date. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Anxious feelings can plague us all from time to time. It's not uncommon to worry about things like upcoming tests, job performance, the behavior or well-being of a child, or even patterns in our own behavior that are disturbing. While we all may worry or feel anxious occasionally, some people are more bogged down with anxiety, and find they cope with anxious feelings by changing their behavior. These changes may be for the better; if you feel anxious about your weight and start eating a healthy diet and exercising you're probably benefiting yourself, putting anxious feelings to rest. But changes can also be for the worse; you suddenly avoid things in your life because participation in these things makes you so anxious.

Anxiety can cause sleeplessness, difficulty maintaining relationships, overmedicating with food, drink, sex and et cetera, and as mentioned, behavior avoidance. In severe cases, anxiety can cause us to have panic attacks, which can be challenging to overcome, and to many people may feel, when the attack is in progress, like they are dying or having a heart attack. Yet even anxiety that is simply making it hard to sleep at night is enough to have an overwhelmingly negative effect on your life.

There are a number of ways to cope with anxious feelings. If these feelings are pervasive, depriving your from sleep, changing the way you live your life, or causing panic attacks, it's a good idea to seek help. First, you may want to see a therapist, since there are many helpful therapies to cope with anxious feelings. One of the chief advocated methods is called cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which can help you think about and contextualize your feelings. Anxiety may often be masking core beliefs or traumatic events, or deep sadness. Getting at what's behind the anxiety with CBT has been proven effective for many.

When anxious feelings are still not put to rest with therapy alone, you may be suffering from generalized anxiety disorder or panic disorder. With help from a psychiatrist, you can find medications that will help regulate brain chemicals creating overly anxious responses to daily living. Medication and CBT are used together to cope with anxious feelings caused by a true medical disorder.

For mild feelings of anxiety, you may find relief talking to a friend, a school counselor, your parents, a pastor, or a trusted family friend. It can also help to consider how you are responding to mild anxiety. If anxious feeling cause you to hide in your room and not go to work, you're probably only going to get more anxious. In the absence of true anxiety disorder, there are some things that can help cope with distressing feelings.

First, eat a healthy diet and avoid overeating to calm anxiety. Second, do not medicate anxiety with illegal drugs or drinking, which can quickly exacerbate your problem. Third, try to get exercise everyday. A 30-minute to hour-long walk helps stimulate production of chemicals that can make you feel more relaxed, and help you sleep better at night. Meditative exercises like Tai Chi and yoga can also be helpful, and many people find prayer, meditation or deep breathing exercises very calming to the mind.

Topic74:

Sadness is an emotion all people have at times. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Sadness is an emotion all people feel at times. Few people can get through life without bouts of sadness. This emotion is a natural response to losses of many kinds: loss of a loved one, a pet, a relationship, or a job. Even when life is just challenging, we may find ourselves sad. Deciding the degree to which these feelings are normal and how you measure them is very difficult.

Sad feelings lasting for more than two weeks is fairly normal, especially if you have real reasons to be sad. The death of a spouse or child, for instance, will evoke powerful emotions that will make you grieve for a long time. Even a painful divorce can cause feelings of sadness to last for months or even years.

Even if you have legitimate reasons to feel sad, when that sadness seems overwhelming, all-encompassing, and is significantly interfering with your ability to continue your normal life, a good therapist or support group can help. Furthermore, when you have few reasons to really feel sad, and yet you do, this may not be “normal.” If you are constantly blue and depressed for little reason, this deserves medical attention because it may be caused by brain chemical imbalance. Major depression is a real disease, and many people respond well to treatment.

Determining whether your feelings are normal may take some deep self-scrutiny. It’s hard to go by the opinion of others. Most people find that others expect them to recover from even major grief, long before they do. In fact a common complaint among those grieving is that after a few intensive weeks when everyone is helpful, most people (friends, family) no longer want to listen or seem to bounce back to their normal lives while the grieving person still feels awful.

Even if medication is not appropriate to treating grief, therapy may be. With a few exceptions, most people will continue to be sad for a long time, and though this may be normal, it may not be tolerated in our society. Dealing with the attitudes of others who expect you to get immediately back on track can fuel your feelings even more, and having a therapist or a support group that understands how isolating sad feelings can be is of extraordinary help.

In sum, in the absence of any obvious causes, long-term sadness should be evaluated as potential depression. Suicidal thoughts and feelings deserve immediate medical attention. Yet sadness should be understood in the context it occurs, and when it occurs in context of true loss, the best help may be talk therapy and time.

Topic75:

Many people experience the feelings of grief and express them differently. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Many assume that grief is associated only with the loss of a loved one. Psychology shows us that this is very often not the case, but those suffering grief from things other than the death of someone are often told to “snap out of it.” Grief is, quite simply put, a response to loss. The loss can be of something tangible or intangible. It helps to recognize that disappointments, abuse, recognizing one’s limitations, losing a job, or so many other things can elicit a grief response. People suffering a loss need time to grieve, and such time depends upon how important the loss was.

Everyone grieves in different ways. Some people stoically plow through loss and essentially feel working is the best way to deal with it. Others need to cry or keep themselves away from other people for a time. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross did great work on the stages of grief, which can help people gain understanding as to the process of grief.

Defining loss that will cause grief is very difficult. It depends much on the perception of the individual. For some people, losing a job is simply a life lesson. These people move onto the next job or job hunt without perceiving this as an emotional blow. For others, loss of a job could seem earth shattering, causing them to question all the decisions they made about their choice of career, or to feel great self-directed negativity.

Some people experience grief when they find out that a future path they wanted to take is now closed to them. For example, a woman who has tried to get pregnant and finds there is no way for her to do so, may mourn the future she expected to have, a future that included carrying and having her own children. Even if the loss is future directed, it can still cause grief in the present. Being shut out from wished for things can cause tremendous grief, again proportionate to a person’s perception.

Children grieve too, for small things, like a friend moving away or having to change schools. One expects a child to perhaps grieve at the death of a pet, but parents may fail to recognize the grief children feel during transitional times. Most therapists recommend that parents not dismiss their children’s first grieving experiences, as this may shape the way in which children are able to recognize grief, mourn, and at the appropriate time move on from the first sad feelings that grip them.

It is not necessary to encourage a child to grieve more, because again, children will respond in individual ways, as adults do. However, leaving open the opportunity for children to discuss their feelings, enabling them to express their feelings by giving them an emotional language, and practicing extra patience around a grieving child may be one of the best things one can do for such a child.

In considering grief, it’s important to remember that it is a response to many different kinds of losses, that is individual, and that it is influenced by the person’s perception of the loss. A couple that loses the ability to have children may grieve in very different ways. Of key importance is the recognition of grief instead of its dismissal. People cannot recover from grief they fail to acknowledge.

Topic76:

Many people are friends first and find over time their feelings change to those more romantic in nature. Discuss this state of emotional change.

Typical Essay:

Falling in love may be a common expression in much of the Western world but it isn't used much elsewhere. The phrase may be connected to the idea of "falling head over heels," which was used in the 1300s, and is another term for being struck suddenly by great romantic attraction to someone else. Even with this connection, it can be hard to get a beat on what falling in love means, or what it feels like. Each person may define this experience somewhat differently.

Generally, when a person falls in love they have heightened romantic interest in someone else, and this doesn't necessarily have to occur at first sight. Many people are friends first and find over time their feelings change to those more romantic in nature. They might want more from a relationship than just friendship and they may cherish more than friendly feelings for the person with whom they've fallen in love.

The word *fall* suggests that there's a certain helplessness about these feelings of attraction, and they're not necessarily within the control of the person stricken suddenly with great affection. It is true that people can't always determine who or what attracts them, but they don't have to be helpless in this regard. People can make choices about whether to act on romantic feelings. However, for those experiencing falling in love for the first few times, the feelings can seem so powerful that there seems little choice but to act upon them. Some people have challenges maturing out of this impulse, which can make forming lasting romantic relationships very difficult.

It would be hard to dispute that initial feelings of attraction and the "falling in love" state are powerful. For centuries, writers and poets have sung both the agonies and joys of discovering passionate feelings for someone else. Chaucer called this early "love" state the "dreadful joy" representing both the pitfalls and ecstasy. Infatuation and romantic interest especially at the onset of a relationship can be both painful and exciting.

People have verifiable physiological reactions when in this early love state. A sight of the object of their affection may cause the pulse to race and the body to sweat. Certain neurotransmitters in the brain tend to be produced in greater volume, which can promote happiness and some anxiety. Yet most social scientists would agree that the reaction is not entirely a chemical one and involves the thinking brain and the emotions on numerous levels.

Topic77:

We have multiple ways to express our feelings, and profanity tends to leak out when we most need to do so. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Though it is common to hear profanity virtually everywhere, it is still possible to learn how not to use it. Profanity is actually a fairly limited language, which can offend or hurt people's feelings. In addition, profanity is often picked up by the small children around whom it is used. Using profanity is a breakable habit that may be helped by a few tips.

First, consider our language. We have multiple ways to express our feelings, and profanity tends to leak out when we most need to express our feelings. One helpful way to break from using profanity is to arm oneself with an emotional language. "That hurts my feelings," "I am really angry," or "I feel frustrated." "I'm tired," or "I'm impatient and cross."

The more we learn our own language, the more ways we have to actually express our own feelings without resorting to profanity. Especially since one has so many other ways one can "use our words," avoiding profanity may actually allow us to express how one truly feels. In front of children, this type of expression is very helpful, because it teaches them the emotional language they will need to cope with difficult situations or challenging feelings.

Another tool for helping to avoid slips of the tongue is to always use language that one would use with either a young person, or someone elderly. If dear grandma were in the room, would one really choose the s or f-word? If a young niece or nephew was over and one stepped on a toy, would one let out an offensive exclamation? Consider that in public, someone's dear old grandma or sweet child may be nearby.

If one does slip, say what one should have said. It helps to get in the habit of saying the words that don't offend. Also, apologize for a word slip in a public venue. Recognize this behavior as potentially harmful or offensive and own one's mistakes. Apologizing can be a healthy way to remind one that such language is now off limits.

Another method some find helpful is the profanity fine. If one slips and says a word, impose a reasonable fine. For teens, this could be a quarter, and for adults perhaps a dollar. Donate the money to one's church or to a charity.

Some new parents substitute nonsense words for profanity, and this may be helpful. Another technique is to actually let out a bleep or buzz sound as would occur on television. Censoring oneself can be a good initial step toward moving onto more inventive words.

Some might argue that about the only acceptable time to use profanity is if one is acting in a part that requires such. At other times, the richness of the English language offers many words that are far more expressive of true feelings. Though this may be a difficult habit to break if one uses profanity frequently, it is not impossible. While profanity is often called "colorful," truly colorful language expresses one's varied vocabulary and ability as a speaker.

Topic78:

To show empathy is to identify with another's feelings and emotionally put yourself in his place. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

Empathy is a feeling different from sympathy. When one is sympathetic, one implies pity but maintains distance from another person's feelings. Empathy is more a sense that one can truly understand or imagine the depth of another person's feelings. It implies feeling *with* a person, rather than feeling sorry for a person.

Empathy is a translation of the German term *Einfühlung*, meaning to feel as one with. It implies sharing the load, or "walking a mile in someone else's shoes," in order to appropriately understand that person's perspective.

In therapy, for example, being sympathetic with a patient implies a distance and a failure to understand the patient's viewpoint. On the other hand, the therapist who displays empathy is attempting to further his or her understanding from the perspective of the patient. This implies closeness rather than distance as it makes little distinction between the person suffering and the person attempting to understand the suffering. However, the therapist must also protect him or herself from becoming entangled in the emotional state of the client. Some distance needs to be maintained even when empathy is practiced.

Group therapy often works because those with a specific issue, such as alcoholism, are able to show empathy to each other. Each person who is an alcoholic finds it easier to understand others who struggle with alcoholism.

Alternately, a group dedicated to providing support to people that have lost a child relies on the empathy of the members. Each person has something in common with the other group members. They can all deeply understand the monumental importance and tragedy of losing a child in a way that cannot be understood by a person who has not lost a child.

Often people who have suffered a loss or experienced a tragedy find themselves put off by sympathy. Sympathy often emphasizes that the grieving person is alone. Even when kindly meant, sympathy is often rejected. Grieving people don't necessarily want pity, but instead want understanding. Finding friends who can offer empathy helps to restore perspective in a world that has been torn by tragedy. It emphasizes that one is not alone, and shares his or her intense feelings with other people.

For those who truly wish to help a grieving person, empathy is not always possible. Most people cannot even begin to be "as one with" a person who has been raped, abused, or who has suffered the death of a loved one. However, in attempting to express empathy, one needs to think carefully. "What would this really be like?" Sometimes the only appropriate response is to say to a person: "I can only imagine how difficult this must be for you." In this way, we come closest to empathy.

Topic79:

What creates a sense of happiness can vary widely from person to person. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

A number of small positive events or accomplishments accumulate to provide a sense of self-satisfaction and contentment, which we interpret as personal happiness. For most of us, happiness is a state of mind rather than a specific emotion or response to positive outside forces.

One important element of happiness is a sense of self-satisfaction. Whether or not we want to admit it, many of us spend our days in a perpetual state of neediness. We have physical, emotional and spiritual needs which we believe need to be satisfied in order to experience some degree of happiness. When we have that morning cup of coffee, socialize with co-workers, enjoy a delicious lunch or finish an important project, at least one of our daily needs will be met. In one sense, happiness occurs when our list of needs becomes replaced by a new list of physical, emotional and spiritual fulfillment.

Another important element of happiness is a sense of accomplishment. Consider how many times our ideas and plans fail throughout an average day. These failures tend to create inner tension and anxiety, which in turn creates a sense of unhappiness. But when an idea does come to fruition or a plan does come together, there is often a feeling of euphoria and accomplishment. Happiness can be the reward for persevering through difficult or challenging times and not succumbing to despair. Winning a contest or receiving recognition for a successful project often triggers feelings of happiness.

For some of us, happiness can be derived from having our material or spiritual needs met. There is an old saying that money can't buy happiness, but in reality it can come very close. For many wage earners, the thought of receiving enough money or other tangible rewards for their efforts can certainly trigger a sense of happiness. Knowing that our immediate needs and even a few personal desires will be met can be very reassuring, which in turn generates feelings of security and happiness. In the same sense, many people find happiness after hearing a life-affirming spiritual message or spending time in deep reflection or meditation. Happiness could mean a sense of harmony between mind, body and spirit.

What creates a sense of happiness can vary widely from person to person. Young children with little life experience may find happiness in the form of an ice cream cone or Saturday morning cartoon, while adults may find happiness by traveling or pursuing outside interests. Some people require a lot of their needs to be met before they experience happiness, while others find happiness in simplicity. Happiness is said to be the one free thing all people strive for and would give anything to obtain.

<http://www.wisegEEK.com/what-is-happiness.htm>

Topic80:

Children often want to know what it means to die but this would be problematic to many parents. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

It is unlikely that a child will make it through childhood without experiencing the death of a friend. When the death of a friend is unexpected, it can be challenging to break the news to a child. A very young child, who has never experience the death of a friend, pet or loved one, may not know how to react to such news.

Children often want to know what it means to die. For young children, this may mean explaining that physically, death is a process where the body stops working. Using euphemisms like passing on or went to sleep are not recommended, as they may cause the child to have concerns that they might accidentally die in their sleep. Children may also want to know what happens to a body after someone dies. In fact they may ask questions that can shock a parent. It's considered best to treat such questions with accurate but simple facts.

Even with an explanation, after the death of a friend, children may not be able to grasp that a friend is really gone. If the family believes in some form of afterlife, this can prove comforting or perplexing. Children that believe in God may find themselves wondering why God caused the death of a friend. There is no one good way to approach this, except to assure the child that he or she is safe.

It can help to consult other parents or a grief counselor if you feel unable to answer your child's questions. Grief counselors can help one navigate parenting through this tragic experience. When necessary, a child may benefit from some individual grief counseling or play therapy as well.

Older children may react differently to a death of a friend than a younger child. In fact teens often don't want to discuss their feelings with parents. They may feel more comfortable discussing their thoughts with their peers. When the death of a friend is felt by a school community, for example, schools are often excellent at providing grief counseling and support to the students in the challenging months ahead.

Some parents feel that they shouldn't show their own emotions about the death of a friend to children. However, psychologists often feel this is a mistake. While overblown screaming and crying might make the child worried, natural tears and feeling sad in front of child may help him or her understand they too can cry or feel sad. Parents and friends teach a lifelong lesson about how people grieve when they encounter the death of a friend. Responding with no emotion may well teach the child that emotional reaction is unacceptable.

Topic81:

Children often want to know what it means to die but this would be problematic to many parents. Discuss.

Typical Essay:

To put it in very simple terms, *tolerance* means to tolerate or put up with differences. It means showing respect for the race, religion, age, gender, opinions, and ideologies of other people or groups. Tolerance means different things to different people. It is when something is disagreeable that tolerance is expected, and in more politically correct cultures, demanded.

Tolerance can be shown in many ways. A person might fully disagree with others on any issue, while at the same time respecting those with different opinions and treating them with dignity and respect. Disagreement alone does not equal intolerance.

One problem is the fact that tolerance is sometimes one-sided. Those who disagree with a particular issue must respect the opinions of those who advocate it, but some advocates feel justified in labeling those who disagree with hateful terms, and vice versa. People on both sides of an issue must be tolerant of each other, in order for tolerance to be effective.

When it comes to controversial issues, tolerance may also represent a “let’s agree to disagree” stance. It does not mean that a person has to accept or embrace words, actions, or ideas that are against his or her values or beliefs. It simply means that each person agrees to respect the other’s right to his or her feelings on the matter. When both parties have expressed their opinions, and it is obvious that neither is likely to change position, agreeing to disagree is often the most amicable outcome.

Some degree of tolerance is necessary in any civilized society, but it is not realistic to believe that all people can achieve complete tolerance on every issue. It goes against human nature, or the instinctive impulse of some to pull away from people or things that are different or unknown. Tolerance is a learned attribute, a virtue, which requires honest effort on the part of every person. It takes time to develop real tolerance, and it also takes commitment.

Topic82:

Love is said to have different languages. Discuss.

Typical Essay

Dr. Gary Chapman, a Christian family counselor and author, has developed a relationship-building program called the 5 love languages. Love languages are defined as verbal and non-verbal communications between couples which improve the mental and physical well-being of both partners. These mutual expressions and actions help to build up a nurturing environment in which couples can improve both their emotional and physical intimacy levels.

The first of the five love languages includes words of affirmation. These words go far beyond a perfunctory "I love you" ritual, and include specific recognition of a partner's contributions to the relationship or the household or a career. The point of the exercise is to provide enough positive affirmation of a partner's self-worth to motivate that person towards even more personal growth. By telling a partner or friend or co-worker how much you appreciate his or her efforts, you are speaking in a language he or she can understand.

The second of the five love languages involves spending quality time with a loved one. This means setting aside a meaningful amount of personal time in which the friend or partner receives your complete and undivided attention. The idea is to have substantial conversations with another person, or take the time to indulge in a mutual interest, such as a movie or a hobby. Quality time can build up intimacy and trust in any relationship, romantic or otherwise.

Receiving gifts is the third component of Chapman's love languages. Almost everyone enjoys receiving personalized gifts from loved ones, and a surprise gift can be even more special. The ritual surrounding the presentation of a gift is often as satisfying as the gift itself. Some gifts are not necessarily tangible, but a spouse or friend can contribute a gift of time or a gift of their unique talents.

The fourth of the five love languages involves acts of service. A partner may volunteer to clean the house before the other partner returns home from work. A husband may decide to convert a garage into a craft room so his wife can pursue her interests and hobbies. The most important idea behind an act of services is that it must be unconditional and free of ulterior motives. A *quid pro quo* arrangement is not considered a true act of service.

The final element of the five love languages is physical touch. A back rub following a hard day at work would be an example of a positive expression of love language. A spouse may spontaneously scratch the other's back, or a father may give his son an affectionate pat on the shoulder after a good sports play. The point of physical touch is to satisfy the basic human need for close contact with others. People who feel isolated from others physically may begin to feel isolated on other levels as well.

Topic83:

Roses are often messengers of various feelings and emotions. Discuss what the different colours of roses can signify.

Typical Essay

Roses are the ultimate flower for expression of emotion or feeling. As a gift, roses can convey different meanings if the person receiving them knows the symbolism attached to the various colors of roses. Over the years, the meanings behind the different colors of roses have evolved to cover many sentiments. Before ordering a bouquet of roses for delivery, or to interpret possible meaning behind the last bouquet of roses you received, read on to learn the meanings associated with many common colors of roses.

Red is the most commonly given color of roses. Red signifies love and passion. True red is the rose for lovers. Fiery red roses signify passion, while cardinal red symbolizes desire. Fully bloomed red roses best convey the message “I still love you,” while red rose buds are a way to express love for the first time.

Yellow roses once meant jealousy, but today the yellow rose signifies friendship, familiar love, and domestic happiness. Yellow roses can also be an appropriate sentiment to express sympathy. Orange roses symbolize an expression of pride or amazement, while peach roses symbolize appreciation and desire. A bouquet of orange roses would be appropriate for a graduate or to commemorate a promotion, while peach could express sincere appreciation for someone’s accomplishments.

Pink roses signify elegance, gentility, and poetic romance, without the seriousness signified by red. Pink roses are more light-hearted than red and can signify mere admiration or sweetness of thought. Light pink roses can signify both sympathy and friendship, while dark pink is symbolic of appreciation and thankfulness. A mixture of pink and red roses signifies a romantic relationship.

White roses are sometimes called the “flower of light” and are the bride’s roses. They symbolize unity, sincerity, loyalty, purity, and a love stronger than death. White roses can be mixed with red to emphasize the meaning of love, while white rose buds are an appropriate gift to a young girl from her father.

Purple roses represent majestic glory and can symbolize eternal love, while lavender or lilac roses signify love at first sight or the beginning of true feelings. Purple roses are appropriate for wedding anniversaries beyond 25 years and as memorial flowers for a lost spouse. Deep purple roses should be reserved for intimate situations.

Black roses are symbolic of death. Many people view black roses as an omen, but they can signify change or rejuvenation on the horizon, as some rose buds appear black but then bloom into crimson red. The meaning of black roses may not be understood or well received as a gift, so you should avoid this color if you are at all unsure of the recipient’s beliefs.

Many colors of roses come in various shades, which can signify slightly different meanings from their primary colors. Mixing different colors together in one bouquet is an excellent way to convey a mixture of emotions when one sentiment is not enough.

Topic84:

Chivalry was a code for a certain small class of society. Discuss.

Typical Essay

Chivalry in its modern sense tends to apply to the courtesies a man might pay to a lady. These include standing until a woman sits, offering a woman a seat on a bus, or opening a door for a woman. These actions are the remains of the once great code for knightly behavior espoused during the Middle Ages.

Simply riding on horseback, however, is not an example of chivalry. In fact the term implies not only the knight, but also the duties of a good knight. These duties were defined as faithfulness and service to God, kindness to fellow Christians, protection and championship of the weak, and courtly love.

Women and men might “play” at courtly love, because in most instances, marriage was a contractual obligation, and not a match made because of love. Gentle behavior, and elaborate praise of the woman helped to satisfy a deep yearning to be admired and appreciated, something not always obtainable from a husband.

As well, a younger knight might act as champion for a woman with an older husband, who did not have the strength to bear her colors in jousting tournaments. This aspect of chivalry was seen as the attention due to women, and not a chance to gain a woman sexually. In fact, by following church teachings as part of chivalry, adultery verges off the path of the chivalrous.

All aspects of chivalry are guided by a knight’s service to honor. Personal worth was measured by adherence to chivalry, and by not simply being chivalrous when others were around to observe it. Chivalry was meant to guide the knight through situations where he was alone; it gave him a chance to act for the salvation of his soul and for the salvation of others.

Naturally one must contrast chivalry with the outrageous and barbaric behavior often in keeping with the feudal system and the crusades. Since chivalry is conducted as a Christian code, it did not apply to the “infidel” such as Jews, or Turks, killed during crusades. Nor did chivalry apply to the abuse frequently inflicted on serfs, though in Arthurian legends, much chivalry was practiced to punish feudal lords who abused their serfs, as part of the protection of the weak.

However, chivalry was a code for a certain small strata of society. As such, chivalrous behavior could separate the knight from the masses rather than have him work for the many poor and abused in the feudal society.

Topic85:

There are many ways for a man to be a better husband and overcome his family problems. Discuss.

Typical Essay

Marriage is the joining of two people in a bond meant to last a lifetime. Unfortunately, as evidenced by the rising divorce rates, this is not always how it goes. Marriages can fall apart for many reasons, and it is usually the fault of both people involved. However, by trying to be a better husband, you can possibly save a marriage heading down a rocky road, or improve an already strong relationship.

The first way to be a better husband is to rekindle the romance. This is not as difficult as it may sound. Start small, especially if it's been a while. Bring home some flowers, and hold doors open for your wife. Show her through little things that you love and admire her. Hold hands again, and cuddle on the couch while watching a movie. If you can afford gifts to show your affection, that's fine, but most women would prefer that their husbands spend more time than money on them.

Learning to spend more time together is important when trying to be a better husband. Make time for each other, a few hours every week, at the very least. If you can carve out even a half hour of time a day, just for the two of you, that is even better. Schedule regular date nights, without the kids. In addition, take an active interest in your wife's hobbies. If she loves to cook, sign yourselves up for some cooking classes. Spending time together doing something that she really enjoys can make your marriage stronger.

Take the time to talk things out, since communication is essential to a great marriage. To be a better husband, you must be willing to listen. This is especially important when there is an argument. Learn to fight fair, and listen to each other's concerns. If communication is difficult for you and your wife, consider marriage counseling, as a counselor can help you both learn to better relate to each other. Listening in a non-judgmental way, and learning to phrase complaints in a loving way, can solve a lot of the problems that most marriages face.

There are many ways to be a better husband. The best way is to remember why you fell in love in the first place. At the beginning of your relationship, you were each other's best friend, and considerate of each other's feelings and opinions. As a marriage goes on, it is easy to lose sight of this. As you try to become a better husband, there is a very good possibility that your wife will respond to your efforts and become a better wife.

Topic86:

There are many ways for a woman to be a better wife and overcome her family problems. Discuss.

Typical Essay

A great way to improve a marriage is to try to be a better wife. It isn't hard to be a better wife, and it is often worth it to put a little extra effort into a relationship to keep it strong. Being a better wife can have a great pay-off, improving your marriage and helping you to rediscover the spark enjoyed in the earlier stages of the relationship.

One of the best ways to be a better wife is to be conscientious of how you phrase requests. Don't be a nag. State your request in a respectful way, and then let it go. Remember that your husband is an adult, and treat him as such. Asking nicely is a better way to get what you want, and it will leave him in a more pleasant mood and more receptive to future requests.

Another terrific way to become a better wife is to learn how to fight fairly. Slamming doors and name calling are not conducive to a strong relationship. Communication is an essential skill for married couples to have. Being able to voice your concerns and opinions in a mature way, and knowing that you are being heard and understood, is important for any relationship, but it is especially important in marriages.

Forgive and forget. This seems basic, but it can be very difficult to let go of a grudge, especially when you feel you have been wronged. Accept the apology, and move on. Everybody makes mistakes, sometimes bad ones. Harboring feelings of resentment is toxic for both your relationship and your happiness. Being a better wife may mean learning to be a better person.

Another way to be a better wife is to give your husband time to himself. This means different things for different men. Some men would love time to go golfing. Others would love to have a chance to go out with the guys, have a couple hours of uninterrupted video game time, or just be able to watch a football game in peace. By granting your husband this time to himself, you will be showing him that you understand his needs, and that you care. In return, it might be easier for you to slip out for a few hours, leaving him to watch the children while you have some personal time of your own.

Marriages are a partnership. It takes two people to make a marriage work, and it takes two people to ruin it. By doing your best to be a better wife, you may inspire your husband to try a little harder, too. Giving yourselves the gift of a solid relationship is more than worth any extra effort it may require.

Topic87:

No matter how much you love the area in which you live or how much you love your home, having an annoying neighbour can take away from your pleasure. Discuss what one can do with an troublesome neighbour.

Typical Essay

No matter how much you love the area in which you live or how much you love your home, having an annoying neighbour can take away from your pleasure. While it is often best to try to ignore minor or infrequent annoyances, that isn't always possible with a particularly annoying neighbor. You may eventually have to confront the person who is keeping you from enjoying your home or yard.

If the transgression isn't extreme but is still a nuisance or an inconvenient disturbance, consider approaching the annoying neighbour in a friendly manner. Invite him or her over for coffee, and attempt to discuss your complaint in a gentle way. In some cases, the person may not even be aware that his habits are bothersome.

A good example is a neighbour that mows his lawn late in the evening while you're children are trying to sleep. It may be that he only wishes to cut grass when it's not so hot outside, and he may not be aware of your children's bedtime. Once aware, he may simply agree to mow earlier, and you will have settled the difference and may even end up liking your once annoying neighbor.

There are however some worse situations as well. If your annoying neighbour encroaches on your property, doesn't maintain the home or yard appropriately, or does other things that could decrease your property value, you may have to call the appropriate agency to lodge a complaint if your neighbour fails to act after being asked to take care of the situation.

You may also find yourself living beside the kind of annoying neighbor that creates real problems. He or she might throw parties or play loud music, fight loudly with a boyfriend or girlfriend, drive too fast up and down the street, or engage in any number of inappropriate behaviors. The best way to approach this type of person is to avoid the heat of the moment confrontation. Don't storm over to the annoying neighbour's home while angry and while or while the person is drinking.

Problem neighbours can sometimes be dangerous, and you don't want to find yourself in the middle of a physical altercation. You might approach the annoying neighbour at another time to ask for some consideration. You may also find that you have no choice but to call the police if the problems persist. This won't help your relationship with your neighbour, so you might consider making the report anonymously. However, it may help quiet things down.

Appendices

How to Write a Sentence

A sentence is the fundamental grammatical unit that a writer uses in the composition of a research paper, essay, or literary work. In its simplest form, the sentence is composed of a subject and a verb. However, it can be shaped by a greater complexity.

Types of sentences

1- Simple Sentences

Simple sentences have one main idea expressed in one *independent clause*.

1. *I have built houses since I was a teenager.*

2- Compound Sentences: they have two independent clauses joined with a comma and a coordinate conjunction (and, but, or). The clauses can also be joined by a semicolon, or with a semicolon and conjunction (nonetheless, furthermore, however, etc.).

2. *I have built houses since I was a teenager, **and** I wouldn't do anything else for a living.*

3. *I have built houses since I was a teenager, **but** I can't wait to quit.*

4. *I have built houses since I was a teenager; I plan to keep doing it.*

5. *I have built houses since I was a teenager; **nonetheless**, I hope one day to explore new areas of employment.*

3- Complex Sentences: they have one independent clause and two or more *dependent* clauses, each beginning with a subordinate conjunction (because, even though, while, when, who, etc.).

Although we lived in Blida
when I was a child

we moved to
Algiers

because my father found a
better job there.

Dependent clauses tell:

who or what

under what circumstances

how

why

where

when

4- Compound Complex Sentences: they have two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

Although we lived in Blida **when** I
was a small child

we moved to
Algiers

because my father found a
better job there

and he knew that meant a greater opportunity for the whole family.

How to Write a Paragraph

A paragraph is has three parts:

1- Topic Sentence: it is the first sentence in a paragraph which summarizes the main idea and indicates to the reader what your paragraph will be about.

Example:

There are three reasons why Canada is one of the best countries in the world. First, Canada has an excellent health care system. All Canadians have access to medical services at a reasonable price. Second, Canada has a high standard of education. Students are taught by well-trained teachers and are encouraged to continue studying at university. Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed. Canadian cities have many parks and lots of space for people to live. As a result, Canada is a desirable place to live.

2- Supporting Details: they come after the topic sentence, making up the body of a paragraph and giving details to develop and support the main idea of the paragraph. You should give supporting facts, details, and examples.

Example:

There are three reasons why Canada is one of the best countries in the world. **First, Canada has an excellent health care system. All Canadians have access to medical services at a reasonable price. Second, Canada has a high standard of education. Students are taught by well-trained teachers and are encouraged to continue studying at university. Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed. Canadian cities have many parks and lots of space for people to live.** As a result, Canada is a desirable place to live.

3- Closing Sentence: it is the last sentence in a paragraph which restates the main idea of the paragraph using different words.

Example:

There are three reasons why Canada is one of the best countries in the world. First, Canada has an excellent health care system. All Canadians have access to medical services at a reasonable price. Second, Canada has a high standard of education. Students are taught by well-trained teachers and are encouraged to continue studying at university. Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed. Canadian cities have many parks and lots of space for people to live. **As a result, Canada is a desirable place to live.**

To write a paragraph, you need to go through the following three stages.

1- The Prewriting Sage: it is when you think carefully and organize your ideas for your paragraph before you begin writing. This stage has six steps as follows.

1. Think carefully about what you are going to write.
2. Open your notebook.
3. Collect facts related to your paragraph or essay topic.
4. Write down your own ideas.
5. Find the main idea of your paragraph or essay.

6. Organize your facts and ideas in a way that develops your main idea.

2- The Writing Stage: it is when you turn your ideas into sentences. This stage has five steps as follows.

1. Open your notebook and word processor.
2. Write the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and closing sentence.
3. Write clear and simple sentences to express your meaning.
4. Focus on the main idea of your paragraph.
5. Use the dictionary to help you find additional words to express your ideas.

3- The Editing Stage: it is when you check your paragraph for mistakes and correct them.

a- Grammar and Spelling:

1. Check your spelling.
2. Check your grammar.
3. Read your essay again.
4. Make sure each sentence has a subject.
5. See if your subjects and verbs agree with each other.
6. Check the verb tenses of each sentence.
7. Make sure that each sentence makes sense.

b- Style and Organization:

1. Make sure your paragraph has a topic sentence.
2. Make sure your supporting sentences focus on the main idea.
3. Make sure you have a closing sentence.
4. Check that all your sentences focus on the main idea.
5. See if your paragraph is interesting.

A paragraph has many kinds. Amongst them, I mention:

1- Definition Paragraph: when writing a definition paragraph, you take a thing or an idea and explain what it is.

Example: write a paragraph giving the definition of a pest.

The following words can help you to write a good definition paragraph:

- "**is defined as**"

Example: A pest **is defined as** any animal or plant that damages crops, forests, or property.

- "**is a kind of**"

Example: A pest **is a kind of** animal or plant that damages crops, forests, or property.

2- Classification Paragraph: when writing a classification paragraph, you group things or ideas into specific categories.

Example: Write a paragraph discussing two types of energy resources.

The following words can help you to write a good classification paragraph:

Helper Words:
<u>is a kind of</u>
<u>can be divided into</u>
<u>is a type of</u>
<u>falls under</u>
<u>belongs to</u>
<u>is a part of</u>
<u>fits into</u>
<u>is grouped with</u>
<u>is related to</u>
<u>is associated with</u>

Examples:

is a kind of

Coal **is a kind of** non-renewable resource.

can be divided into

Energy resources **can be divided into** two types.

is a type of

Coal **is a type of** non-renewable resource.

falls under

Coal **falls under** the category of non-renewable resources.

belongs to

Coal **belongs to** the category of non-renewable resources.

is a part of

Coal **is a part of** the category of non-renewable resources.

fits into

Coal **fits into** the category of non-renewable resources.

is grouped with

Coal **is grouped with** non-renewable resources.

is related to

Coal **is related to** other non-renewable resources.

is associated with

Coal **is associated with** other non-renewable resources.

3- Description Paragraph: in a description paragraph, you are writing about what a person, place, or thing is like. Sometimes, you may describe where a place is located.

Examples:

- Write a paragraph describing what a polar bear looks like.
- Describe where Canada's industry is located.

The following words can help you to write a good description paragraph:

Helpful Words:

Properties	Measurement	Analogy	Location
<u>size</u>	<u>length</u>	<u>is like</u>	<u>in</u>
<u>colour</u>	<u>width</u>	<u>resembles</u>	<u>above</u>
<u>shape</u>	<u>mass/weight</u>		<u>below</u>
<u>purpose</u>	<u>speed</u>		<u>beside</u>
			<u>near</u>
			<u>north/east/south/west</u>

Properties

size

Example: Polar bears are big in **size**.

colour

Example: Polar bears are usually white in **colour**.

shape

Example: Polar bears have a special **shape**.

purpose

Example: The **purpose** of the polar bear's fur is to keep it warm.

Measurement

length

Example: The **length** of a polar bear's claws is 20 cm.

width

Example: The **width** of a polar bear's head is about 50 cm.

mass / weight

Example: Polar bears **weigh** up to 650 kg.

speed

Example: Polar bears can swim at a **speed** of 40 km per hour.

Analogy

is like

Example: A polar bear **is like** other bears in shape.

resembles

Example: A polar bear **resembles** other bears in shape.

Location

in

Example: Most of Canada's manufacturing is located **in** Ontario and Quebec.

above

Example: The ceiling is **above** us.

below

Example: Most of Ontario is **below** Hudson Bay.

beside

Example: Quebec is located **beside** Ontario.

near

Example: Many companies are located **near** Toronto.

north / east / south / west

Example: Ontario is **west** of Quebec.

4-Compare and Contrast Paragraph: in a compare and contrast paragraph, you write about the similarities and differences between two or more people, places, things, or ideas.

Example: Write a paragraph comparing the weather in Vancouver and Halifax.

The following words can help you to write a good compare and contrast paragraph:

Helpful Words:

Similarities	Differences
<u>is similar to</u>	<u>the other hand</u>
<u>both</u>	<u>however</u>
<u>also</u>	<u>but</u>
<u>too</u>	<u>in contrast</u>
<u>as well</u>	<u>differs from</u>
	<u>while</u>
	<u>unlike</u>

Similarities**is similar to**

Example: Spring weather in Vancouver **is similar to** spring weather in Halifax.

both

Example: **Both** Vancouver and Halifax have rain in the spring.

also

Example: Halifax **also** has a rainy spring season.

too

Example: Halifax has a rainy spring season, **too**.

as well

Example: **As well**, Halifax has rainy spring season.

Differences

on the other hand

Example: **On the other hand**, winter is much colder in Halifax.

however

Example: **However**, winter is much colder in Halifax.

but

Example: Vancouver has a mild winter, **but** Halifax has a cold one.

in contrast to

Example: **In contrast to** Vancouver, Halifax has a cold winter.

differs from

Example: Halifax **differs from** Vancouver by having a cold winter.

while

Example: **While** Vancouver has a mild winter, Halifax has a cold winter.

How to Write an Essay

An essay can have many purposes, but the basic structure is the same no matter what. You may be writing an essay to argue for a particular point of view or to explain the steps necessary to complete a task.

Either way, your essay will have the same basic format.

If you follow a few simple steps, you will find that the essay almost writes itself. You will be responsible only for supplying ideas, which are the important part of the essay anyway.

These simple steps will guide you through the essay writing process:

- 1- Decide on your topic.
- 2- Prepare an outline or diagram of your ideas.
- 3- Write your thesis statement.
- 4- Write the body.
 - a. Write the main points.
 - b. Write the subpoints.
 - c. Elaborate on the subpoints.
- 5- Write the introduction.
- 6- Write the conclusion.
- 7- Add the finishing touches.

How to Write a Book/Film Review

A book/film review describes, analyzes and evaluates. The review conveys an opinion, supporting it with evidence from the book/film.

These simple steps will guide you through the book/film review writing process:

- 1- An introduction about the theme and the storyline.
- 2- A developing paragraph providing information about the characters, the setting, the action...
- 3- A paragraph expressing your viewpoint about the film/book.
- 4- A paragraph to say what you liked and disliked about it.
- 5- A conclusion to give recommendations/advice.

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